

AMERICAN LITERATURE

EDITED BY
ROBERT SHAFER

E X L I B R I S



JULIET ABRAHAMSON

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(Complete Edition)

TEXTS SELECTED AND EDITED
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TO
ELIZABETH FAHRNEY SHAFER
AND
SAMUEL McCAULEY SHAFER
MY PARENTS

PREFACE

This work was planned, at the invitation of the publishers, immediately after the appearance of my *From Beowulf to Thomas Hardy* (2 volumes, 1924), and my aim has been to follow, so far as different material and conditions should permit, the plan upon which those volumes were based. In the Preface to *From Beowulf to Thomas Hardy* I stated my conviction, gained from my own experience and that of many other teachers, "that anthologies and collections of extracts are more useful to those who know literature than to those who are just learning to know it." The student who does not already know a writer's works can gain neither a correct nor a lasting impression from reading a few pages of brief poems or of fragments. On the contrary, he inevitably becomes confused, and in the end retains only the perniciously mistaken notion that he has sufficiently explored the riches of a literature when, in reality, he has no immediate acquaintance with it which deserves the name. This is the more true because the almost unavoidable tendency of anthologies and collections of extracts is to stress the minor phases of literature at the expense of its great masterpieces. Indeed, to speak frankly, instruction based on such books is scarcely better than a sham — teacher and students tacitly agreeing to cover the ground in a manner which merely "saves the appearances." This is generally realized, and deplored, yet the alternative plan of making acquaintance with a relatively small number of complete books the basis of a survey of a nation's literature is neither satisfactory nor, indeed, actually practicable. Even though the number of books used be small, the expense of this plan is likely to be prohibitive; and, in any event, the resultant "survey" is not only fragmentary, but gravely misleading, and can afford no sufficient foundation either for later academic work or for the student's independent reading.

The only real alternative is a collection of texts which, omitting writers of minor importance and those who could lend merely their names and a few inadequate fragments to the work, includes a genuinely representative body of selections adequate in the case of each writer to make a marked and lasting impression upon the learner. The appearance—it can only be an "appearance," and a ridiculous one—of "including everything" no matter how thinly the ground is covered, must deliberately be sacrificed in order that the writers who are represented may be adequately represented, not for one who has read widely and knows how to place a brief selection, but for the learner, and in order also that the greater and more significant elements of a literature may be represented no less than its minor and relatively insignificant elements. And though I use the word

“sacrificed,” this is really no sacrifice, but an invaluable aid to every teacher who regards his work seriously and aims at solid and lasting results.

It has been my effort in the present work to furnish such a body of selections from American literature, primarily for students in colleges and universities. So far as I am aware, no existing compilation does this. The editor of a volume published while the present work was in preparation admits that he has included in his book “approximately eighty-five minor writers.” This is to confuse the needs of the advanced student with those of the student in the general, introductory course, and to serve the needs of neither. It is possible, as I hope the present compilation shows, to exhibit the important elements entering into American literature, and also the major characteristics of the literature in its historical development, without drawing upon writers or books of merely antiquarian interest, and without including writers, the quality and real character of whose work could not be, for one reason or another, satisfactorily displayed within the space that could be accorded to them.

In making selections I have endeavored to govern myself, not by criteria derived from other national literatures, but by the actual development of our own. This is a matter of greater difficulty than may at first sight appear. Still a young nation, we are nevertheless sharers in an old culture, and our own elder literature is that of England. Our writers have been, as writers, from the beginning, citizens of the Western world, drawing inspiration and instruction from the literature which we share with England and from the literatures of Europe. This has been, and continues to be, at once unescapable and desirable, though it has often been made, both at home and abroad, the subject of ignorant or undiscerning reproach. Contemporary writers who superciliously refer to the first half of the nineteenth century as “the New England or imitative period” of our literature are themselves the products of cultural influences not exclusively American—as are all of us—and need only a little more knowledge and a little less complacency to be self-convicted of absurdity. On the other hand, of course, mere imitation can at best result only in second-rate literature, and it cannot be denied that our writers have produced much of doubtful value because of its predominantly derivative character. Critics of American letters have not always avoided two dangers which these remarks suggest. There has been in some quarters a tendency to understand the word literature narrowly, in obedience to recent and questionable European criticism which would restrict it to *belles lettres*, and to search the native field for matter which will fit the imported conception. It is not surprising that such critics have failed to discover the spirit of American literature, have fixed their attention upon some of our productions which are of little or no worth, have neglected other matter of high importance and value, and have ended on a note of general depreciation. In point of fact there are distinctively American strains running through our literature from its beginnings to the present time, but discovery of these has equally been retarded by another tendency—a tendency to celebrate whatever eccentricity has begotten upon ignorance in this new land as, at last, the authentic American achievement.

The prevalence of such mistaken points of departure in the criticism of

American literature may help to account for the fact that native letters have been, until recently, almost neglected in our colleges and universities. It is more than time that this condition should change, and it will be an event of happy augury for our future as a nation when it can be said confidently that it has changed. Some college professors have been heard to say that they would consider their lives wasted if spent in the teaching of our literature, but such an attitude can be only the result of ignorance, bred by a vicious specialism. Our little specialists, indeed, have tended to rob all literary studies of breadth and substance and deep human value by their acceptance of "current finical and transitory definitions of literature" which divorce the subject from intellectual, social, and political history; but the ignorance and narrowness encouraged by specialism cannot indefinitely delay the realization that neglect of American letters is disgraceful. For in reality there are "admirable riches of human nature" stored in our literature whose discovery should not be left to unlikely accident and the chance recommendations of journalists; and, in addition, it requires but little thought to recognize the extraordinary nature, after all, of the fact that we should pretend to give our youth a liberal education, and yet should omit their own literature from their courses of instruction. This may have been well once; it is well no longer when—as any candid review of such matter as is gathered in the present work must show—we incontestably have produced a national literature of high value from any point of view, and one which must be known and studied by all who seek to learn what it means to be an American.

In the preparation of this collection of texts, I have endeavored to reduce explanatory matter to its minimum, but, at the same time, I have aimed to provide such help as may be needed for fairly rapid yet accurate reading, and also to provide information sufficient for the personal approach to the various writers represented which is an indispensable element in the study of literature. Wherever it has been possible, only pieces complete in themselves have been selected for use. Omissions have been permitted solely because of considerations of space; and all editorial omissions in the texts are indicated by asterisks, so as to distinguish them plainly from the cases where authors themselves have, for one purpose or another, made use of extra periods. In general, modern usage has been followed in the matters of spelling and punctuation, though to this rule a few exceptions have been made in cases where (as in *Bacon's Epitaph*) this has seemed advantageous.

Such a work as the present one involves many debts, not all of which can even be acknowledged, much less repaid. The help afforded by the *Cambridge History of American Literature* has been indispensable, and I also owe much to earlier editors. I am indebted, in common with all students of our literature, to the important historical studies of Professor Fred Lewis Pattee and to his scholarly edition of the more important poems of Freneau. Other obligations there are, too numerous for any save this general acknowledgment, but I must at least express my gratitude to several persons without whose help or encouragement my work would have been far more difficult:—Mr. Edwin Arlington Robinson, Mrs. William Vaughn Moody, Mr. Paul Elmer More, Mr. John Jay Chapman, Mr. and Mrs.

Vachel Lindsay, Mr. Wilson Follett, Mr. Horace Liveright, Mrs. Alfred A. Knopf, Professor J. Penrose Harland of the University of Cincinnati, Mrs. O. T. Wilson of the Cincinnati Public Library, Mr. E. D. Hellweg and Mr. W. E. Thomas of the staff of Messrs. Doubleday, Page and Company, and, finally, my wife, whose aid in the preparation of the manuscript, in the reading of proofs, and indeed in every phase of the work, has been constant and invaluable. My obligations to several publishing houses are recorded in each case on the pages where they occur.

No pains have been spared to secure accuracy in both texts and notes, but in such a compilation as this errors are almost inevitable. I hope that at least no serious ones remain to be discovered, but I shall be grateful to any who use the work for pointing out to me any errors they find, of whatever sort, so that they may be promptly corrected.

ROBERT SHAFER

10 MAY, 1926.

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Arranged according to Types

It need scarcely be said that the classification of literature by types is always and of necessity a fluid and approximate matter. Many methods are equally possible, and for various purposes different methods are best. No classification by types is likely to suit two teachers equally well; for, even when there is agreement as to the best or most useful method for a specific purpose, there is still room for many differences of opinion as to the place within a system of classification where a given work is to be put. Probably no one has ever looked through a classified list without at once seeing what he considered mistakes of judgment. The texts in the present collection are arranged chronologically to illustrate the course of American literature from its beginning to the present day, in order that students may be enabled to form a sound conception of our literature as a whole and in its historical development. But it is believed that this arrangement of the texts is also the most satisfactory one for the purpose of studying types of literature. For it not only insures something, at least, of the historical perspective essential in any study of literature, but also enables teachers to make their own classifications in accordance with their own judgment and in accordance with the needs of their own students.

The following arrangement by types is intended as a suggestion for this purpose. It is hoped that it may be practically useful, and to this end strict consistency has been sacrificed. Some types of literature are important and significant for their form, others for their method, and others for their content. The effort has been to distinguish important types, regardless of the system of classification which any one taken by itself might suggest as appropriate for the whole body of literature. Moreover, in several of the groups of lyrical poems pieces have been included which, though not properly lyrics, nevertheless belong, either by virtue of content or by virtue of form, to a distinct and predominantly lyrical type. Some duplication in a classification according to types is in any event unavoidable, but this procedure in the present instance has materially lessened duplication, and at the same time it should, in fact, increase the practical usefulness of the following lists.

I. EPIC

Burlesque-Epic

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FROM THE BEGINNINGS TO LINCOLN AND MOTLEY

BACON'S EPITAPH

The governor of Virginia in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, Sir William Berkeley, was a high-handed autocrat whose character is well illustrated in his reply to the Commissioners of Plantations (1671) when they asked: "What course is taken about the instructing the people within your government in the Christian religion?" Berkeley answered: "The same course that is taken in England out of towns, every man according to his ability instructing his children. We have forty-eight parishes, and our ministers are well paid, and by my consent should be better *if they would pray oftener and preach less*. But of all other commodities, so of this, *the worst are sent us*, and we had few that we could boast of, since the persecution in Cromwell's tyranny drove divers worthy men hither. But, I thank God, *there are no free schools* nor *printing*, and I hope we shall not have these hundred years; for *learning* has brought disobedience, and heresy, and sects into the world, and *printing* has divulged them, and libels against the best government. God keep us from both!" Berkeley's almost absolute power was exerted in favor of wealthy land-owners, and justly aroused popular discontent. Nathaniel Bacon, a young planter on the western frontier of Virginia, was in 1676 suddenly elevated by events and the action of the governor into the position of a popular leader. In that year his plantation was attacked by Indians, who killed one of his men. He at once led a successful expedition against the Indians, but was at the same time practically denounced a rebel by Berkeley, for assuming military command without authority. This was the beginning of what is usually called "Bacon's Rebellion." (The best modern account is in H. L. Osgood's *American Colonies in the Seventeenth Century*, III, Chap. viii.) It provoked a popular outcry and led to important but abortive political reforms. Bacon assumed the character of a revolutionary leader, was on the whole successful, and, possibly, began to entertain the notion of forming Virginia, Maryland, and Carolina into an independent commonwealth. But, before the close of 1676, he was stricken with illness which caused his death, after which the "rebellion" quickly subsided.

The Burwell Papers, so called because the manuscript was owned by the Burwell family in the early part of the nineteenth century, contain an account of Bacon's Rebellion by an unknown hand. The writer probably composed his narrative not long after 1676, and he wrote in sympathy with Berkeley. In recounting the manner of Bacon's death he quoted "a cuple" of poems written upon the event, one of which is the *Epitaph* printed below. All that we know concerning its author is contained in this introductory sentence: "After he was dead he was bemoned in these following lines (drawne by the Man that waited upon his person, as it is said) and who attended his Corps to there Buriall place." Whoever the author, he was a genuine poet and, probably, a discerning student of Ben Jonson. He "produced what is perhaps the one real American poem of the seventeenth century." (S. M. Tucker, *Camb. Hist. Am. Lit.*, I, 150.) For other American verse written before the time of Philip Freneau, Mr. P. E. More has said, with disarming sympathy, all that can be said, in his essay entitled *The Spirit and Poetry of Early New England* (reprinted in the second part of this work). Briefly, there was no American poet save "Bacon's Man" before the latter half of the eighteenth century.

The *Epitaph* was first printed in the *Collections* of the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1814. The copy then used was inaccurate. It was again printed, from the manuscript, in the *Proceedings* of the same Society in 1866, and the present reprint follows this text, save for the correction of one or two obvious slips. Punctuation, however, has been modernized.

DEATH, why so crewill? What, no other way
To manifest thy spleene but thus to slay
Our hopes of safety, liberty, our all
Which, through thy tyranny, with him must
fall
To its late Caoss? Had thy rigned force
Bin delt by retale, and not thus in gross,
Griefe had bin silent. Now, wee must com-
plaine.

Since thou in him hast more then thousand
slane,
Whose lives and safetys did so much depend
On him there¹ lif, with him there lives must
end. IO
If 't be a sin to thinke Death brib'd can
bee,
Wee must be guilty—say twas bribery

¹ Their (as also elsewhere in the poem).

Guided the fatall shaft. Verginias foes,
To whom for secret crimes just vengeance
owes

Disarved plagues, dreading their just disart,
Corrupted Death by Parasscelleian¹ art
Him to destroy, whose well tride curage
such

There heartless harts nor arms nor strength
could touch.

Who now must heale those wounds or stop
that blood

The Heathen² made and drew into a
flood? 20

Who is 't must pleade our Cause? Nor
Trump nor Drum

Nor Deputations;—these alas are dumb,
And Cannot speake. Our Arms (though
nere so strong)

Will want the aide of his Commanding
tongue,

Which Conquer'd more than Ceaser: He
orethrew

Onely the outward frame; this Could subdue
The rugged workes of nature. Soules repleate

¹ Paracelsus (1493-1541) was reputed to be the
master of arts learned from evil spirits.

² Indians.

With dull Child could³ he'd annemate with
heate

Drawne forth of reasons Lymbick. In a
word,

Marss and *Minerva* both in him concurd 30
For arts, for arms; whose pen and sword
alike,

As *Catos* did, may admiration strike
Into his foes, while they confess withall
It was there guilt stil'd him a Criminall.

Onely this differance doth from truth pro-
ceed:

They in the guilt, he in the name, must bleed;
While none shall dare his *Obseques* to sing
In disarv'd measures, untill time shall bring
Truth, Crown'd with freedom and from
danger free,

To sound his praises to posterity. 40

Here let him rest; while we this truth
report:

Hee's gone from hence unto a higher Court
To pleade his Cause, where he by this doth
know

WHETHER TO CEASER HEE WAS FRIEND OR
FOE.

³ W. C. Bronson has suggested the emendation: chill
cold.

COTTON MATHER (1663-1728)

Cotton Mather's father was Increase Mather (1639-1723), his grandfathers Richard Mather (1596-1669) and John Cotton (1585-1652). These men were the very center and interior stronghold of the Puritan theocracy of New England's early years. The Puritans came to the American wilderness for freedom of worship. The idea of religious toleration had scarcely made its appearance in the world in the early part of the seventeenth century, and the Puritans aimed at freedom—not for all people and all beliefs—but for themselves. Their efforts to secure the absolute sway of their own religion in a commonwealth constructed and governed to that end were commensurate with the depth of earnest conviction which had driven them out of the civilized world. What was their religion? Barrett Wendell, in his life of Cotton Mather (1891, reprinted 1926), has admirably summarized the Puritan creed out of Book V of the *Magnalia Christi Americana*: "In the beginning God created man, responsible to Him, with perfect freedom of will. Adam, in the fall, exerted his will in opposition to the will of God: thereby Adam and all his posterity merited eternal punishment. As a mark of that punishment they lost the power of exerting the will in harmony with the will of God, without losing their hereditary responsibility to Him. But God, in His infinite mercy, was pleased to mitigate His justice. Through the mediation of Christ, certain human beings, chosen at God's pleasure, might be relieved of the just penalty of sin, and received into everlasting salvation. These were the elect: none others could be saved, nor could any acts of the elect impair their salvation. Now there were no outward and visible marks by which the elect might be known: there was a fair chance, then, that any human being to whom the Gospel was brought might be of the number. The thing that most vitally concerned every man, then, was to discover whether he were elect, and so free from the just penalty of sin, ancestral and personal. The test of election was ability to exert the will in true harmony with the will of God—a proof of emancipation from the hereditary curse of the children of Adam: whoever could ever do right, and want to, had a fair ground for hope that he should be saved. But even the elect were infected with the hereditary sin of humanity; and, besides, no wile of the Devil was more frequent than that which deceived men into believing themselves regenerate when in truth they were not. The task of assuring one's self of election, then, could end only with life—a life of passionate aspirations, ecstatic enthusiasms, profound discouragements. Above all, men must never forget that the true will of God was revealed, directly or by implication, only and wholly in Scripture: incessant study of Scripture, then, was the sole means by which any man could assure himself that his will was really exerting itself, through the mediatory power of Christ, in true harmony with the will of God."

Passionately the Puritans worked to fashion a community devoted to an other-worldly end thus defined; and Mather's life of Winthrop is sufficient testimony that enlightened and noble men threw themselves into the effort. No pains were spared. Godly exhortation was poured forth in floods. Every aspect of life was piously supervised. Men and women of different beliefs were relentlessly persecuted and driven away. Evil spirits and the witches through whom they were thought to work were tracked down—the witches killed, the spirits, so far as might be, banished. Harvard College was founded to bring up new generations of ministers in the true faith. And yet—it was all in the end to no avail. Individual free thought was implanted in the heart of Protestantism, and the spirit of worldliness, howsoever individuals might precariously triumph over it, could not be banished from a community which soon began to grow prosperous. The lives of Increase and Cotton Mather were a prolonged but always losing struggle to maintain the pure faith of the first generation of settlers.

Cotton Mather was born in Boston, was graduated from Harvard, a learned youth, in 1678, and was pastor of the North Church in Boston from 1685 until his death. During all save the last five years of this period he was associated in the pastorate with his father. He read everything that came within his reach and wrote incessantly, living a life of almost unbelievable industry, as well as devotion, in support of Puritanism. But, even so, his religious work did not exhaust all of his energy. For his scientific attainments procured his election to the Royal Society, and he was a pioneer in the advocacy of inoculation against the small-pox. This should be remembered when we hear him abused, as he still is, for sharing the belief, almost universal in his day, in the powers of witches, and for taking part in the Salem witchcraft trials.

Mather published more than four hundred books, and left others in manuscript. Many of these are sermons. Of the others, the three which remain best known are: *The Wonders of the Invisible*

World: Observations upon the Nature, the Number, and the Operations of the Devils (1693); *Essays to Do Good* (at first entitled *Bonifacius*, 1710); and the *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702), from which two selections are here printed. This, Mather's most ambitious literary performance, was written to preserve the memory of New England's heroic Puritan days, with the hope that readers might be fired to emulate the great examples therein delineated. It was, in truth, one of the many unavailing efforts with which Mather's days were filled to preserve the old order and its faith. In the General Introduction, directed to Englishmen (the book was published in England), we read: "It may be, 't is not possible for me to do a greater service unto the Churches on the *best Island* of the universe, than to give a distinct relation of these great examples which have been occurring among Churches of *exiles*, that were driven out of that Island into an horrible wilderness, merely for their being well-wishers unto the Reformation. . . . 'T is possible that our Lord Jesus Christ carried some thousands of Reformers into the retirements of an American desert on purpose that, with an opportunity granted unto many of his faithful servants to enjoy the precious *liberty* of their Ministry, though in the midst of many temptations all their days, He might there, *to them first*, and then *by them*, give a *specimen* of many good things which He would have His Churches elsewhere aspire and arise unto."

Wendell, after mentioning the haste in which this book was evidently written, its imperfections of design, its many small errors, and the like, goes on to say: "For all this, the *Magnalia* has merits which dispose me to rate it among the great works of English literature in the seventeenth century. The style, in the first place, seems to me remarkably good. Any one can detect its faults at a glance: it is prolix, often overloaded with pedantic quotation, now and then fantastic in its conceits. But these were faults of Mather's time. And he has two merits peculiarly his own: in the whole book I have not found a line that is not perfectly lucid, nor many paragraphs that, considering the frequent dullness of his subject, I could honestly call tiresome. In the second place, admitting once for all every charge of inaccurate detail, I am inclined to think the veracity of spirit that pervades the book of very high order. Somehow, as no one else can, Cotton Mather makes you by and by feel what the Puritan ideal was: if he does not tell just what men were, he does tell just what they wanted to be, and what loyal posterity longed to believe them. In the third place, not even the sustained monotony of his style and temper can prevent one who reads with care from recognizing the marked individuality of his separate portraits."

MAGNALIA CHRISTI AMERICANA,

or,

THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF NEW ENGLAND,

FROM ITS FIRST PLANTING, IN THE
YEAR 1620, UNTO THE YEAR OF
OUR LORD 1698¹

BOOK II

CHAPTER IV

NEHEMIAS AMERICANUS

THE LIFE OF JOHN WINTHROP, ESQ., GOV-
ERNOR OF THE MASSACHUSET COLONY

I. LET Greece boast of her patient Lycurgus, the lawgiver, by whom diligence, temperance, fortitude and wit were made the fashions of a therefore long-lasting and

renowned commonwealth: let Rome tell of her devout Numa, the lawgiver, by whom the most famous commonwealth saw peace triumphing over extinguished war and cruel plunders, and murders giving place to the more mollifying exercises of his religion. Our New England shall tell and boast of her WINTHROP, a lawgiver as patient as Lycurgus, but not admitting any of his criminal disorders; as devout as Numa, but not liable to any of his heathenish madneses; a governor in whom the excellencies of Christianity made a most improving addition unto the virtues, wherein even without those he would have made a parallel for the great men of Greece, or of Rome, which the pen of a Plutarch has eternized.

2. A stock of heroes by right should afford nothing but what is heroical; and nothing but an extreme degeneracy would make any thing less to be expected from a stock of Winthrops. Mr. Adam Winthrop, the son of a worthy gentleman wearing the same name, was himself a worthy, a discreet, and a learned gentleman, particularly eminent for skill in the law, nor without remark for love to the Gospel, under the reign of King

¹ Reprinted from the first edition, a folio published in London in 1702. Spelling, punctuation, *etc.*, have been altered.

Henry VIII, and brother to a memorable favorer of the reformed religion in the days of Queen Mary, into whose hands the famous martyr Philpot committed his papers, which afterward made no inconsiderable part of our martyr-books. This Mr. Adam Winthrop had a son of the same name also, and of the same endowments and employments with his father; and this third Adam Winthrop was the father of that renowned John Winthrop, who was the father of New England, and the founder of a colony which, upon many accounts, like him that founded it, may challenge the first place among the English glories of America. Our JOHN WINTHROP, thus born at the mansion-house of his ancestors, at Groton in Suffolk, on June¹ 12, 1587, enjoyed afterward an agreeable education. But though he would rather have devoted himself unto the study of Mr. John Calvin than of Sir Edward Cook,² nevertheless, the accomplishments of a lawyer were those wherewith Heaven made his chief opportunities to be serviceable.

3. Being made, at the unusually early age of eighteen, a justice of peace, his virtues began to fall under a more general observation; and he not only so bound himself to the behavior of a Christian as to become exemplary for a conformity to the laws of Christianity in his own conversation, but also discovered a more than ordinary measure of those qualities which adorn an officer of human society. His justice was impartial, and used the balance to weigh not the *cash*, but the *case*, of those who were before him: *protopolatria*³ he reckoned as bad as *idolatria*: his wisdom did exquisitely temper things according to the art of governing, which is a business of more contrivance than the seven arts of the schools; *oyer* still went before *terminer*⁴ in all his administrations: his courage made him dare to do right, and fitted him to stand among the lions that have sometimes been the supporters of the throne: all which virtues he rendered the more illustrious by emblazoning them with the constant liberality and hospitality of a gentleman. This made him the terror of the wicked, and the delight of the sober, the

envy of the many, but the hope of those who had any hopeful design in hand for the common good of the nation and the interests of religion.

4. Accordingly, when the noble design of carrying a colony of chosen people into an American wilderness was by some eminent persons undertaken, this eminent person was, by the consent of all, chosen for the Moses, who must be the leader of so great an undertaking: and indeed nothing but a Mosaic spirit could have carried him through the temptations, to which either his farewell to his own land, or his travel in a strange land, must needs expose a gentleman of his education. Wherefore, having sold a fair estate of six or seven hundred a year, he transported himself with the effects of it into New England in the year 1630, where he spent it upon the service of a famous plantation, founded and formed for the seat of the most reformed Christianity: and continued there, conflicting with temptations of all sorts, as many years as the nodes of the moon take to dispatch a revolution. Those persons were never concerned in a new plantation, who know not that the unavoidable difficulties of such a thing will call for all the prudence and patience of a mortal man to encounter therewithal; and they must be very insensible of the influence, which the just wrath of Heaven has permitted the devils to have upon this world, if they do not think that the difficulties of a new plantation, devoted unto the evangelical worship of our Lord Jesus Christ, must be yet more than ordinary. How prudently, how patiently, and with how much resignation to our Lord Jesus Christ, our brave Winthrop waded through these difficulties, let posterity consider with admiration. And know, that as the picture of this their governor was, after his death, hung up with honor in the state-house of his country, so the wisdom, courage, and holy zeal of his life, were an example well-worthy to be copied by all that shall succeed him in government.

5. Were he now to be considered only as a Christian, we might therein propose him as greatly imitable. He was a very religious man; and as he strictly kept his heart, so he kept his house, under the laws of piety; there he was every day constant in holy duties, both morning and evening, and on

¹ Should be, January.

² So printed in all of the editions, for Coke.

³ Face-worship, respect of persons.

⁴ *I.e.*, a hearing of the evidence preceded a verdict.

the Lord's days, and lectures; though he wrote not after the preacher, yet such was his attention, and such his retention in hearing, that he repeated unto his family the sermons which he had heard in the congregation. But it is chiefly as a governor that he is now to be considered. Being the governor over the considerablest part of New England, he maintained the figure and honor of his place with the spirit of a true gentleman; but yet with such obliging condescension to the circumstances of the colony that when a certain troublesome and malicious calumniator, well known in those times, printed his libelous nick-names upon the chief persons here, the worst nick-name he could find for the governor was *John Temper-well*; and when the calumnies of that ill man caused the Archbishop to summon one Mr. Cleaves before the King, in hopes to get some accusation from him against the country, Mr. Cleaves gave such an account of the governor's laudable carriage in all respects, and the serious devotion wherewith prayers were both publicly and privately made for his Majesty, that the King expressed himself most highly pleased therewithal, only sorry that so worthy a person should be no better accommodated than with the hardships of America. He was, indeed, a governor who had most exactly studied that book which, pretending to teach politics, did only contain three leaves, and but one word in each of those leaves, which word was, MODERATION. Hence, though he were a zealous enemy to all vice, yet his practice was according to his judgment thus expressed: "In the infancy of plantations, justice should be administered with more lenity than in a settled state; because people are more apt then to transgress; partly out of ignorance of new laws and orders, partly out of oppression of business, and other straits. *Lento gradu*¹ was the old rule; and if the strings of a new instrument be wound up unto their height they will quickly crack." But when some leading and learned men took offense at his conduct in this matter, and upon a conference gave it as their opinion, "That a stricter discipline was to be used in the beginning of a plantation than after its being with more age established and confirmed," the governor,

being readier to see his own errors than other men's, professed his purpose to endeavor their satisfaction with less of lenity in his administrations. At that conference there were drawn up several other articles to be observed between the governor and the rest of the magistrates, which were of this import: "That the magistrates, as far as might be, should aforehand ripen their consultations, to produce that unanimity in their public votes which might make them liker to the voice of God; that, if differences fell out among them in their public meetings, they should speak only to the case, without any reflection, with all due modesty, and but by way of question, or desire the deferring of the cause to further time, and after sentence to imitate privately no dislike; that they should be more familiar, friendly, and open unto each other, and more frequent in their visitations, and not any way expose each other's infirmities, but seek the honor of each other, and all the Court; that one magistrate shall not cross the proceedings of another without first advising with him; and that they should in all their appearances abroad be so circumstanced as to prevent all contempt of authority; and that they should support and strengthen all under officers." All of which articles were observed by no man more than by the governor himself.

6. But whilst he thus did, as our New English Nehemiah, the part of a ruler in managing the public affairs of our American Jerusalem, when there were Tobijahs and Sanballats enough to vex him, and give him the experiment of Luther's observation, *Omnis qui regit est tanquam signum, in quod omnia jacula Satan et Mundus dirigunt*,² he made himself still an exacter parallel unto that governor of Israel, by doing the part of a neighbor among the distressed people of the new plantation. To teach them the frugality necessary for those times he abridged himself of a thousand comfortable things, which he had allowed himself elsewhere: his habit was not that soft raiment which would have been disagreeable to a wilderness; his table was not covered with the superfluities that would have invited unto sensualities; water was commonly his

² One who rules is a target at which Satan and the world direct all their darts.

¹ By slow degrees.

own drink, though he gave wine to others. But at the same time his liberality unto the needy was even beyond measure generous; and therein he was continually causing "the blessing of him that was ready to perish to come upon him, and the heart of the widow and the orphan to sing for joy"—but none more than those of deceased Ministers, whom he always treated with a very singular compassion; among the instances whereof we still enjoy with us the worthy and now aged son of that Reverend Higginson, whose death left his family in a wide world soon after his arrival here, publicly acknowledging the charitable Winthrop for his foster-father. It was oftentimes no small trial unto his faith, to think how a table for the people should be furnished when they first came into the wilderness! and for very many of the people his own good works were needful, and accordingly employed for the answering of his faith. Indeed, for a while the governor was the Joseph, unto whom the whole body of the people repaired when their corn failed them; and he continued relieving of them with his open-handed bounties as long as he had any stock to do it with; and a lively faith to see the return of the "bread after many days," and not starve in the days that were to pass till that return should be seen, carried him cheerfully through those expenses.

Once it was observable that, on February 5, 1630,¹ when he was distributing the last handful of the meal in the barrel unto a poor man distressed by the "wolf at the door," at that instant they spied a ship arrived at the harbor's mouth, laden with provisions for them all. Yea, the governor sometimes made his own private purse to be the public: not by sucking into it, but by squeezing out of it; for when the public treasure had nothing in it he did himself defray the charges of the public. And having learned that lesson of our Lord, "that it is better to give than to receive," he did, at the general court, when he was a third time chosen governor, make a speech unto this purpose: "That he had received gratuities from divers towns, which he accepted with much comfort and content; and he had likewise received civilities from particular persons, which he could not refuse without incivility

in himself: nevertheless, he took them with a trembling heart, in regard of God's word, and the conscience of his own infirmities; and therefore he desired them that they would not hereafter take it ill if he refused such presents for the time to come." 'Twas his custom also to send some of his family upon errands unto the houses of the poor, about their meal time, on purpose to spy whether they wanted; and if it were found that they wanted, he would make that the opportunity of sending supplies unto them. And there was one passage of his charity that was perhaps a little unusual: in an hard and long winter, when wood was very scarce at Boston, a man gave him a private information that a needy person in the neighborhood stole wood sometimes from *his* pile; whereupon the governor in a seeming anger did reply: "Does he so? I'll take a course with him; go, call that man to me; I'll warrant you I'll cure him of stealing." When the man came, the governor, considering that if he had stolen it was more out of necessity than disposition, said unto him: "Friend, it is a severe winter, and I doubt you are but meanly provided for wood; wherefore I would have you supply yourself at my wood-pile till this cold season be over." And he then merrily asked his friends, "Whether he had not effectually cured this man of stealing his wood?"

7. One would have imagined that so good a man could have had no enemies, if we had not had a daily and woeful experience to convince us that goodness itself will make enemies. It is a wonderful speech of Plato (in one of his books, *De Republica*): "For the trial of true virtue, 'tis necessary that a good man μηδὲν ἀδικῶν, δόξαν ἔχει τῆς μεγίστης ἀδικίας²—though he do no unjust thing, should suffer the infamy of the greatest injustice." The governor had by his unspotted integrity procured himself a great reputation among the people; and then the crime of popularity was laid unto his charge by such who were willing to deliver him from the danger of having all men speak well of him. Yea, there were persons eminent both for figure and for number, unto whom it was almost essential to dis-

² Here and elsewhere the Greek quotations have been corrected. In the present case Mather gives the translation in the text.

¹ Old style. New style, 1631.

like every thing that came from him; and yet he always maintained an amicable correspondence with them, as believing that they acted according to their judgment and conscience, or that their eyes were held by some temptation in the worst of all their oppositions. Indeed, his right works were so many that they exposed him unto the envy of his neighbors; and of such power was that envy, that sometimes he could not stand before it; but it was by not standing that he most effectually withstood it all. Great attempts were sometimes made among the freemen to get him left out from his place in the government upon little pretenses, lest by the too frequent choice of one man the government should cease to be by choice; and with a particular aim at him sermons were preached at the anniversary court of election, to dissuade the freemen from choosing one man twice together. This was the reward of his *extraordinary serviceableness!* But when these attempts *did* succeed, as they sometimes did, his profound humility appeared in that equality of mind, wherewith he applied himself cheerfully to serve the country in whatever station their votes had allotted for him. And one year when the votes came to be numbered there were found six less for Mr. Winthrop than for another gentleman who then stood in competition: but several other persons, regularly tendering their votes before the election was published, were, upon a very frivolous objection, refused by some of the magistrates that were afraid lest the election should at last fall upon Mr. Winthrop: which, though it was well perceived, yet such was the self-denial of this patriot that he would not permit any notice to be taken of the injury. But these trials were nothing in comparison of those harsher and harder treats which he sometimes had from the frowardness of not a few in the days of their paroxysms, and from the faction of some against him, not much unlike that of the Piazzis in Florence against the family of the Medices: all of which he at last conquered by conforming to the famous Judge's motto, *Prudens qui Patiens*.¹ The oracles of God have said, "Envy is rottenness to the bones"; and Gulielmus Parisiensis applies it unto rulers, who are as it were the bones of

the societies which they belong unto: "Envy," says he, "is often found among them, and it is rottenness unto them." Our Winthrop encountered this envy from others, but conquered it, by being free from it himself.

8. Were it not for the sake of introducing the exemplary skill of this wise man at giving soft answers, one would not choose to relate those instances of wrath which he had sometimes to encounter with; but he was for his gentleness, his forbearance, and longanimity, a pattern so worthy to be written *after*, that something must here be written *of* it. He seemed indeed never to speak any other language than that of Theodosius: "If any man speak evil of the governor, if it be through lightness, 'tis to be contemned; if it be through madness, 'tis to be pitied; if it be through injury, 'tis to be remitted." Behold, reader, the "meekness of wisdom" notably exemplified! There was a time when he received a very sharp letter from a gentleman who was a member of the Court, but he delivered back the letter unto the messengers that brought it, with such a Christian speech as this: "I am not willing to keep such a matter of provocation by me!" Afterwards the same gentleman was compelled by the scarcity of provisions to send unto him that he would sell him some of his cattle; whereupon the governor prayed him to accept what he had sent for as a token of his good will; but the gentleman returned him this answer: "Sir, your overcoming of yourself hath overcome me"; and afterwards gave demonstration of it. The French have a saying that *Un honeste homme, est un homme mesle!*—a good man is a mixed man, and there hardly ever was a more sensible mixture of those two things, resolution and condescension, than in this good man. There was a time when the court of election, being for fear of tumult held at Cambridge, May 17, 1637, the sectarian part of the country, who had the year before gotten a governor more unto their mind, had a project now to have confounded the election, by demanding that the court would consider a petition then tendered before their proceeding thereunto. Mr. Winthrop saw that this was only a trick to throw all into confusion, by putting off the choice of the governor and assistants until the day should be over; and therefore

¹ He who is patient is prudent.

he did, with a strenuous resolution, procure a disappointment unto that mischievous and ruinous contrivance. Nevertheless, Mr. Winthrop himself being by the voice of the freemen in this exigence chosen the governor, and all the other party left out, that ill-affected party discovered the dirt and mire which remained with them, after the storm was over; particularly the serjeants, whose office 'twas to attend the governor, laid down their halberds; but such was the condescension of this governor as to take no present notice of this anger and contempt, but only order some of his own servants to take the halberds; and when the country manifested their deep resentments of the affront thus offered him, he prayed them to overlook it. But it was not long before a compensation was made for these things by the doubled respects which were from all parts paid unto him. Again, there was a time when the suppression of an antinomian and familistical faction, which extremely threatened the ruin of the country, was generally thought much owing unto this renowned man; and therefore when the friends of that faction could not wreak their displeasure on him with any *politic* vexations, they set themselves to do it by *ecclesiastical* ones. Accordingly when a sentence of banishment was passed on the ringleaders of those disturbances, who

—*Maria et Terras, Cælumque profundum,
Quippe ferant Rapidi, secum vertantque per Auras,*¹

many at the church of Boston, who were then that way too much inclined, most earnestly solicited the elders of that church, whereof the governor was a member, to call him forth as an offender, for passing of that sentence. The elders were unwilling to do any such thing; but the governor understanding the ferment among the people took that occasion to make a speech in the congregation to this effect:

Brethren: Understanding that some of you have desired that I should answer for an offense lately taken among you, had I been called upon so to do, I would, first, have advised with the ministers of the country whether the church had power to call in question the civil court; and I would, secondly, have advised with the rest of

the court, whether I might discover their counsels unto the church. But though I know that the reverend elders of this church, and some others, do very well apprehend that the church cannot inquire into the proceedings of the court; yet, for the satisfaction of the weaker, who do not apprehend it, I will declare my mind concerning it. If the church have any such power, they have it from the Lord Jesus Christ; but the Lord Jesus Christ hath disclaimed it, not only by practice, but also by precept, which we have in his gospel, Matthew, xx, 25, 26. It is true, indeed, that magistrates, as they are church-members, are accountable unto the church for their failings; but that is when they are out of their calling. When Uzziah would go offer incense in the temple, the officers of the church called him to an account, and withstood him; but when Asa put the prophet in prison the officers of the church did not call *him* to an account for *that*. If the magistrate shall in a *private way* wrong any man, the church may call him to an account for it; but if he be in pursuance of a course of justice, though the thing that he does be unjust, yet he is not accountable for it before the church. As for myself, I did nothing in the causes of any of the brethren but by the advice of the elders of the church. Moreover, in the oath which I have taken there is this clause: "In all cases wherein you are to give your vote, you shall do as in your judgment and conscience you shall see to be just, and for the public good." And I am satisfied it is most for the glory of God, and the public good, that there has been such a sentence passed; yea, those brethren are so divided from the rest of the country in their opinions and practices that it cannot stand with the public peace for them to continue with us; Abraham saw that Hagar and Ishmael must be sent away.

By such a speech he marvelously convinced, satisfied, and mollified the uneasy brethren of the church; *Sic cunctus Pelagice cecidit Frigor.*² And after a little patient waiting the differences all so wore away that the church, merely as a token of respect unto the governor when he had newly met with some losses in his estate, sent him a present of several hundreds of pounds. Once more there was a time when some active spirits among the deputies of the colony, by their endeavors not only to make themselves a Court of Judicature, but also to take away the negative by which the magistrates might check their votes, had like by over-driving to have run the whole government into something too democratical.

¹ Rack sea and land and sky with mingled wrath,
In the wild tumult of their stormy path.

² To silence sunk the thunder of the wave.

And if there were a town in Spain undermined by coney, another town in Thrace destroyed by moles, a third in Greece ranversed by frogs, a fourth in Germany subverted by rats, I must on this occasion add that there was a country in America like to be confounded by a swine. A certain stray sow being found, was claimed by two several persons with a claim so equally maintained on both sides that after six or seven years' hunting the business from one court unto another, it was brought at last into the General Court, where the final determination was, "that it was impossible to proceed unto any judgment in the case." However, in the debate of this matter, the negative of the upper-house upon the lower in that Court was brought upon the stage, and agitated with so hot a zeal that a little more, and all had been in the fire. In these agitations, the governor was informed that an offense had been taken by some eminent persons at certain passages in a discourse by him written thereabout; whereupon, with his usual condescendency, when he next came into the General Court he made a speech of this import:

I understand that some have taken offense at something that I have lately written; which offense I desire to remove now, and begin this year in a reconciled state with you all. As for the *matter* of my writing, I had the concurrence of my brethren; it is a point of judgment which is not at my own disposing. I have examined it over and over again by such light as God has given me, from the rules of religion, reason, and custom, and I see no cause to retract any thing of it: wherefore I must enjoy my liberty in that, as you do yourselves. But for the *manner*, this, and all that was blameworthy in it, was wholly my own; and whatsoever I might allege for my own justification therein before men, I waive it, as now setting myself before another Judgment seat. However, what I wrote was upon great provocation, and to vindicate myself and others from great aspersion; yet that was no sufficient warrant for me to allow any distemper of spirit in myself; and I doubt I have been too prodigal of my brethren's reputation; I might have maintained my cause without casting any blemish upon others when I made that my conclusion, "And now let religion and sound reason give judgment in the case"; it looked as if I arrogated too much unto myself, and too little to others. And when I made that profession, "That I would maintain what I wrote before all the world," though such

words might be modestly spoken, yet I perceive an unbecoming pride of my own heart breathing in them. For these failings, I ask pardon of God and man.

*Sic ait, et dicto citius Tumida Æquora placat,
Collectasque fugat Nubes, Solemque reducit.*¹

This acknowledging disposition in the governor made them all acknowledge that he was truly "a man of an excellent spirit." In fine, the victories of an Alexander, an Hannibal, or a Cæsar over *other men* were not so glorious as the victories of this great man over *himself*, which also at last proved victories over other men.

9. But the stormiest of all the trials that ever befell this gentleman was in the year 1645, when he was, in title, no more than Deputy-Governor of the colony. If the famous Cato were forty-four times called into judgment, but as often acquitted, let it not be wondered, and if our famous Winthrop were one time so. There happening certain seditious and mutinous practices in the town of Hingham, the Deputy-Governor, as legally as prudently, interposed his authority for the checking of them: whereupon there followed such an enchantment upon the minds of the deputies in the General Court, that upon a scandalous petition of the delinquents unto them, wherein a pretended invasion made upon the liberties of the people was complained of, the Deputy-Governor was most irregularly called forth unto an ignominious hearing before them in a vast assembly; whereto with a sagacious humilitude he consented, although he showed them how he might have refused it. The result of that hearing was that, notwithstanding the touchy jealousy of the people about their liberties lay at the bottom of all this prosecution, yet Mr. Winthrop was publicly acquitted, and the offenders were severally fined and censured. But Mr. Winthrop then resuming the place of Deputy-Governor on the bench, saw cause to speak unto the root of the matter after this manner:

I shall not now speak any thing about the past proceedings of this Court, or the persons therein concerned. Only I bless God that I see an issue of

¹ He speaks—but ere the word is said,
Each mounting billow droops its head,
And brightening clouds one moment stay
To pioneer returning day.

this troublesome affair. I am well satisfied that I was publicly accused, and that I am now publicly acquitted. But though I am justified before men, yet it may be the Lord hath seen so much amiss in my administrations as calls me to be humbled; and indeed for me to have been thus charged by men is itself a matter of humiliation, whereof I desire to make a right use before the Lord. If Miriam's father spit in her face, she is to be ashamed. But give me leave, before you go, to say something that may rectify the opinions of many people, from whence the distempers have risen that have lately prevailed upon the body of this people. The questions that have troubled the country have been about the authority of the magistracy, and the liberty of the people. It is *you* who have called *us* unto this office; but, being thus called, we have our authority from God; it is the ordinance of God, and it hath the image of God stamped upon it; and the contempt of it has been vindicated by God with terrible examples of his vengeance. I entreat you to consider that when you choose magistrates, you take them from among yourselves, "men subject unto like passions with yourselves." If you see *our* infirmities, reflect on *your own*, and you will not be so severe censors of *ours*. We count him a good servant who breaks not his covenant: the covenant between us and you is the oath you have taken of us, which is to this purpose, "that we shall govern you, and judge your causes, according to God's laws and our own, according to our best skill." As for our skill, you must run the hazard of it; and if there be an error, not in the will, but only in skill, it becomes you to bear it. Nor would I have you to mistake in the point of your own liberty. There is a liberty of corrupt nature, which is affected both by men and beasts, to do what they list; and this liberty is inconsistent with authority, impatient of all restraint; by this liberty *Sumus Omnes Deteriores*;¹ 'tis the grand enemy of truth and peace, and all the ordinances of God are bent against it. But there is a civil, a moral, a federal liberty, which is the proper end and object of authority; it is a liberty for that only which is *just* and *good*; for this liberty you are to stand with the hazard of your very lives; and whatsoever crosses it is not authority, but a distemper thereof. This liberty is maintained in a way of subjection to authority; and the authority set over you will in all administrations for your good be quietly submitted unto, by all but such as have a disposition to shake off the yoke and lose their true liberty, by their murmuring at the honor and power of authority.

The spell that was upon the eyes of the people being thus dissolved, their distorted

and enraged notions of things all vanished; and the people would not afterwards entrust the helm of the weather-beaten bark in any other hands but Mr. Winthrop's until he died.

10. Indeed, such was the *mixture* of distant qualities in him as to make a most admirable temper; and his having a certain greatness of soul, which rendered him grave, generous, courageous, resolved, well-applied, and every way a *gentleman* in his demeanor, did not hinder him from taking sometimes the old Roman's way to avoid confusions, namely, *Cedendo*;² or from discouraging some things which are agreeable enough to most that wear the name of gentlemen. Hereof I will give no instances, but only oppose two passages of his life.

In the year 1632 the governor, with his pastor, Mr. Wilson, and some other gentlemen, to settle a good understanding between the two colonies, traveled as far as Plymouth, more than forty miles, through an howling wilderness, no better accommodated in those early days than the princes that in Solomon's time saw "servants on horseback," or than *genus* and *species* in the old epigram, "going on foot." The difficulty of the walk, was abundantly compensated by the honorable, first reception, and then dismissal, which they found from the rulers of Plymouth; and by the good correspondence thus established between the new colonies, who were like the floating bottles wearing this motto: *Si Collidimur Frangimur*.³ But there were at this time in Plymouth two ministers, leavened so far with the humors of the rigid separation, that they insisted vehemently upon the unlawfulness of calling any unregenerate man by the name of "good-man such an one," until by their indiscreet urging of this whimsy the place began to be disquieted. The wiser people being troubled at these trifles, they took the opportunity of Governor Winthrop's being there to have the thing publicly propounded in the congregation; who in answer thereunto distinguished between a theological and a moral goodness; adding that when juries were first used in England it was usual for the crier, after the names of persons fit for that service were called over, to bid them all, "Attend, good

² Yielding the point.

³ If we come into collision we break.

¹ We are all the worse.

men and true"; whence it grew to be a civil custom in the English nation for neighbors living by one another to call one another "good-man such an one"; and it was pity now to make a stir about a civil custom so innocently introduced. And that speech of Mr. Winthrop's put a lasting stop to the little, idle, whimsical conceits, then beginning to grow obstreperous. Nevertheless, there was one civil custom used in (and in few but) the English nation, which this gentleman did endeavor to abolish in this country; and that was the usage of drinking to one another. For although by drinking to one another no more is meant than an act of courtesy, when one going to drink does invite another to do so too, for the same ends with himself; nevertheless the governor (not altogether unlike to Cleomenes, of whom 'tis reported by Plutarch, ἀκοντι οὐδείς ποτήριον προσέφερε, *Nolenti poculum nunquam præbuit*¹) considered the impertinency and insignificancy of this usage, as to any of those ends that are usually pretended for it; and that indeed it ordinarily served no ends at all, but only to provoke persons unto unseasonable and perhaps unreasonable drinking, and at last produce that abominable health-drinking which the fathers of old so severely rebuked in the Pagans, and which the Papists themselves do condemn, when their casuists pronounce it, *Peccatum mortale, provocare ad Æquales Calices, et Nefas Respondere*.² Wherefore in his own most hospitable house he left it off, not out of any silly or stingy fancy, but merely that by his example a greater temperance, with liberty of drinking, might be recommended, and sundry inconveniences in drinking avoided; and his example accordingly began to be much followed by the sober people in this country, as it now also begins among persons of the highest rank in the English nation itself; until an order of court came to be made against that ceremony in drinking, and then the old wont violently returned, with a *Nitimur in Vetitum*.³

II. Many were the afflictions of this righteous man! He lost much of his estate in a ship, and in an house, quickly after his

coming to New England, besides the prodigious expense of it in the difficulties of his first coming hither. Afterwards his assiduous application unto the public affairs (wherein *Ipse se non habuit, postquam Respublica eum Gubernatorem habere cepit*⁴) made him so much to neglect his own private interests that an unjust steward ran him £2,500 in debt before he was aware; for the payment whereof he was forced, many years before his decease, to sell the most of what he had left unto him in the country. Albeit, by the observable blessing of God upon the posterity of this liberal man, his children all of them came to fair estates, and lived in good fashion and credit. Moreover, he successively buried three wives; the first of which was the daughter and heiress of Mr. Forth, of Much-Stambridge in Essex, by whom he had "wisdom with an inheritance," and an excellent son. The second was the daughter of Mr. William Clopton, of London, who died with her child, within a very little while. The third was the daughter of the truly worshipful Sir John Tyndal, who made it her whole care to please, first God, and then her husband; and by whom he had four sons, which survived and honored their father. And unto all these, the addition of the distempers, ever now and then raised in the country, procured unto him a very singular share of trouble; yea, so hard was the measure which he found even among pious men, in the temptations of a wilderness, that when the thunder and lightning had smitten a wind-mill, whereof he was owner, some had such things in their heads as publicly to reproach this charitablest of men as if the voice of the Almighty had rebuked I know not what oppression, which they judged him guilty of; which things I would not have mentioned, but that the instances may fortify the expectations of my best readers for such afflictions.

12. He that had been for his attainments, as they said of the blessed Macarius, a παιδαριόγερων (an old man while a young one), and that had in his young days met with many of those ill days whereof he could say, he had "little pleasure in them"; now found old age in its infirmities advancing earlier upon him than it came upon his

¹ That he never urged the reluctant to drink.

² A deadly sin to challenge another to a drinking-match, and impious to accept such challenges.

³ Bias towards the forbidden indulgence.

⁴ He no longer belonged to himself, after the Republic had once made him her Chief Magistrate.

much longer-lived progenitors. While he was yet seven years off of that which we call "the grand climacterical," he felt the approaches of his dissolution; and finding he could say,

*Non Habitus, non ipse Color, non Gressus Euntis,
Non Species Eadem, quæ fuit ante, manet,*¹

he then wrote this account of himself: "Age now comes upon me, and infirmities therewithal, which makes me apprehend that the time of my departure out of this world is not far off. However, our times are all in the Lord's hand, so as we need not trouble our thoughts how long or short they may be, but how we may be found faithful when we are called for." But at last when *that year* came, he took a cold which turned into a fever, whereof he lay sick about a month, and in that sickness, as it hath been observed that there was allowed unto the serpent the "bruising of the heel," and accordingly at the heel or the close of our lives the old serpent will be nibbling more than ever in our lives before, and when the devil sees that we shall shortly be "where the wicked cease from troubling," that wicked one will trouble us more than ever; so this eminent saint now underwent sharp conflicts with the tempter, whose wrath grew great as the time to exert it grew short; and he was buffeted with the disconsolate thoughts of black and sore desertions, wherein he could use that sad representation of his own condition:

*Nuper eram Judex; Jam Judicor; Ante Tribunal
Subsistens paveo, Judicor ipse modo.*²

But it was not long before those clouds were dispelled, and he enjoyed in his holy soul the great consolations of God! While he thus lay ripening for heaven, he did out of obedience unto the ordinance of our Lord send for the elders of the church to pray with him; yea, they and the whole church fasted as well as prayed for him; and in that fast the venerable Cotton preached on Psalm xxxv, 13, 14: "When they were sick, I humbled myself with fasting; I behaved myself as though he had been my

friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourned for his mother": from whence I find him raising that observation, "The sickness of one that is to us as a friend, a brother, a mother, is a just occasion of deep humbling our souls with fasting and prayer"; and making this application:

Upon this occasion we are now to attend this duty for a governor who has been to us as a friend in his counsel for all things, and help for our bodies by physic, for our estates by law, and of whom there was no fear of his becoming an enemy, like the friends of David: a governor who has been unto us as a brother; not usurping authority over the church; often speaking his advice, and often contradicted, even by young men, and some of low degree; yet not replying, but offering satisfaction also when any supposed offenses have arisen; a governor who has been unto us as a mother, parent-like distributing his goods to brethren and neighbors at his first coming; and gently bearing our infirmities without taking notice of them.

Such a governor, after he had been more than ten several times by the people chosen their governor, was New England now to lose; who having, like Jacob, first left his counsel and blessing with his children gathered about his bed-side; and, like David, "served his generation by the will of God," he "gave up the ghost," and fell asleep on March 26, 1649. Having, like the dying Emperor Valentinian, this above all his other *victories* for his triumphs, *His overcoming of himself*.

The words of Josephus about Nehemiah, the governor of Israel, we will now use upon this governor of New England, as his

EPITAPH

Ἀνὴρ ἐγένετο χρηστὸς τὴν φύσιν, καὶ δίκαιος,
καὶ περὶ τοὺς ὁμοεθνεῖς φιλοτιμώτατος:
μνημεῖον αἰώνιων αὐτοῖς καταλιπὼν τὰ τῶν
Ἱεροσολύμων τεῖχῃ.

VIR FUIT INDOLE BONUS, AC JUSTUS:
ET POPULARIUM GLORIÆ AMANTISSIMUS;
QUIBUS ETERNUM RELIQUIT MONUMENTUM,
NOVANGLORUM MOENIA.³

¹ I am not what I was in form or face,
In healthful color or in vigorous pace.

² I once judged others, but now trembling stand
Before a dread tribunal, to be judged.

³ He was by nature a man at once benevolent and just; most zealous for the honor of his countrymen; and to them he left an imperishable monument—the walls of Jerusalem. (The Latin paraphrase substitutes New England for Jerusalem.)

BOOK VI

CHAPTER VII

THIAUMATOGRAPHIA PNEUMATICA;¹RELATING THE WONDERS OF THE INVISIBLE
WORLD IN PRETERNATURAL OCCURRENCES

THE Ninth Example.—*Hæc ipse miserrima vidi.*²—Four children of John Goodwin in Boston, which had enjoyed a religious education, and answered it with a towardly ingenuity—children, indeed, of an exemplary temper and carriage, and an example to all about them for piety, honesty, and industry—these were, in the year 1688, arrested by a very stupendous witchcraft. The eldest of the children, a daughter of about thirteen years old, saw cause to examine their laundress, the daughter of a scandalous Irish woman in the neighborhood, about some linen that was missing; and the woman bestowing very bad language on the child, in her daughter's defense, the child was immediately taken with odd fits, that carried in them something *diabolical*. It was not long before one of her sisters, with two of her brothers, were horribly taken with the like fits, which the most experienced physicians pronounced extraordinary and preternatural: and one thing that the more confirmed them in this opinion was that all the children were tormented still just the same part of their bodies, at the *same time*, though their pains flew like swift lightning from one part unto another, and they were kept so far asunder that they neither saw nor heard one another's complaints. At 9 or 10 o'clock at night they still had a release from their miseries, and slept all night pretty comfortably. But when the day came they were most miserably handled. Sometimes they were deaf, sometimes dumb, sometimes blind, and often all this at once. Their tongues would be drawn down their throats, and then pulled out upon their chins, to a prodigious length. Their mouths were forced open to such a wideness that their jaws went out of joint; and anon clap together again, with a force like that of a spring lock; and the like would happen to their shoulder-blades and their elbows, and

hand wrists, and several of their joints. They would lie in a benumbed condition, and be drawn together like those that are tied neck and heels; and presently be stretched out—yea, *drawn back* enormously.

They made piteous outcries that they were cut with knives, and struck with blows; and the plain prints of the wounds were seen upon them.

Their necks would be broken, so that their neck-bone would seem dissolved unto them that felt after it; and yet on the sudden it would become again so stiff that there was no stirring of their heads; yea, their heads would be twisted almost round; and if the main force of their friends at any time obstructed a dangerous motion which they seemed upon, they would roar exceedingly: and when devotions were performed with them their hearing was utterly taken from them. The ministers of Boston and Charlestown, keeping a day of prayer with fasting, on this occasion, at the troubled house, the youngest of the four children was immediately, happily, finally delivered from all its trouble. But the magistrates, being awakened by the noise of these grievous and horrid occurrences, examined the person who was under the suspicion of having employed these troublesome demons; and she gave such a wretched account of herself that she was committed unto the jailer's custody.

It was not long before this woman (whose name was Glover) was brought upon her trial; but then the court could have no answers from her but in the Irish, which was her native language, although she understood English very well, and had accustomed her whole family to none but English in her former conversation. When she pleaded to her indictment, it was with owning and bragging, rather than denial of her guilt. And the interpreters, by whom the communication between the bench and the bar was managed, were made sensible that a spell had been laid by another witch on this, to prevent her telling tales, by confining her to a language which 'twas hoped nobody would understand. The woman's house being searched, several images, or poppets, or babies, made of rags, and stuffed with goats' hair, were thence produced; and the vile woman confessed that her way to torment the objects of her malice was by wetting

¹ Wonders of the spirit-world.² I myself saw these most wretched things.

of her finger with her spittle, and stroking of those little images. The abused children were then present in the court, and the woman kept still stooping and shrinking, as one that was almost pressed unto death with a mighty weight upon her. But one of the images being brought unto her, she oddly and swiftly started up and snatched it into her hand: but she had no sooner snatched it than one of the children fell into sad fits before the whole assembly. The judges had their just apprehensions at this and, carefully causing a repetition of the experiment, they still found the same event of it, though the children saw not when the hand of the witch was laid upon the images. They asked her "whether she had any to stand by her?" She replied, "she had," and looking very pertly into the air, she added, "No, he's gone!" and she then acknowledged that she had one, who was her prince, with whom she mentioned I know not what communion. For which cause, the night after, she was heard expostulating with a devil for his thus deserting her, telling him that "because he had served her so basely and falsely, she had confessed all."

However, to make all clear, the court appointed five or six physicians to examine her very strictly, whether she was no way crazed in her intellectuals. Divers hours did they spend with her; and in all that while no discourse came from her but what was agreeable; particularly when they asked her what she thought would become of her soul, she replied, "You ask me a very solemn question, and I cannot tell what to say to it." She professed herself a Roman Catholic, and could recite her *Pater-noster* in Latin very readily; but there was one clause or two always too hard for her, whereof she said, "she could not repeat it, if she might have all the world."

In the upshot, the doctors returned her *compos mentis*, and sentence of death was passed upon her. Divers days passed between her being arraigned and condemned; and in this time one Hughes testified that her neighbor (called Howen), who was cruelly bewitched unto death about six years before, laid her death to the charge of this woman, and bid her (the said Hughes) to remember this, for within six years there would be occasion to mention it. One of

Hughes's children was presently taken ill in the same woeful manner that Goodwin's [was], and particularly the boy in the night cried out, that a *black person* with a *blue cap* in the room tortured him, and that they tried with their hand in the bed for to pull out his bowels. The mother of the boy went unto Glover the day following and asked her, "Why she tortured her poor lad at such a rate?" Glover answered, "Because of the wrong she had received from her"; and boasted "that she had come at him as a black person with a blue cap, and with her hand in the bed would have pulled his bowels out, but could not." Hughes denied that she had wronged her; and Glover, then desiring to see the boy, wished him well; upon which he had no more of his indispositions. After the condemnation of the woman I did myself give divers visits unto her, wherein she told me that she did use to be at meetings, where her prince with four more were present. She told me who the four were, and plainly said, "that her prince was the devil." When I told her *that* and *how* her prince had cheated her, she replied, "If it be so, I am sorry for that!" And when she declined answering some things that I asked her, she told me, "she would fain give me a full answer, but her spirits would not give her leave"; nor could she consent, she said, without their leave, "that I should pray for her." At her execution, she said the afflicted children should not be relieved by her death, for others besides she had a hand in their affliction. Accordingly the three children continued in their furnace as before; and it grew rather "seven times hotter" than it was. In their fits they cried out of "they" and "them" as the authors of all their miseries; but who that "they" and "them" were they were unable to declare: yet, at last, one of the children was able to discern their shapes and utter their names. A blow at the place where they saw the specter was always felt by the boy himself, in that part of his body that answered what might be stricken at: and this, though his back were turned, and the thing so done, that there could be no collusion in it. But as a blow at the specter always hurt him, so it always helped him too: for after the agonies to which a push or stab at that had put him were over (as in a minute or two they would

be) he would have a respite from his ails a considerable while, and the specter would be gone: yea, 'twas very credibly affirmed that a dangerous woman or two in the town received wounds by the blows thus given to their specters. The calamities of the children went on till they barked at one another like dogs, and then purred like so many cats. They would complain that they were in a red-hot oven, and sweat and pant as much as if they had been really so. Anon they would say that cold water was thrown on them, at which they would shiver very much.

They would complain of blows with great cudgels laid upon them, and we that stood by, though we could see no cudgels, yet could see the marks of the blows in red streaks upon their flesh.

They would complain of being roasted on an invisible spit; and lie and roll and groan as if it had been most sensibly so; and by and by shriek that knives were cutting of them. They would complain that their heads were nailed unto the floor, and it was beyond an ordinary strength to pull them from thence. They would be so limber sometimes, that it was judged every bone they had might be bent; and anon so stiff, that not a joint of them could be stirred.

One of them dreamed that something was growing within his skin, cross one of his ribs. An expert chirurgeon searched the place and found there a brass pin, which could not possibly come to lie there as it did without a prestigious and mysterious conveyance. Sometimes they would be very mad; and then they would climb over high fences; yea, they would fly like geese, and be carried with an incredible swiftness through the air, having but just their toes now and then upon the ground (sometimes not once in twenty foot), and their arms waved like the wings of a bird. They were often very near drowning or burning of themselves; and they often strangled themselves with their neck-cloths; but the providence of God still ordered the seasonable succors of them that looked after them. If there happened any mischief to be done where they were, as the dirtying of a garment, or spilling of a cup, or breaking of a glass, they would laugh excessively.

But upon the least reproof of their parents they were thrown into inexpressible anguish,

and roar[ed] as excessively. It usually took up abundance of time to dress them or undress them, through the strange postures into which they would be twisted, on purpose to hinder it; and yet the demons did not know our thoughts: for if we used a jargon, and said, "Untie his neck-cloth," but the party bidden understood our meaning to be, "Untie his shoe!" the *neck-cloth*, and not the *shoe*, has been by writhen postures rendered strangely inaccessible. In their beds they would be sometimes treated so that no clothes could for an hour or two be laid upon them. If they were bidden to do a needless thing (as to rub a clean table) they were able to do it unmolested; but if to do any useful thing (as to rub a dirty table) they would presently, with many torments, be made incapable.

They were sometimes hindered from eating their meals by having their teeth set, when any thing was carrying unto their mouths. If there were any discourse of God, or Christ, or any of the "things which are not seen, and are eternal," they would be cast into intolerable anguishes. All praying to God, and reading of his Word, would occasion 'em a very terrible vexation. Their own ears would then be stopped with their own hands, and they would roar, and howl, and shriek, and hollo, to drown the voice of the devotions; yea, if any one in the room took up a Bible, to look into it, though the children could see nothing of it, as being in a crowd of spectators, or having their faces another way, yet would they be in wonderful torments till the Bible was laid aside. Briefly, no good thing might then be endured near those children, which, while they were themselves, loved every good thing, in a measure that proclaimed in them the fear of God. If I said unto them, "Child, cry to the Lord Jesus Christ!" their teeth were instantly set. If I said, "Yet, child, look unto him!" their eyes were instantly pulled so far into their heads that we feared they could never have used them any more.

It was the eldest of these children that fell chiefly under my own observation: for I took her home to my own family, partly out of compassion to her parents, but chiefly that I might be a critical eye-witness of things that would enable me to confute the Sadducism of this debauched age. Here she

continued well for some days; applying herself to actions of industry and piety: But November 20, 1688, she cried out, "Ah, they have found me out!" and immediately she fell into her fits; wherein we often observed that she would cough up a ball as big as a small egg into the side of her wind-pipe, that would near choke her, till by stroking and by drinking it was again carried down.

When I prayed in the room, first her hands were with a strong, though not even force, clapped upon her ears: and when her hands were by our force pulled away she cried out, "They make such a noise, I cannot hear a word!" She complained that Glover's chain was upon her leg; and, assaying to go, her gait was exactly such as the chained witch had before she died. When her tortures passed over, still frolics would succeed, wherein she would continue hours—yea, days together—talking perhaps never wickedly, but always wittily beyond herself: and at certain provocations her torments would renew upon her, till we had left off to give them; yet she frequently told us in these frolics, "That if she might but steal or be drunk, she should be well immediately." She told us, "That she must go down to the bottom of our well" (and we had much ado to hinder it), "for they said there was plate there, and they would bring her up safely again."

We wondered at this; for she had never heard of any plate there, and we ourselves, who had newly bought the house, were ignorant of it; but the former owner of the house, just then coming in, told us, "There had been plate for many years lost at the bottom of the well." Moreover, one singular passion that frequently attended her was this:

An invisible chain would be clapped about her, and she, in much pain and fear, cry out when "they" began to put it on. Sometimes we could with our hands knock it off, as it began to be fastened: But ordinarily, when it was on, she would be pulled out of her seat with such violence toward the fire that it was as much as one or two of us could do to keep her out. Her eyes were not brought to be perpendicular to her feet when she rose out of her seat, as the mechanism of an human body requires in them that rise, but she was dragged *wholly* by other hands. And if we stamped on the hearth, just between her

and the fire, she screamed out, "That by jarring the chain, we hurt her."

I may add, that "they" put an unseen rope, with a cruel noose, about her neck, whereby she was choked until she was black in the face: and though it was got off before it had killed her, yet there were the red marks of it, and of a finger and a thumb near it, remaining to be seen for some while afterwards. Furthermore, not only upon her own looking into the Bible, but if any one else in the room did it, wholly unknown to her, she would fall into unsufferable torments.

A Quaker's book being brought her, she could quietly read whole pages of it; only the name of GOD and CHRIST she still skipped over, being unable to pronounce it, except sometimes stammering a minute or two or more upon it: and when we urged her to tell what the word was that she missed she would say, "I must not speak it; they say I must not. You know what it is: 'Tis G, and O, and D." But a book against Quakerism "they" would not allow her to meddle with. Such books as it might have been profitable and edifying for her to read, and especially her catechisms, if she did but offer to read a line in them she would be cast into hideous convulsions, and be tossed about the house like a football: But books of jests being shown her, she could read them well enough, and have cunning descants upon them. Popish books "they" would not hinder her from reading; but "they" would from reading books against Popery. A book which pretends to prove "that there are no witches," was easily read by her; only the name "devils" and "witches" might not be uttered. A book which proves "that there are witches," being exhibited unto her, she might not read it; and that expression in the story of Ann Cole, about running to the rock, always threw her into sore convulsions.

Divers of these trials were made by many witnesses: but I, considering that there might be a snare in it, put a seasonable stop to this fanciful business. Only I could not but be amazed at one thing: A certain Prayer-Book being brought her, she not only could read it very well, but also did read a large part of it over, calling it her Bible, and putting a more than ordinary respect upon it. If she were going into her tortures, at the tender of this book she would recover

herself to read it: Only when she came to the Lord's Prayer, now and then occurring in that book, she would have her eyes put out, so that she must turn over a new leaf, and then she could read again. Whereas also there are Scriptures in that book, she could read them there; but if any showed her the very same Scriptures in the Bible itself, she should sooner die than read them: and she was likewise made unable to read the Psalms in an ancient meter, which this Prayer-Book had in the same volume with it.

Besides these, there was another inexplicable thing in her condition. Ever now and then an invisible horse would be brought unto her by those whom she only called "them" and "her company," upon the approach of which, her eyes would be still closed up: For (said she) "they say I am a tell-tale, and therefore they will not let me see them." Hereupon she would give a spring as one mounting an horse and, settling herself in a riding posture, she would in her chair be agitated, as one sometimes ambling, sometimes trotting, and sometimes galloping very furiously. In these motions we could not perceive that she was moved by the stress of her feet upon the ground, for often she touched it not. When she had rode a minute or two, she would seem to be at a rendezvous with "them" that were "her company," and there she would maintain a discourse with them, asking them many questions concerning herself (we gave her none of ours) and have answers from them, which indeed none but herself perceived. Then would she return and inform us, "How 'they' did intend to handle her for a day or two afterwards," and some other things that she inquired. Her horse would sometimes throw her with much violence, especially if any one stabbed or cut the air under her. But she would briskly mount again, and perform her fantastic journeys, mostly in her chair; but sometimes also she would be carried from her chair, out of one room into another, very oddly, in the postures of a riding woman. At length, she pretended that her horse could ride up the stairs; and unto admiration she rode (that is, was tossed as one that rode) up the stairs. There then stood open the study of one belonging to the family; into which entering,

she stood immediately on her feet, and cried out, "They are gone! they are gone! They say that they cannot — God won't let 'em come here!" Adding a reason for it, which the owner of the study thought more kind than true. And she presently and perfectly came to herself, so that her whole discourse and carriage was altered unto the greatest "measure of sobriety"; and she sat reading of the Bible and other good books for a good part of the afternoon. Her affairs calling her anon to go down again, the demons were in a quarter of a minute as bad upon her as before; and her horse was waiting for her. Some, then, to see whether there had not been a fallacy in what had newly happened, resolved for to have her up unto the study, where she had been at ease before; but she was then so strangely distorted that it was an extreme difficulty to drag her upstairs. The demons would pull her out of the people's hands, and make her heavier than perhaps *three* of herself. With incredible toil (though she kept screaming, "They say I must not go in"), she was pulled in; where she was no sooner got but she could stand on her feet, and, with an altered note, say, "Now I am well."

She would be faint at first, and say, "She felt something to go out of her!" (the noises whereof we sometimes heard, like those of a mouse) but in a minute or two she could apply herself to devotion, and express herself with discretion, as well as ever in her life.

To satisfy some strangers, the experiment was divers times with the same success repeated; until my loathness to have any thing done like making a charm of a room, caused me to forbid the repetition of it. But enough of this. The ministers of Boston and Charlestown kept another day of prayer with fasting, for Goodwin's afflicted family: after which, the children had a sensible, but a gradual, abatement of their sorrows, until perfect ease was at length restored unto them. The young woman dwelt at my house the rest of the winter, having by a virtuous conversation made herself enough welcome to the family. But ere long I thought it convenient for me to entertain my congregation with a sermon on the "memorable providences" wherein these children had been concerned (afterwards published). When I

had begun to study my sermon, her tormentors again seized upon her, and managed her with a special design, as was plain, to disturb me in what I was then about.

In the worst of her extravagancies formerly, she was more dutiful to myself than I had reason to expect. But now her whole carriage to me was with a sauciness which I was not used anywhere to be treated withal. She would knock at my study door, affirming "That some below would be glad to see me," though there was none that asked for me. And when I chid her for telling what was false her answer was, "Mrs. Mather is always glad to see you!" She would call to me with numberless impertinences: And when I came down she would throw things at me, though none of them could ever hurt me: and she would hector me at a strange rate for something I was doing above, and threaten me with mischief and reproach, that should revenge it. Few tortures now attended her, but such as were provoked. Her frolics were numberless, if we may call them hers. I was in Latin telling some young gentlemen that, if I should bid her look to God, her eyes would be put out: upon which her eyes were presently served so. Perceiving that her troublers understood Latin, some trials were thereupon made whether they understood Greek and Hebrew, which it seems they also did; but the Indian languages they did seem not so well to understand.

When we went unto prayer the demons would throw her on the floor at the feet of him that prayed, where she would whistle, and sing, and yell, to drown the voice of prayer, and she would fetch blows with her fist, and kicks with her foot, at the man that prayed: But still her fist and foot would always recoil when they came within an inch or two of him, as if rebounding against a wall: and then she would beg hard of other people to strike him, which (you may be sure) not being done, she cried out, "He has wounded me in the head." But before the prayer was over she would be laid for dead, wholly senseless, and (unto appearance) breathless, with her belly swelled like a drum, and sometimes with croaking noises in her. Thus would she lie, most exactly with the stiffness and posture of one that had been two days laid out for dead. Once lying thus,

as he that was praying was alluding to the words of the Canaanites, and saying, "Lord, have mercy on a daughter vexed with a devil," there came a big but low voice from her, in which the spectators did not see her mouth to move, "There's two or three of us." When prayer was ended she would revive in a minute or two, and continue as frolicsome as before.

She thus continued until Saturday toward the evening; when she assayed with as nimble, and various, and pleasant an application as could easily be used, for to divert the young folks in the family from such exercises as it was proper to meet the Sabbath withal: But they refusing to be diverted, she fell fast asleep, and in two or three hours waked perfectly herself, weeping bitterly to remember what had befallen her. When Christmas arrived, both she at my house and her sister at home were by the demons made very drunk, though we are fully satisfied they had no strong drink to make them so; nor would they willingly have been so to have gained the world. When she began to feel herself drunk, she complained, "Oh! they say they will have me to keep Christmas with them. They will disgrace me when they can do nothing else." And immediately the ridiculous behaviors of one drunk were, with a wondrous exactness, represented in her speaking, and reeling, and spewing, and anon sleeping, till she was well again. At last the demons put her upon saying that she was dying, and the matter proved such that we feared she really *was*; for she lay, she tossed, she pulled, just like one dying, and urged hard for some one to die with her, seeming loath to die alone. She argued concerning death, with a paraphrase on the thirty-first Psalm, in strains that quite amazed us: And concluded that though she was "loath to die," yet, if God said she must, "she must!" Adding, that the Indians would quickly shed much blood in the country, and horrible tragedies would be acted in the land. Thus the vexations of the children ended.

But after a while they began again; and then one particular minister, taking a particular compassion on the family, set himself to serve them in the methods prescribed by our Lord Jesus Christ. Accordingly, the Lord being besought thrice in three days of

prayer, with fasting on this occasion, the family then saw their deliverance perfected; and the children afterwards, all of them, not only approved themselves devout Christians, but unto the praise of God reckoned these their afflictions among the special incentives of their Christianity.

The ministers of Boston and Charlestown

afterwards accompanied the printed narrative of these things with their attestation to the truth of it. And when it was reprinted at London the famous Mr. Baxter prefixed a preface unto it, wherein he says: "This great instance comes with such convincing evidence, that he must be a very obdurate Sadducee that will not believe it."

JOHN WISE (1652-1725)

John Wise was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts. He was graduated from Harvard College in 1673, and ten years later was ordained pastor of the Second Church of Ipswich—a post which he held until his death. He was a man of great height and remarkable strength, and it is said that in a wrestling-match with a challenger from Andover—the champion of that whole region—he almost instantly threw his opponent. He first attracted general notice in 1687, when he led his parishioners in resistance against the collection of a tax imposed by Sir Edmund Andros. For this he was, with five others, thrown into jail at Boston, and later fined. He afterwards wrote: “The evidence in the case, as to the substance of it, was that we too boldly endeavored to persuade ourselves that we were Englishmen and under privileges.” This spirit of independence was characteristic, and Wise later manifested it in two small books which deserve a better fate than their present neglect.

In 1705 there was published at Boston a set of *Questions and Proposals* addressed to the ministers and churches of New England. The pamphlet bore no signatures, but was understood to be the work of Increase and Cotton Mather and a number of ministers friendly to them. It was, in fact, one of the attempts of the Mathers to preserve the early Puritanism of the colony; in this instance an attempt to insure conservatism in the New England churches by doing away with their congregational form of government and their independence of each other, and by instituting a centralized control which would concentrate authority in the hands of the clergy. The pamphlet was worded cautiously and shrewdly to disguise its purpose, but this was soon grasped by Wise, who set himself the task of answering it. In 1710 he published *The Churches' Quarrel Espoused*, in which he took up the *Questions and Proposals* one by one and riddled them with such great effect that the scheme they suggested was never again brought forward. This book he followed in 1717 with *A Vindication of the Government of New England Churches*, from which two selections are here reprinted. In both books Wise, in defending congregational church-government, stands uncompromisingly for the cause of freedom, and his words have a significance not bounded by their immediate occasion. Protestantism necessarily has stood for individual freedom, because, repudiating the authority of tradition, it could only fall back on “private judgment” in interpreting the divine revelation. The early New England Puritans, following Calvin, sought to create a new infallible church, but, being Protestants, they had no basis on which to rest it save the consent of its members. When this inevitably began to fail them they helplessly turned towards autocratic control. At this juncture John Wise proved himself a true Protestant, conscious of the real nature and bearings of his religion, and eager to oppose its enemies from within. In so doing, he also remarkably and vividly illustrated the fact that the principles of the Reformation have a political as well as a religious significance.

M. C. Tyler (*History of American Literature*, 1676-1765) writes: “Upon the whole, no other American author of the colonial time is the equal of John Wise in the union of great breadth and power of thought with great splendor of style. . . . Perhaps even greater than the distinction he deserves for his brilliant writing, is the distinction due him for the prophetic clearness, the courage, and the inapproachable ability with which, in that unfriendly time, he, almost alone among Americans, avowed his belief in civil governments founded on the idea of human equality. He was the first great American democrat. In the earlier years of the eighteenth century, he announced the political ideas that, fifty years later, took immortal form under the pen of Thomas Jefferson.” Wise is not a “correct” writer, but he is forceful and vivid, and on the whole he deserves the high praise which Tyler has given him for the manner as well as the content of his work. The earlier of his two books follows a controversial method not uncommon in his day and in the preceding century, but one which is almost invariably fatal to the interest of later generations. This is a pity, for there are memorable sentences buried in it. For instance: “Right reason, that great oracle in human affairs, is the soul of man so formed and endowed by creation, with a certain sagacity or acumen, . . . whereby man’s intellect is enabled to take up (*pro Medulo*, or in a degree) the true idea or perception of things agreeable with and according to their natures.” And again: “Order is both the beauty and safety of the universe; take away the decorum whereby the whole hangs together, the great frame of nature is unpinned, and drops piece from piece; and out of a beautiful structure we have a chaos.” This is finely said, and it is fortunate that Wise’s method of procedure in his *Vindication* was such that time has built but the slightest of barriers between it and readers of the present day.

A VINDICATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW ENGLAND CHURCHES

DRAWN FROM ANTIQUITY; THE LIGHT OF NATURE; HOLY SCRIPTURE; ITS NOBLE NATURE; AND FROM THE DIGNITY DIVINE PROVIDENCE HAS PUT UPON IT.¹

* * * THUS ends my first demonstration in a fair parallel drawn up between the holiest churches that ever were in the world,² and the churches of *New England*; and however they may differ in their morals, they are very harmonious in their order. And considering that the former cannot rationally be thought but they derived their constitution from the apostles, and so it must needs be of a divine original: and if so then these in *New England* who are fashioned so exactly like them, must needs be of the same pedigree, *etc.* But I shall waive all improvement of the premises, and leave the whole to the serious and judicious thoughts of every impartial reader, not doubting but he will find sufficient evidence of the divine original of these churches in what has been said. And that I might now obtain a *supersedeas*, and forbear adding any further plea in their defense. But yet to gratify my own curiosity, and divert the reader, I shall proceed to inquire into the natural reason of the constitution of those churches we have been comparing. In this question I shall go out of the common road, and take into an unusual and unbeaten path; wherein possibly I may fall into some thickets now and then, and be somewhat entangled; yet I hope the candid reader will afford some succor by his tender clemency, and his friendly interpretation of my good intentions. For though I may in so devious a way miss of some part of the truth, yet I have a great presumption that I may open a road to men

¹ That Wise probably influenced the leaders of the Revolution is evidenced by the fact that his two books were reprinted in 1772. The passages here reproduced are taken from what is thought to be a copy of the earlier of two editions published in that year. It was impossible to secure a copy of the edition of 1717. Spelling and punctuation have been altered.

² *I. e.*, those of the earliest Christian centuries. In the preceding portion of the book, here omitted, Wise vindicates the congregational form of church government by showing its agreement with that which obtained in the earliest Christian churches.

of greater learning, and a deeper search, that will lead to a rich treasure of knowledge, and wisdom, for ease and relief under those many questions and crabbed debates concerning church-government in the Christian world; for to me it seems most apparent that under Christ the reason of the constitution of these and the primitive churches is really and truly owing to the original state and liberty of mankind, and founded peculiarly in the light of nature. And thus I come to the

SECOND DEMONSTRATION

in defense of our *Platform*,³ which is founded in the Light of Nature.

CHAP. I

THE divine establishment in providence of the forenamed churches in their order is apparently the royal assent of the supreme monarch of the churches to the grave decisions of reason in favor of man's natural state of being, and original freedom. For if we should make a new survey of the constitution before named under the brightest light of nature, there is no greater example of natural wisdom in any settlement on earth—for the present and future security of human beings in all that is most valuable and grand—than in this. That it seems to me as though wise and provident nature by the dictates of right reason, excited by the moving suggestions of humanity, and awed with the just demands of natural liberty, equity, equality, and principles of self-preservation, originally drew up the scheme, and then obtained the royal approbation. And certainly it is agreeable that we attribute it to God, whether we receive it nextly from reason or revelation, for that each is equally an emanation of his wisdom (*Proverbs*, 20. 27): "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly." There be many larger volumes in this dark recess called the belly to be read by that candle God has lighted up. And I am very well assured the forenamed constitution is a transcript out of some of their

³ The *Platform of Church-Discipline Gathered out of the Word of God, and agreed upon by the Elders and Messengers of the Churches assembled in the Synod at Cambridge in New England: . . . the Eighth Month, Anno 1648.*

pages (*John*, 1. 4, 9): "And the life was the light of men, which lighteth every man which cometh into the world." This admirable effect of Christ's creating power in hanging out so many lights to guide man through a dark world, is as applicable to the light of reason, as to that of revelation. For that the light of reason as a law and rule of right is an effect of Christ's goodness, care, and creating power, as well as of revelation; though revelation is nature's law in a fairer and brighter edition. This is granted by the *London* ministers (p. 8. C. 3): "That, that which is evident by, and consonant to the true light of nature, or natural reason, is to be accounted, *Jure Divino*, in matters of religion." But in the further and more distinct management of this plea, I shall,

1. Lay before the reader several principles [of] natural knowledge.
2. Apply or improve them in ecclesiastical affairs.
3. Infer from the premises, a demonstration that these churches, if not properly formed, yet are fairly established in their present order by the law of nature.

CHAP. II

I SHALL disclose several principles of natural knowledge, plainly discovering the law of nature, or the true sentiments of natural reason, with respect to man's being and government. And in this essay I shall peculiarly confine the discourse to two heads, *viz.*:

1. Of the natural (in distinction to the civil), and then,
2. Of the civil being of man. And I shall principally take Baron Puffendorff¹ for my chief guide and spokesman.

I shall consider man in a state of natural being, as a free-born subject under the crown of heaven, and owing homage to none but God himself. It is certain civil government

¹ Samuel von Pufendorf (1632–1694), German writer on jurisprudence and history, was a professor at Heidelberg and at Lund. His chief work was *De Jure Naturæ et Gentium* (On the Law of Nature and Nations), 1672. This was one of the sources of Locke's conception of the Law of Nature. Locke also used the first book of Richard Hooker's treatise *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, and so too, it would appear, did Wise. It has not been suggested that Wise knew Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*.

in general is a very admirable result of providence, and an incomparable benefit to mankind, yet must needs be acknowledged to be the effect of human free-compacts and not of divine institution; it is the produce of man's reason, of human and rational combinations, and not from any direct orders of infinite wisdom, in any positive law wherein is drawn up this or that scheme of civil government. Government (says the Lord Warrington) is necessary . . . in that no society of men can subsist without it; and that particular form of government is necessary which best suits the temper and inclination of a people. Nothing can be God's ordinance but what he has particularly declared to be such; there is no particular form of civil government described in God's word, neither does nature prompt it. The government of the *Jews* was changed five times. Government is not formed by nature, as other births or productions; if it were, it would be the same in all countries, because nature keeps the same method, in the same thing, in all climates. If a commonwealth be changed into a monarchy, is it nature that forms and brings forth the monarch? Or if a royal family be wholly extinct (as in Noah's case, being not heir apparent from descent from Adam), is it nature that must go to work (with the king's bees, who themselves alone preserve the royal race in that empire) to breed a monarch before the people can have a king, or a government sent over them? And thus we must leave kings to resolve which is their best title to their crowns, whether natural right or the constitution of government settled by human compacts, under the direction and conduct of reason.

But to proceed under the head of a state of natural being, I shall more distinctly explain the state of human nature in its original capacity, as man is placed on earth by his Maker, and clothed with many investitures and immunities which properly belong to man separately considered. As,

The prime immunity in man's state is that he is most properly the subject of the law of nature. He is the favorite animal on earth; in that this part of God's image, *viz.*, reason, is congenate with his nature, wherein by a law immutable, instamped upon his frame, God has provided a rule for men in

all their actions, obliging each one to the performance of that which is right, not only as to justice, but likewise as to all other moral virtues, the which is nothing but the dictate of right reason founded in the soul of man. (Molloy, *De Mao, Præf.*) That which is to be drawn from man's reason, flowing from the true current of that faculty, when unperverted, may be said to be the law of nature, on which account the Holy Scriptures declare it written on men's hearts. For being endowed with a soul, you may know from yourself how and what you ought to act (*Romans*, 2. 14): "These having not a law, are a law to themselves." So that the meaning is, when we acknowledge the law of nature to be the dictate of right reason, we must mean that the understanding of man is endowed with such a power as to be able, from the contemplation of human condition, to discover a necessity of living agreeably with this law, and likewise to find out some principle by which the precepts of it may be clearly and solidly demonstrated. The way to discover the law of nature in our own state is by a narrow watch and accurate contemplation of our natural condition and propensions. Others say this is the way to find out the law of nature; *scil.*, if a man any ways doubts whether what he is going to do to another man be agreeable to the law of nature, then let him suppose himself to be in that other man's room, and by this rule effectually executed. A man must be a very dull scholar to nature not to make proficiency in the knowledge of her laws. But more particularly in pursuing our condition for the discovery of the law of nature, this is very obvious to view, *viz.*:

1. A principle of self-love and self-preservation is very predominant in every man's being.

2. A sociable disposition.

3. An affection or love to mankind in general.

And, to give such sentiments the force of a law, we must suppose a God who takes care of all mankind, and has thus obliged each one, as a subject of higher principles of being than mere instincts. For that all law, properly considered, supposes a capable subject and a superior power, and the law of God which is binding, is published by the dictates of right reason as other ways.

Therefore, says Plutarch, "to follow God and obey reason is the same thing." But, moreover, that God has established the law of nature as the general rule of government is further illustrable from the many sanctions in providence, and from the peace and guilt of conscience in them that either obey or violate the law of nature. But, moreover, the foundation of the law of nature with relation to government may be thus discovered, *scil.*: Man is a creature extremely desirous of his own preservation; of himself he is plainly exposed to many wants, unable to secure his own safety and maintenance without assistance of his fellows; and he is also able of returning kindness by the furtherance of mutual good; but yet man is often found to be malicious, insolent, and easily provoked, and as powerful in effecting mischief as he is ready in designing it. Now that such a creature may be preserved, it is necessary that he be sociable; that is, that he be capable and disposed to unite himself to those of his own species, and to regulate himself towards them, that they may have no fair reason to do him harm, but rather incline to promote his interests and secure his rights and concerns. This, then, is a fundamental law of nature, that every man, as far as in him lies, do maintain a sociableness with others, agreeable with the main end and disposition of human nature in general. For this is very apparent, that reason and society render man the most potent of all creatures. And finally, from the principles of sociableness it follows as a fundamental law of nature, that man is not so wedded to his own interest but that he can make the common good the mark of his aim. And hence he becomes capacitated to enter into a civil state by the law of nature; for without this property in nature, *viz.*, Sociableness, which is for cementing of parts, every government would soon molder and dissolve.

The second great immunity of man is an original liberty instamped upon his rational nature. He that intrudes upon this liberty violates the law of nature. In this discourse I shall waive the consideration of man's moral turpitude, but shall view him physically as a creature which God has made and furnished essentially with many ennobling immunities, which render him the most

august animal in the world; and still, whatever has happened since his creation, he remains at the upper end of nature, and as such is a creature of a very noble character. For as to his dominion, the whole frame of the lower part of the universe is devoted to his use and at his command; and his liberty under the conduct of right reason is equal with his trust. Which liberty may be briefly considered, internally as to his mind, and externally as to his person.

The native liberty of man's nature implies a faculty of doing or omitting things according to the direction of his judgment. But in a more special meaning this liberty does not consist in a loose and ungovernable freedom or in an unbounded license of acting. Such license is disagreeing with the condition and dignity of man, and would make man of a lower and meaner constitution than brute creatures, who in all their liberties are kept under a better and more rational government by their instincts. Therefore, as Plutarch says, "Those persons only who live in obedience to reason are worthy to be accounted free; they alone live as they will who have learned what they ought to will." So that the true natural liberty of man, such as really and truly agrees to him, must be understood, as he is guided and restrained by the ties of reason and laws of nature. All the rest is brutal, if not worse.

Man's external personal, natural liberty, antecedent to all human parts or alliances, must also be considered. And so every man must be conceived to be perfectly in his own power and disposal, and not to be controlled by the authority of any other. And thus every man must be acknowledged equal to every man, since all subjection and all command are equally banished on both sides; and, considering all men thus at liberty, every man has a prerogative to judge for himself, *viz.*, what shall be most for his behoof, happiness, and well-being.

The third capital immunity belonging to man's nature is an equality amongst men, which is not to be denied by the law of nature, till man has resigned himself with all his rights for the sake of a civil state, and then his personal liberty and equality is to be cherished and preserved to the highest degree as will consist with all just distinctions amongst men of honor, and shall be agreeable

with the public good. For man has a high valuation of himself, and the passion seems to lay its first foundation, not in pride, but really in the high and admirable frame and constitution of human nature. The word man, says my author, is thought to carry somewhat of dignity in its sound; and we commonly make use of this as the most proper and prevailing argument against a rude insulter, *viz.*, "I am not a beast or a dog, but am a man as well as yourself." Since, then, human nature agrees equally with all persons, and since no one can live a sociable life with another that does not own or respect him as a man, it follows, as a command of the law of nature, that every man esteem and treat another as one who is naturally his equal, or who is a man as well as he. There be many popular or plausible reasons that greatly illustrate this equality, *viz.*, that we all derive our being from one stock, the same common father of [the] human race. On this consideration Boethius checks the pride of the insulting nobility.

*Quid genus et proavos strepitis? Si primordia vestra
Auctoremque deum spectes, nullus degener exstat,
Ni vitiis peiora fovens proprium deserat ortum.*¹

Fondly our first descent we boast;
If whence at first our breath we drew,
The common springs of life we view,
The airy notion soon is lost.
The Almighty made us equal all;
But he that slavishly complies
To do the drudgery of vice
Denies his high original.

And also that our bodies are composed of matter, frail, brittle, and liable to be destroyed by thousand accidents; we all owe our existence to the same method of propagation. The noblest mortal in his entrance on the stage of life is not distinguished by any pomp, or of passage from the lowest of mankind, and our life hastens to the same general mark. Death observes no ceremony, but knocks as loud at the barriers of the court as at the door of the cottage. This equality being admitted bears a very great force in maintaining peace and friendship amongst men. For that he who would use the assistance of others in promoting his own advantage ought as freely to be at their service

¹ *Consolat. Philosoph.*, Bk. III, vi. Quoted inexactly by Wise, but corrected above.

when they want his help on the like occasions. "One good turn requires another," is the common proverb; for otherwise he must need esteem others unequal to himself who constantly demands their aid and as constantly denies his own. And whoever is of this insolent temper cannot but highly displease those about him, and soon give occasion of the breach of the common peace. It was a manly reproof which Caractacus¹ gave the *Romans*: *Num si vos omnibus, etc.* What! because you desire to be masters of all men, does it follow therefore that all men should desire to be your slaves, for that it is a command of nature's law that no man that has not obtained a particular and special right shall arrogate to himself a larger share than his fellows, but shall admit others to equal privileges with himself. So that the principle of equality in a natural state is peculiarly transgressed by pride, which is, when a man without sufficient reason prefers himself to others. And though as Hensius² paraphrases upon Aristotle's *Politics* to this purpose, *viz.*: "Nothing is more suitable to nature than that those who excel in understanding and prudence should rule and control those who are less happy in those advantages," *etc.* Yet we must note that there is room for an answer, *scil.*, that it would be the greatest absurdity to believe that nature actually invests the wise with a sovereignty over the weak, or with a right of forcing them against their wills; for that no sovereignty can be established, unless some human deed or covenant precede. Nor does natural fitness for government make a man presently governor over another; for that, as Ulpian³ says, "*by a natural right all men are born free.*" And nature having set all men upon a level and made them equals, no servitude or subjection can be conceived without inequality; and this cannot be made without usurpation or force in others, or voluntary compliance in those who resign their freedom and give away their degree of natural being. And thus we come,

To consider man in a civil state of being, wherein we shall observe the great difference between a natural and political state; for in the latter state many great disproportions appear, or at least many obvious distinctions are soon made amongst men, which doctrine is to be laid open under a few heads.

Every man, considered in a natural state, must be allowed to be free and at his own dispose; yet to suit man's inclinations to society, and in a peculiar manner to gratify the necessity he is in of public rule and order, he is impelled to enter into a civil community, and divests himself of his natural freedom, and puts himself under government, which, amongst other things, comprehends the power of life and death over him, together with authority to enjoin him some things to which he has an utter aversion, and to prohibit him other things for which he may have as strong an inclination, so that he may be often, under this authority, obliged to sacrifice his private for the public good; so that, though man is inclined to society, yet he is driven to a combination by great necessity. For that the true and leading cause of forming governments and yielding up natural liberty, and throwing man's equality into a common pile to be new cast by the rules of fellowship, was really and truly to guard themselves against the injuries men were liable to interchangeably; for none so good to man as man, and yet none a greater enemy. So that,

The first human subject and original of civil power is the people. For as they have a power every man over himself in a natural state, so upon a combination they can and do bequeath this power unto others, and settle it according as their united discretion shall determine. For that this is very plain, that when the subject of sovereign power is quite extinct, that power returns to the people again. And when they are free, they may set up what species of government they please; or, if they rather incline to it, they may subside into a state of natural being, if it be plainly for the best. In the Eastern country of the Mogul we have some resemblance of the case, for upon the death of an absolute monarch they live so many days without a civil head; but in that interregnum those who survive the vacancy

¹ Flourished (in England) A.D. 50. He resisted the Romans for about nine years, but was finally delivered into their hands and taken to Rome.

² Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655). Dutch classical philologist.

³ Roman jurist, flourished A.D. 200.

are glad to get into a civil state again, and usually they are in a very bloody condition when they return under the covert of a new monarch. This project is to endear the people to a tyranny, from the experience they have so lately had of an anarchy.

The formal reason of government is the will of a community yielded up and surrendered to some other subject, either of one particular person, or more, conveyed in the following manner.

Let us conceive in our mind a multitude of men, all naturally free and equal, going about voluntarily to erect themselves into a new commonwealth. Now their condition being such, to bring themselves into a politic body they must needs enter into divers covenants.

They must interchangeably each man covenant to join in one lasting society, that they may be capable to concert the measures of their safety by a public vote.

A vote or decree must then nextly pass to set up some particular species of government over them. And if they are joined in their first compact upon absolute terms to stand to the decision of the first vote concerning the species of government, then all are bound by the majority to acquiesce in that particular form thereby settled, though their own private opinion incline them to some other model.

After a decree has specified the particular form of government, then there will be need of a new covenant, whereby those on whom sovereignty is conferred engage to take care of the common peace and welfare; and the subjects, on the other hand, to yield them faithful obedience. In which covenant is included that submission and union of wills by which a state may be conceived to be but one person. So that the most proper definition of a civil state is this, *viz.*: A civil state is a compound moral person, whose will (united by those covenants before passed) is the will of all, to the end it may use and apply the strength and riches of private persons towards maintaining the common peace, security, and well-being of all, which may be conceived as though the whole state was now become but one man; in which the aforesaid covenants may be supposed under God's providence to be the divine fiat pronounced by God: "Let us make man."

And by way of resemblance the aforesaid being may be thus anatomized:

1. The sovereign power is the soul infused, giving life and motion to the whole body.

2. Subordinate officers are the joints by which the body moves.

3. Wealth and riches are the strength.

4. Equity and laws are the reason.

5. Councilors the memory.

6. *Salus Populi*, or the happiness of the people, is the end of its being, or main business to be attended and done.

7. Concord amongst the members and all estates is the health.

8. Sedition is sickness, and civil war death.

The parts of sovereignty may be considered so,

1. As it prescribes the rule of action, it is rightly termed legislative power.

2. As it determines the controversies of subjects by the standard of those rules, so is it justly termed judiciary power.

3. As it arms the subjects against foreigners or forbids hostility, so it's called the power of peace and war.

4. As it takes in ministers for the discharge of business, so it is called the right of appointing magistrates. So that all great officers and public servants must needs owe their original to the creating power of sovereignty; so that those whose right it is to create may dissolve the being of those who are created, unless they cast them into an immortal frame, and yet must needs be dissoluble if they justly forfeit their being to their creators.

5. The chief end of civil communities is that men thus conjoined may be secured against the injuries they are liable to from their own kind. For, if every man could secure himself singly, it would be great folly for him to renounce his natural liberty, in which every man is his own king and protector.

6. The sovereign authority, besides that it inheres in every state as in a common and general subject, so farther according as it resides in some one person, or in a council (consisting of some select persons, or of all the members of a community) as in a proper and particular subject, so it produceth different forms of commonwealths, *viz.*, such as are either simple and regular, or mixed.

The forms of a regular state are three only, which forms arise from the proper and particular subject in which the supreme power resides. As,

A democracy, which is when the sovereign power is lodged in a council consisting of all the members, and where every member has the privilege of a vote. This form of government appears in the greatest part of the world to have been the most ancient. For that reason seems to show it to be most probable that, when men (being originally in a condition of natural freedom and equality) had thoughts of joining in a civil body, would without question be inclined to administer their common affairs by their common judgment, and so must necessarily, to gratify that inclination, establish a democracy. Neither can it be rationally imagined that fathers of families, being yet free and independent, should in a moment or little time take off their long delight in governing their own affairs, and devolve all upon some single sovereign commander; for that it seems to have been thought more equitable that what belonged to all should be managed by all, when all had entered by compact into one community. The original of our government, says Plato (speaking of the Athenian commonwealth), was taken from the equality of our race. Other states there are composed of different blood, and of unequal lines, the consequences of which are disproportionable sovereignty, tyrannical or oligarchical sway, under which men live in such a manner as to esteem themselves partly lords and partly slaves to each other. But we and our countrymen, being all born brethren of the same mother, do not look upon ourselves to stand under so hard a relation as that of lords and slaves; but the parity of our descent inclines us to keep up the like parity by our laws, and to yield the precedency to nothing but to superior virtue and wisdom. And, moreover, it seems very manifest that most civil communities arose at first from the union of families that were nearly allied in race and blood; and though ancient story makes frequent mention of kings, yet it appears that most of them were such that had an influence rather in persuading than in any power of commanding. So Justin describes that kind of government as the most primi-

tive, which Aristotle styles an heroic kingdom, *viz.*, such as is no ways inconsistent with a democratical state. (*De Princip. Reru.* 1, L. 1, C.)

A democracy is then erected, when a number of free persons do assemble together in order to enter into a covenant for uniting themselves in a body; and such a preparative assembly hath some appearance already of a democracy; it is a democracy in embryo, properly in this respect, that every man hath the privilege freely to deliver his opinion concerning the common affairs. Yet he who dissents from the vote of the majority is not in the least obliged by what they determine, till by a second covenant a popular form be actually established; for not before then can we call it a democratical government, *viz.*, till the right of determining all matters relating to the public safety is actually placed in a general assembly of the whole people; or by their own compact and mutual agreement determine themselves the proper subject for the exercise of sovereign power. And to complete this state, and render it capable to exert its power to answer the end of a civil state, these conditions are necessary:

1. That a certain time and place be assigned for assembling.
2. That when the assembly be orderly met, as to time and place, that then the vote of the majority must pass for the vote of the whole body.
3. That magistrates be appointed to exercise the authority of the whole for the better dispatch of business of every day's occurrence, who also may, with more mature diligence, search into more important affairs; and if in case any thing happens of greater consequence, may report it to the assembly; and be peculiarly serviceable in putting all public decrees into execution. Because a large body of people is almost useless in respect of the last service, and of many others as to the more particular application and exercise of power. Therefore it is most agreeable with the law of nature that they institute their officers to act in their name and stead.

The second species of regular government is an aristocracy, and this is said then to be constituted when the people or assembly, united by a first covenant, and having

thereby cast themselves into the first rudiments of a state, do then by common decree devolve the sovereign power on a council consisting of some select members; and these, having accepted of the designation, are then properly invested with sovereign command; and then an aristocracy is formed.

The third species of a regular government is a monarchy, which is settled when the sovereign power is conferred on some one worthy person. It differs from the former, because a monarch who is but one person in natural, as well as in moral, account, and so is furnished with an immediate power of exercising sovereign command in all instances of government; but the forenamed must needs have particular time and place assigned; but the power and authority is equal in each.

Mixed governments, which are various and of divers kinds (not now to be enumerated), yet possibly the fairest in the world is that which has a regular monarchy, settled upon a noble democracy as its basis; and each part of the government is so adjusted by pacts and laws that render the whole constitution an elysium. It is said of the British empire that it is such a monarchy as that, by the necessary subordinate concurrence of the lords and commons in the making and repealing all statutes or acts of parliament, it hath the main advantages of an aristocracy and of a democracy, and yet free from the disadvantages and evils of either. It is such a monarchy as, by most admirable temperament, affords very much to the industry, liberty, and happiness of the subject, and reserves enough for the majesty and prerogative of any king who will own his people as subjects, not as slaves. It is a kingdom that, of all the kingdoms of the world, is most like to the kingdom of Jesus Christ, whose yoke is easy, and burden light. (*Present State of England*, 1st part, 64th p.) * * *

I shall now make some improvement of the foregoing principles of civil knowledge, fairly deduced from the law of nature. And I shall peculiarly refer to ecclesiastical affairs, whereby we may in probability discover more clearly the kind and something of the nature of that government which Christ has placed in and over his church.

The learned debates of men, and Divine Writ sometimes, seem to cast such a grandeur on the church and its officers, as though they stood in peerage with civil empire. (*Revelation*, 1. 6, 9. *I Peter*, 2. 9. *I Corinthians*, 4. 8. *I Corinthians*, 12. 28. *II Corinthians*, 10. 8.) But all such expressions must needs be other ways interpreted. God is the highest cause that acts by council; and it must needs be altogether repugnant to think he should forecast the state of this world by no better a scheme than to order two sovereign powers in the same grand community, which would be to set the universe into a flame: That should such an error happen, one must needs be forthwith extinguished, to bring the frame of nature into a just temper and keep it out of harm's way. But, to proceed with my purpose, I shall go back upon the civil scheme and inquire after two things: First of rebellion against government in general; and then in special whether any of the aforesaid species of regular government can be predicable of the church of God on earth.

In general concerning rebellion against government, for particular subjects to break in upon regular communities duly established is from the premises to violate the law of nature, and is a high usurpation upon the first grand immunities of mankind. Such rebels in states, and usurpers in churches, affront the world with a presumption that the best of the brotherhood are a company of fools, and that themselves have fairly monopolized all the reason of human nature. Yea, they take upon them the boldness to assume a prerogative of trampling under foot the natural original equality and liberty of their fellows; for to push the proprietors of settlements out of possession of their old, and impose new schemes upon them, is virtually to declare them in a state of vassalage, or that they were born so; and therefore, will the usurper be so gracious as to insure them they shall not be sold at the next market, they must esteem it a favor; for by this time all the original prerogatives of man's nature are intentionally a victim, smoking to satiate the usurper's ambition. It is a very tart observation on an *English* monarch, and, where it may by proportion be applied to a subject, must needs sink very deep and serve

for evidence under this head. It is in the secret history of King Charles II and King James II, p. 2, says my author: Where the constitution of a nation is such that the laws of the land are the measures both of the sovereign's commands and the obedience of the subjects, whereby it is provided that as the one are not to invade what by concessions and stipulations is granted to the ruler, so the other is not to deprive them of their lawful and determined rights and liberties, then the prince who strives to subvert the fundamental laws of the society is the traitor and the rebel, and not the people, who endeavor to preserve and defend their own. It's very applicable to particular men in their rebellions or usurpations in church or state.

In special I shall now proceed to inquire whether any of the aforesaid species of regular, unmixed governments can with any show of reason be predicable of the church of Christ on earth. If the churches of Christ, as churches, are either the object or subject of a sovereign power intrusted in the hands of men, then most certainly one of the forecited schemes of a perfect government will be applicable to it.

Before I pursue the inquiry it may not be improper to pause and make some caution here, by distinguishing between that which may have some resemblance of civil power and the thing itself; and so the power of churches is but a faint resemblance of civil power. It comes in reality nothing near to the thing itself; for the one is truly coercive, the other persuasive; the one is sovereign power, the other is delegated and ministerial. But not to delay, I shall proceed with my inquiry, and therein shall endeavor to humor the several great claimers of government in the church of Christ. And,

I shall begin with a monarchy. It's certain his holiness, either by reasonable pleas or powerful cheats, has assumed an absolute and universal sovereignty. This fills his cathedral chair and is adorned with a triple crown; and in defense thereof [he] does protest: The Almighty has made him both key-keeper of heaven and hell, with the adjacent territories of purgatory, and vested in him an absolute sovereignty over the Christian world. And his right has so far

prevailed that princes and civil monarchs hold their crowns and donations as his dutiful sons and loyal subjects. He therefore decks himself with the spoils of the divine attributes, styling himself our Lord God, *optimum, maximum, et supremum numen in Terris*;¹ a God on earth, a visible deity; and that his power is absolute and his wisdom infallible. And many of the great potentates of the earth have paid their fealty, as though it was really so. One of them clad in canvas, going barefoot in the depth of winter (in obedience to the decree, stinting the penance in proportion to the wickedness of princes), has waited many days for absolution at his pious gates. Another has thrown himself down prostrate a humble penitent before him. He has placed his holy foot on the monarch's profane neck, as crushing a vermin crawling out of the stable of his sovereignty; and others frequently kiss his toes with very profound devotion. These and such like triumphant signals of his sovereign power does he wear. And indeed if he is the universal monarch of the Catholic Church, princes that are members of it must needs knock under, for that in one world there cannot possibly be two Most High's, any more than two Infinites. Thus you see the clergy or Gospel ministry of the Christian world have so wisely handled business and managed the Gospel that they have fairly (as they avouch) found a sovereign power bequeathed in it to the ministry of Christ, and, rummaging more warily and nicely, at last found a spiritual monarch very completely furnished with the keys of all sorts of power hanging at his girdle. And may we not pronounce the wiser they!—seeing the world, growing weary of religion, was willing to loll itself down to sleep and leave them in sole trust with the whole interest of God's kingdom. But the sad inquiry is, whether this sort of government has not plainly subverted the design of the Gospel and the end for which Christ's government was ordained, *viz.*, the moral, spiritual, and eternal happiness of men?

But I have no occasion to pursue this remark with tedious demonstrations. It's very plain, it's written with blood in capital

¹ The best, greatest, and highest God in the world.

letters, to be read at midnight by the flames of *Smithfield*¹ and other such like consecrated fires, that the government of this ecclesiastical monarch has, instead of sanctifying, absolutely debauched the world and subverted all good Christianity in it. So that without the least show of any vain presumption we may infer that God and wise nature were never propitious to the birth of this monster.

An aristocracy which places the supreme power in a select company of choice persons: Here I freely acknowledge, were the Gospel ministry established the subject of this power, *viz.*, to will and do in all church affairs without control, *etc.*, this government might do to support the church in its most valuable rights, *etc.*, if we could be assured they would make the Scripture, and not their private will, the rule of their personal and ministerial actions. And indeed upon these terms any species of government might serve the great design of redemption. But considering how great an interest is embarked and how frail a bottom we trust, though we should rely upon the best of men, especially if we remember what is in the hearts of good men (*viz.*, much ignorance, abundance of small ends, many times cloaked with a high pretense in religion; pride skulking and often breeding revenge upon a small affront, and blown up by a pretended zeal, yet really and truly by nothing more divine than interest, or ill nature), and also considering how very uncertain we are of the real goodness of those we esteem good men, and also how impossible it is to secure the entail of it to successors, and also if we remind how Christianity by the foresaid principle has been peeled, robbed, and spoiled already, it cannot consist with the light of nature to venture again upon such perils, especially if we can find a safer way home. More distinctly,

It is very plain (allowing me to speak emblematically) the primitive constitution of the churches was a democracy, as appears by the foregoing parallel. But after the Christian churches were received into the favor of the imperial court, under the

dominion of Constantine the Great, there being many preliminaries which had furnished the ministers with a disposition thereunto, they quickly deprived the fraternities of their rights in the government of the churches, when they were once provided of a plentiful maintenance through the liberality of Constantine; that when Christianity was so luxuriantly treated, as by his great bounty and noble settlement, it is said there was a voice heard from heaven saying: "Now is poison poured into the church." But the subversion of the constitution is a story too long now to tell. Take therefore part of it, out of a late author well versed in antiquity, which may give some brief image of the whole: *Non multa secula jus Plebis Illaesum Mansit, neque Aliter Evenire Potuit. Quin Illud, vel amittatur, vel saltem diminuat² etc. (De Ordina, Diss. Hystorica, p. 36, 40, 41.)*

The right of the people did not remain unhurt through many ages, neither could it well be otherways but that it must be lost, or much diminished. Zonaras³ does confess that heretofore bishops were chosen by the suffrage of the people. But, many seditions happening amongst them, it was decreed that every bishop should hereafter be chosen by the authority of the bishops of every province. The cause seemed to be so very specious that nothing could be more decent or more conducive to the safety of the commonwealth.

Yet (says my author) if you do well weigh the business you must needs acknowledge nothing could have happened more pernicious or destructive to the church of God. For, soon after these things came to pass, it is very obvious that tyranny over the consciences of the faithful and an intolerable pride everywhere grew rampant amongst the guides of the church. Yet there was one thing still very needful to be done, and that was to establish or confirm the power which the metropolitans and bishops had acquired to themselves. Therefore they fell to it tooth and nail to drive away the fraternity from all interest in elections; and alas, poor hearts! they began to sleep with both ears,

¹ London, north of St. Paul's Cathedral. The allusion is to its use in the time of Queen Mary for burning heretics at the stake.

² Translated in the following sentence, in the new paragraph.

³ Byzantine chronicler and theologian, flourished in twelfth century.

that then was scarce any enemy left to interrupt or control the conquerors. This was the manner of the clergy till they had made themselves the subjects of all power and then acted arbitrarily, and did what they pleased in the church of God.

But let the learned, knowing world consider what the issue of all this was, *scil.*, what a wretched capacity the drowsiness and cowardice of the people, and the usurpation and ambition of the ministry, brought the professing world into. If those who were truly godly on both sides had in a few ages looked down from heaven, and had eyed the following centuries, they might have beheld a world of matter for sorrowful impressions; to think that they themselves had occasioned the ruin of millions by their remiss and passive temper in one sort, and too much humoring and nourishing pride, and high conceits of themselves and others, in the other; when as if they had stood firm to the government as left settled by the apostles, they had certainly prevented an apostasy that has damned and confounded a great part of about thirty generations of men, women, and children. That for my own part I can upon experience in some measure truly say (to the history of the primitive churches in the loss of their government and the consequences which followed, when I am impelled to repeat it to myself) as one Æneas said to Queen Dido:

Infandum, regina, jubes renovare dolorem.

. *Quis talia fando*

.

*Temperet a lacrimis!*¹

So doleful a contemplation is it to think the world should be destroyed by those men who by God were ordained to save it!

In a word, an aristocracy is a dangerous constitution in the church of Christ, as it possesses the presbytery of all church power. What has been observed sufficiently evinces it. And not only so but from the nature of the constitution, for it has no more barrier to it against the ambition, insults, and arbitrary measures of men, than an absolute monarchy. But to abbreviate: it seems most agreeable with the light of nature that if there be any of the regular governments settled in the church of God it must needs be,

A democracy. This is a form of government which the light of nature does highly value, and often directs to as most agreeable to the just and natural prerogatives of human beings. This was of great account in the early times of the world. And not only so, but upon the experience of several thousand years, after the world had been tumbled and tossed from one species of government to another at a great expense of blood and treasure, many of the wise nations of the world have sheltered themselves under it again, or at least have blandished, and balanced their governments with it.

It is certainly a great truth, *scil.*, that man's original liberty after it is resigned (yet under due restrictions) ought to be cherished in all wise governments, or otherwise a man, in making himself a subject, he alters himself from a freeman into a slave, which to do is repugnant to the law of nature. Also the natural equality of men amongst men must be duly favored; in that government was never established by God or nature to give one man a prerogative to insult over another, therefore in a civil, as well as in a natural state of being, a just equality is to be indulged so far as that every man is bound to honor every man, which is agreeable both with nature and religion (*I Peter*, 2. 17): "Honor all men."—The end of all government is to cultivate humanity and promote the happiness of all, and the good of every man in all his rights, his life, liberty, estate, honor, *etc.*, without injury or abuse done to any. Then certainly it cannot easily be thought that a company of men, that shall enter into a voluntary compact to hold all power in their own hands, thereby to use and improve their united force, wisdom, riches, and strength for the common and particular good of every member, as is the nature of a democracy—I say it cannot be that this sort of constitution will so readily furnish those in government with an appetite or disposition to prey upon each other, or embezzle the common stock, as some particular persons may be apt to do when set off and entrusted with the same power. And, moreover, this appears very natural, that when the aforesaid government or power, settled in all, when they have elected certain capable persons to minister in their affairs and the said ministers remain accountable to the

¹ Virgil, *Æneid*, Bk. II, 3, 6, 8.

assembly, these officers must needs be under the influence of many wise cautions from their own thoughts (as well as under confinement by their commission) in their whole administration. And from thence it must needs follow that they will be more apt and inclined to steer right for the main point, *viz.*, the peculiar good and benefit of the whole and every particular member, fairly and sincerely. And why may not these stand for very rational pleas in church order?

For certainly if Christ has settled any form of power in his church he has done it for his church's safety, and for the benefit of every member. Then he must needs be presumed to have made choice of that government as should least expose his people to hazard, either from the fraud or arbitrary measures of particular men. And it is as plain as daylight there is no species of government like a democracy to attain this end. There is but about two steps from an aristocracy to a monarchy, and from thence but one to a tyranny. An able standing force and an ill nature, *ipso facto*, turns an absolute monarch into a tyrant. This is obvious amongst the *Roman* Cæsars and through the world. And all these direful transmutations are easier in church affairs (from the different qualities of things) than in civil states. For what is it that cunning and learned men can't make the world swallow as an article of their creed, if they are once invested with an uncontrollable power, and are to be the standing orators to mankind in matters of faith and obedience? Indeed some very wise and learned men are pleased to inveigh, and reproach the notion of a democracy in the church, which makes the *Cetu fidelium*, or community of the faithful, the first subject of the power of government. This they say tends to Brownism and abhorred anarchy, and then say they upon such premises, it must needs follow that every member of the body must be an officer, and then every one must preach and dispense the sacraments, *etc.*

[But] certainly such gentlemen either design to pose and baffle their readers with fallacy, or they themselves never took up or understood the true ideas of the several species of government; in that a democracy is as regular a form and as particular as any other. For,

1. An absolute or limited monarch can't manage the power or government devolved upon him without the great officers of the crown, or a large set of ministers; though possibly he may with the quicker despatch issue out his decrees, yet he must execute all by his ministry. And why may not a democracy be indulged the same liberty? And this will prevent all anarchy or confusion most apparently. But,

2. The bitter pill to swallow in this doctrine of a democracy in the church is the terrible power of life and death, or the accountableness of particular members to the assembly, and especially those in the ministry; but yet this is agreeable with the nature of the constitution and easily managed without anarchy, or popular confusion also, which would be made very evident if we should but run the parallel in all points between the democracy of the state and church. But nextly from the premises I shall

3. Infer that, if these churches are not properly formed, yet are [they] fairly established in their present order by the law of nature. And will they be advised, I would exhort them to try who will be so bold as to dare to disseize them. A monarchy has been tried in the church with a witness, but it has absolutely failed us. An aristocracy in a deep calm threw the democracy overboard and took not only the helm in hand, but seized ship and cargo as their right and title, but after some time brought all to shipwreck, and that in a good harbor too.

A democracy was the noble government which beat out in all the bad weather of ten bloody persecutions under the management of antiquity. And this is our constitution, and what, can't we be pleased? This constitution is as agreeable with the light and laws of nature as any other whatsoever, as has been fairly laid down and fully evinced, and more accommodated to the concerns of religion than any other. Therefore I shall now conclude my demonstration with this brief appeal to the common reason of mankind, *viz.*:

How can it consist with the honorable terms man holds upon here on earth that the best sort of men that we can find in the world, such men as are adorned with a double set of ennobling immunities, the first

from nature, the other from grace—that these men when they enter into charter-party to manage a trade for heaven must *ipso facto* be clapped under a government that is arbitrary and despotic, yea, that carries the plain symptoms of a tyranny in it, when the light of nature knows of a better species and frequently has made use of it? It wants no farther demonstration; for it's most apparent that nature is so much mistress of herself that man, in a natural state of being, is under God the first subject of all power, and therefore can make his own choice, and by deliberate compacts settles his own conditions for the government of himself in a civil state of being. And when a government so settled shall throw itself from its foundations, or the subjects of sovereign power shall subvert or confound the constitution, they then degrade themselves, and so all power returns again to the people, who are the first owners. And what! is man become so unfortunate, degraded, and debased as to be without all power in settling a government over himself, relating to the matters of his eternal well-being? Or when he comes back to a father's house must he fall into the capacity of a mere passive being, and be put under such tutors as can easily turn tyrants over him, and no relief left for him in his own hands? This is certainly most repugnant to the light of nature, and very disagreeable with the liberty and free genius of a Gospel state. Nay, in a word, if the government of the churches be settled by God, either in the hands of a church monarch, or aristocracy, and the people are no ways the subject of church power—nay, if they are not under Christ, the fountain of power, then the reformation, so-called, is but a mere cheat, a schism, and notorious rebellion, neither is there room left for the least palliation or shadow of excuse for the reformers in renouncing their obedience to their public governors. And the martyrologies which pretend to immortalize the fame of eminent heroes must be changed into chronicles, handing along an account of the just and deserved fate of a crew of rebels against God and government. For what business had such a company of illiterate and crack-brained fellows to meddle with their rulers, or examine into their administrations? For

if they have no right of power in government, they stand absolutely bound to yield a passive obedience and non-resistance; and, if they are so hardy and daring as to oppose their lawful rulers, the sharpest penalty in this world is too easy for them—the inquisition is but dallying and playing with them—hell is their desert. But how it comes about that a state of grace, when in want of a suitable government, is become such a vassal, and wise and cunning nature is by her creator entrusted and adorned with more ennobling prerogatives, I must leave and resign unto those learned men to solve, who plead for an aristocracy in the churches of Christ. * * *

It's certain every species of government, simple and mixed, have their various excellencies and defects; much may be said in honor of each, and also every constitution may have something wanting; at least it may seem so, under a more critical survey of its nature, principles, ill-conveniencies, corrupt ministry, misfortunes, *etc.* And many times a government falls under scandal from distemper of mind, from false ends and corrupt interests, which sway and overrule men's thoughts relating to government more than from the constitution itself. But, however, to evade all circular discourses, we may very fairly infer, where we find nations flourishing, and their liberty and property with the rest of the great immunities of man's nature nourished, secured, and best guarded from tyranny, we may venture to pronounce this people to be the subjects of a noble government; and there be many such on earth whose constitution will serve to justify ours. I shall instance in three, and no more.

I. The *Venetian* commonwealth; though some are pleased to call the government of this free state an aristocracy, but it seems more properly a limited democracy, for that the seat of sovereign power is their ancient commons, called their families, enrolled in the golden book; these make up the grand council of the nations, settle the public ministry, and enact laws, *etc.* This people have by this mode of government raised themselves into so august and flourishing a capacity that from a very obscure original they are grown to that degree as to bridle and curb the pride and haughtiness of Turk

and Pope. This example must needs be no small honor to our constitution. But,

2. The *Belgic* provinces are without interruption allowed to be the subjects of a formed democracy. They in some ages past being insulted and unmercifully trampled upon by that august tyrant, the *Spanish* monarch, they, being his subjects, broke loose from him and set up for themselves. They assumed to themselves their original power, and, when they had got it into their hands, had the wit, and kept it, and have improved it in the form of a democracy to this day; and God has blessed them, that from the poor states of *Holland*, they are now grown to wear the splendid title of "their high mightinesses," and are a match for most monarchs on earth. Says Gordon of their government: "The seven provinces of *Holland*, being under a democratical government, are as it were several commonwealths, each province being a distinct state; yea, and every city having an independent power within itself to judge of all causes, whether civil or criminal, and to inflict even capital punishments; but all joining together make one republic, the most considerable in the world." * * *

3. The *English*. This nation is reputed to be the subjects of the finest and most incomparable government in the world. And this original happy form of government is

(says one) truly and properly called an Englishman's liberty: a privilege to be freed in person and estate from arbitrary violence and oppression, and a greater inheritance than we derive from our parents. And this birth-right of Englishmen shines most conspicuously in two things:

(1) In *Parliaments*, wherein the subject has, by his representatives, a share in legislative power, and so makes his own laws, and disposes of his own money.

(2) In *Juries*, whereby he has a share in the executive part of law, so that no causes are tried, nor any man adjudged to lose his life, member, or estate, but upon the verdict of his peers, his equals or neighbors, and of his own condition.

These two grand pillars of *English* liberty are the fundamental, vital privileges whereby we have been, and are still preserved more free and happy than any other people in the world, and we trust shall ever continue so. For whosoever shall design to impair, pervert, undermine either of these, do strike at the very constitution of our government, and ought to be prosecuted and punished with the utmost zeal and vigor. For to poison all the springs and rivers in the kingdom could not be a greater mischief, for this would only affect the present age, but the other would ruin and enslave all our posterity. * * *

JONATHAN EDWARDS (1703-1758)

Jonathan Edwards was born at East (now South) Windsor, Connecticut, on 5 October, 1703. He was the fifth of his parents' eleven children, and their only son. When he was thirteen he entered a school at Saybrook, which was soon removed to New Haven, to become Yale College, from which he was graduated in 1720. He remained at New Haven two years more, studying divinity, and then, after a short period of preaching in New York, took his M.A. at Yale and was for two years a tutor in the College (1724-1726). At the end of this period he was called to assist his grandfather, the venerable Solomon Stoddard, in the church at Northampton. He was installed in this post on 15 February, 1727. Shortly afterwards he married Sarah Pierrepont of New Haven. In 1729 Edwards's grandfather died, leaving him in sole charge of the Northampton church. Here he remained until he was dismissed by the congregation, in June, 1750. In the following year he removed to Stockbridge, Massachusetts, where he took charge of a mission to the Indians. At this remote frontier post he lived until 1758, when he journeyed to Princeton to become President of Nassau Hall, the College of New Jersey, in succession to the elder Aaron Burr. The small-pox was present in the town, and Edwards was inoculated. From the effects of this he died on 22 March, shortly after his inauguration.

Such were the chief outward events in the life of the most rigorous and profound thinker whom America has produced. Even as a boy Edwards exhibited phenomenal capacities, as can be seen from his paper on *The Flying Spider*, written when he was about twelve years old. During his sophomore year in college he read Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, which made a deep impression on him. As early as this, or earlier, he had begun his lifelong practice of reading and thinking with a pen in his hand, always ready to write down what might be useful to him, and always aiming, not at mere assimilation, but at positive thinking on his own account. And soon after his reading of Locke's *Essay* he began a series of notes for a comprehensive treatise on the mind, and another series for a treatise on natural science. These notes cannot be exactly dated, but it is considered certain that some of the most interesting of them date from his undergraduate days, or from about his sixteenth year, and that all, or practically all, of them date from before his twentieth year. Fragments though they are, they are amongst the most significant of Edwards's writings, and selections from them are here reprinted. They exhibit not only the early development of his intellectual powers, but also the astonishing fact that, almost certainly without knowledge of Bishop Berkeley's work, he had gone on from Locke to an idealism Berkeleian in character; and they exhibit as well the fact that he had already, after studying Sir Isaac Newton, reached independent conclusions concerning the method of science.

But Edwards's upbringing, immediate surroundings, and inner experiences all conspired to lead him aside from the glittering career as a philosopher and man of letters which he might have had, and to send him on in life as the last and greatest leader of New England Puritanism. In the *Personal Narrative* here reprinted—one of the classics of the world's religious literature—we are given the day, 12 January, 1723, when he solemnly dedicated himself to the service of God. On this day he also entered in the *Resolutions* which he had begun to draw up for his guidance, one upon which he acted unflinching throughout the remainder of his life: "*Resolved*, that no other end but religion shall have any influence at all on any of my actions; and that no action shall be, in the least circumstance, any otherwise than the religious end will carry it." The task which confronted Edwards, in his attempt to live in the spirit of this Resolution, was one of opposing the teachings of the Dutch theologian Arminius, according to which man's will was regarded as free and man consequently was asserted to have the power of initiating actions, on his own account, which might contribute to his salvation. Arminius attempted to soften Calvinism both by taking off from the Deity responsibility for the existence of evil and by legitimizing man's sense of his own dignity and worth. The intention was well enough, but, not to speak of other difficulties, practically the diffusion of Arminianism lent a certain sanction to the religious indifference which had begun to spread through New England by the early part of the eighteenth century. Edwards's task, then, was to discredit Arminian teaching, to revive genuine Calvinism, and to try to rouse the people to an effective sense of their complete dependence on God, and of the tremendous consequences of sinful disobedience.

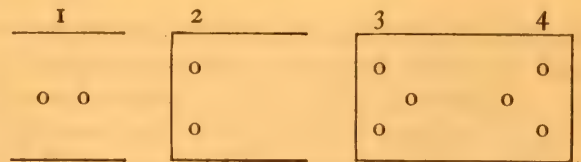
It is significant that one of the *Resolutions* above referred to reads: "*Resolved*, to live with all my might while I do live." Edwards did so, and his own inner religious experiences partook of the nature of ecstasy. He thus brought fire as well as devotion to his life's work—a fire that shone and burned through his severely controlled and rigorously logical sermons and discourses. And for a time he seemed to be wonderfully succeeding in his efforts. In the years 1734 and 1735 he brought about an unmistakable revival of religious interest, whose extent and nature may be learned from his *Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton and the Neighboring Towns and Villages* (written in 1736). And this revival prepared the way for the "Great Awakening" which swept through New England a few years later, one of the important events of which was Edwards's preaching, at Enfield, of his most famous sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. The "Awakening" must have seemed to Edwards the sign and seal of almost complete success in the practical portion of his task; and he confidently justified it against criticism in *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God* (1741) and in *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (1742). Nevertheless, those who distrusted the "Awakening" were in the right of it, for the high-pitched excitement induced by religious ecstasy or terror could not endure, and indeed tended to subside into strong reaction. Edwards soon saw indications of this, and felt it directly in his dismissal from Northampton. The immediate causes of this painful incident scarcely account for it, and the truth is that a large portion of Edwards's congregation had come to fear the man, and were ready to seize any pretext for banishing one who failed to understand that not all men were, like himself, able and anxious heroically to devote their whole lives to the service of God. Thus Edwards's life ended in outer defeat, though he continued, held up by his own sense of "evangelical integrity," to support his cause in one way, if not in another. His later years were largely occupied by the composition of several treatises which still, in an alien age, are read with admiration, for their evidences of his religious genius and of his power of sustained and close argument. The chief of these are: *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746); *A Careful and Strict Inquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of that Freedom of the Will which is Supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency* (1754); *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended* (1758); and *Two Dissertations: I. Concerning the End for which God Created the World. II. The Nature of True Virtue* (posthumously published, 1765).

THE MIND¹

EXCELLENCY

THERE has nothing been more without a definition than *Excellency*; although it be what we are more concerned with than any thing else whatsoever: yea, we are concerned with nothing else. But what is this *Excellency*? Wherein is one thing excellent, and another evil; one beautiful, and another deformed? Some have said that all *Excellency* is *Harmony*, *Symmetry*, or *Proportion*; but they have not yet explained it. We would know, Why *Proportion* is more excellent than *Disproportion*; that is, why *Proportion* is pleasant to the mind, and *Disproportion* unpleasant? *Proportion* is a thing that may be explained yet further. It is an *Equality*, or *Likeness of ratios*; so that it is the *Equality*, that makes the *Proportion*. *Excellency* therefore seems to consist in *Equality*. Thus, if there be two perfect *equal* circles, or globes, together, there is

something more of beauty than if they were of *unequal*, disproportionate magnitudes. And if two *parallel* lines be drawn, the beauty is greater, than if they were *obliquely* inclined without proportion, because there is equality of distance. And if betwixt two parallel lines, two equal circles be placed, each at the same distance from each parallel line, as in Fig. 1, the beauty is greater than if they stood



at irregular distances from the parallel lines. If they stand, each in a perpendicular line, going from the parallel lines (Fig. 2), it is requisite that they should each stand at an equal distance from the perpendicular line next to them; otherwise there is no beauty. If there be three of these circles between two parallel lines, and near to a perpendicular line run between them (Fig. 3), the most beautiful form, perhaps, that they could be placed in, is in an equilateral triangle with the cross line, because there are most equali-

¹ All of the following selections are reprinted from the ten-volume edition of Edwards's *Works* (New York, 1829) edited with a memoir by S. E. Dwight.

ties. The distance of the two next to the cross line is equal from that, and also equal from the parallel lines. The distance of the third from each parallel is equal, and its distance from each of the other two circles is equal, and is also equal to their distance from one another, and likewise equal to their distance from each end of the cross line. There are two equilateral triangles: one made by the three circles, and the other made by the cross line and two of the sides of the first protracted till they meet that line. And if there be another like it, on the opposite side, to correspond with it and it be taken altogether, the beauty is still greater, where the distances from the lines, in the one, are equal to the distances in the other; also the two next to the cross lines are at equal distances from the other two; or, if you go crosswise, from corner to corner. The two cross lines are also parallel, so that all parts are at an equal distance, and innumerable other equalities might be found.

This simple Equality, without Proportion, is the lowest kind of Regularity, and may be called Simple Beauty. All other beauties and excellencies may be resolved into it. Proportion is Complex Beauty. Thus, if we suppose that there are two points, A B, placed at two inches' distance, and the next, C, one inch farther (Fig. 1), it is requisite, in order to regularity and beauty,

Fig. 1

• • • •
A B C D

Fig. 2

| | |
A B C

if there be another, D, that it should be at half an inch distance; otherwise there is no regularity, and the last, D, would stand out of its proper place; because now the relation that the space C D, bears to B C, is equal to the relation that B C, bears to A B; so that B C D, is exactly similar to A B C. It is evident, this is a more complicated excellency than that which consisted in Equality, because the terms of the relation are here complex, and before were simple. When there are three points set in a right line, it is requisite, in order to regularity, that they should be set at an equal distance, as A B C (Fig. 2), where A B, is similar to B C, or the relation of C to B, is the same as of B to A. But in the other are three terms

necessary in each of the parts, between which the relation, B C D, is as A B C: so that here more simple beauties are omitted, and yet there is a general complex beauty: that is, B C is not as A B, nor is C D as B C, but yet, B C D is as A B C. It is requisite that the consent or regularity of C D to B C, be omitted, for the sake of the harmony of the whole. For although, if C D was perfectly equal to B C, there would be regularity and beauty with respect to them two; yet, if A B be taken into the idea, there is nothing but confusion. And it might be requisite, if these stood with others, even to omit this proposition, for the sake of one more complex still. Thus, if they stood with other points, where B stood at four inches' distance from A, C at two from B, and D at six from C: the place where D must stand in, if A, B, C, D, were alone, *viz.*, one inch from C, must be so as to be made proportionate with the other points beneath:

A B C D
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
A B C D

So that although A, B, C, D, are not proportioned, but are confusion among themselves; yet taken with the whole they are proportioned and beautiful.

All beauty consists in similarness or identity of relation. In identity of relation consists all likeness, and all identity between two consists in identity of relation. Thus, when the distance between two is exactly equal, their distance is their relation one to another, the distance is the same, the bodies are two; wherefore this is their correspondence and beauty. So bodies exactly of the same figure, the bodies are two, the relation between the parts of the extremities is the same, and this is their agreement with them. But if there are two bodies of different shapes, having no similarness of relation between the parts of the extremities; this, considered by itself, is a deformity, because being disagrees with being, which must undoubtedly be disagreeable to perceiving being: because what disagrees with Being must necessarily be disagreeable to Being in general, to every thing that partakes of Entity, and of course to perceiving being;

and what agrees with Being, must be agreeable to Being in general, and therefore to perceiving being. But agreeableness of perceiving being is pleasure, and disagreeableness is pain. Disagreement or contrariety to Being is evidently an approach to Nothing, or a degree of Nothing; which is nothing else but disagreement or contrariety of Being, and the greatest and only evil: And Entity is the greatest and only good. And by how much more perfect Entity is that is without mixture of Nothing, by so much the more Excellency. Two beings can agree one with another in nothing else but Relation; because otherwise the notion of their twoness (duality) is destroyed, and they become one.

And so, in every case, what is called Correspondency, Symmetry, Regularity, and the like, may be resolved into Equalities; though the Equalities in a beauty, in any degree complicated, are so numerous that it would be a most tedious piece of work to enumerate them. There are millions of these Equalities. Of these consist the beautiful shape of flowers, the beauty of the body of man, and of the bodies of other animals. That sort of beauty which is called Natural, as of vines, plants, trees, *etc.*, consists of a very complicated harmony; and all the natural motions, and tendencies, and figures of bodies in the Universe are done according to proportion, and therein is their beauty. Particular disproportions sometimes greatly add to the general beauty, and must necessarily be, in order to a more universal proportion:—So much equality, so much beauty; though it may be noted that the quantity of equality is not to be measured only by the number, but the intenseness, according to the quantity of being. As bodies are shadows of being, so their proportions are shadows of proportion.

The pleasures of the senses, where harmony is not the object of judgment, are the result of equality. Thus in Music, not only in the proportion which the several notes of a tune bear, one among another, but in merely two notes, there is harmony; whereas it is impossible there should be proportion between only two terms. But the proportion is in the particular vibrations of the air, which strike on the ear. And so, in the pleasantness of light, colors, tastes, smells,

and touch, all arise from proportion of motion. The organs are so contrived that, upon the touch of such and such particles, there shall be a regular and harmonious motion of the animal spirits.

Spiritual harmonies are of vastly larger extent: *i. e.*, the proportions are vastly oftener redoubled, and respect mere beings, and require a vastly larger view to comprehend them; as some simple notes do more affect one, who has not a comprehensive understanding of Music.

The reason why Equality thus pleases the mind, and Inequality is displeasing, is because Disproportion, or Inconsistency, is contrary to Being. For Being, if we examine narrowly, is nothing else but Proportion. When one being is inconsistent with another being, then Being is contradicted. But contradiction to Being, is intolerable to perceiving being, and the consent to Being, most pleasing.

Excellency consists in the *Similarness* of one being to another—not merely Equality and Proportion, but any kind of Similarness—thus Similarness of direction. Supposing many globes moving in right lines, it is more beautiful, that they should move all the same way, and according to the same direction, than if they moved disorderly; one, one way, and another, another. This is an universal definition of Excellency:—*The Consent of Being to Being, or Being's Consent to Entity.* The more the Consent is, and the more extensive, the greater is the Excellency.

How exceedingly apt are we, when we are sitting still, and accidentally casting our eye upon some marks or spots in the floor or wall, to be ranging of them into regular parcels and figures: and, if we see a mark out of its place, to be placing of it right, by our imagination; and this, even while we are meditating on something else. So we may catch ourselves at observing the rules of harmony and regularity, in the careless motions of our heads or feet, and when playing with our hands, or walking about the room.

PLEASEDNESS, in perceiving Being, always arises either from a perception of Consent to Being in general, or of Consent to that Being that perceives. As we have shown

that Agreeableness to Entity must be agreeable to perceiving Entity it is as evident that it is necessary that Agreeableness to that Being must be pleasing to it, if it perceives it. So that Pleasedness does not always arise from a perception of Excellency [in general;] but the greater a Being is, and the more it has of Entity, the more will Consent to Being in general please it. But God is proper Entity itself, and these two therefore, in Him, become the same; for, so far as a thing consents to Being in general, so far it consents to Him; and the more perfect Created Spirits are, the nearer do they come to their Creator, in this regard.

THAT, which is often called *Self Love*, is exceedingly improperly called *Love*, for they do not only say that one loves himself, when he sees something amiable in himself, the view of which begets delight. But merely an inclination to pleasure, and averseness to pain, they call *Self Love*; so that the devils, and other damned spirits, love themselves, not because they see any thing in themselves, which they imagine to be lovely, but merely, because they do not incline to pain but to pleasure, or merely because they are capable of pain or pleasure; for pain and pleasure include an inclination to agreeableness, and an aversion to disagreeableness. Now how improper is it to say, that one loves himself, because what is agreeable to him is agreeable to him, and what is disagreeable to him is disagreeable to him: which mere Entity supposes. So that this, that they call *Self Love*, is no affection, but only the Entity of the thing, or his being what he is.

ONE alone, without any reference to any more, cannot be excellent; for in such case, there can be no manner of relation no way, and therefore no such thing as Consent. Indeed what we call *One*, may be excellent because of a consent of parts, or some consent of those in that being, that are distinguished into a plurality some way or other. But in a being that is absolutely without any plurality, there cannot be Excellency, for there can be no such thing as consent or agreement.

One of the highest excellencies is Love. As nothing else has a proper being but

Spirits, and as Bodies are but the shadow of being, therefore the consent of bodies one to another, and the harmony that is among them, is but the shadow of Excellency. The highest Excellency therefore must be the consent of Spirits one to another. But the consent of Spirits consists half in their mutual love one to another. And the sweet harmony between the various parts of the Universe, is only an image of mutual love. But yet a lower kind of love may be odious, because it hinders, or is contrary to, a higher and more general. Even a lower proportion is often a deformity, because it is contrary to a more general proportion.

Coroll. 1. If so much of the beauty and excellency of Spirits consists in Love, then the deformity of evil spirits consists as much in hatred and malice.

Coroll. 2. The more any doctrine, or institution, brings to light of the Spiritual World, the more will it urge to Love and Charity.

HAPPINESS strictly consists in the perception of these three things: of the consent of being to its own being; of its own consent to being; and of being's consent to being.

EXCELLENCE, to put it in other words, is that which is beautiful and lovely. That which is beautiful, considered by itself separately, and deformed, considered as a part of something else more extended; or beautiful, only with respect to itself and a few other things, and not as a part of that which contains all things—the Universe; is false beauty and a confined beauty. That which is beautiful, with respect to the university of things, has a generally extended excellence and a true beauty; and the more extended, or limited, its system is, the more confined or extended is its beauty.

AS BODIES, the objects of our external senses, are but the shadows of beings; that harmony, wherein consists sensible excellency and beauty, is but the shadow of excellency. That is, it is pleasant to the mind, because it is a shadow of love. When one thing sweetly harmonizes with another, as the Notes in music, the notes are so conformed, and have such proportion one to another, that they seem to have respect one to another, as if they loved one another.

So the beauty of figures and motions is, when one part has such consonant proportion with the rest, as represents a general agreeing and consenting together; which is very much the image of Love, in all the parts of a Society, united by a sweet consent and charity of heart. Therein consists the beauty of figures, as of flowers drawn with a pen; and the beauty of the body, and of the features of the face.

There is no other way, that sensible things can consent one to another but by Equality, or by Likeness, or by Proportion. Therefore the lowest or most simple kind of beauty is equality or likeness; because by equality or likeness, one part consents with but one part; but by Proportion one part may sweetly consent to ten thousand different parts; all the parts may consent with all the rest; and not only so, but the parts, taken singly, may consent with the whole taken together. Thus, in the figures or flourishes drawn by an acute penman, every stroke may have such a proportion, both by the place and distance, direction, degree of curvity, *etc.*, that there may be a consent, in the parts of each stroke, one with another, and a harmonious agreement with all the strokes, and with the various parts, composed of many strokes, and an agreeableness to the whole figure taken together.

There is a beauty in Equality, as appears very evident by the very great respect men show to it, in every thing they make or do. How unbeautiful would be the body, if the parts on one side were unequal to those on the other; how unbeautiful would writing be, if the letters were not of an equal height, or the lines of an equal length, or at an equal distance, or if the pages were not of an equal width or height; and how unbeautiful would a building be, if no equality were observed in the correspondent parts.

EXISTENCE or Entity is that, into which all Excellency is to be resolved. Being or Existence is what is necessarily agreeable to Being; and when Being perceives it, it will be an agreeable perception; and any contradiction to Being or Existence is what Being when it perceives, abhors. If Being, in itself considered, were not pleasing, Being's consent to Being would not be pleasing, nor would Being's disagreeing with Being,

be displeasing. Therefore, not only may *Greatness* be considered as a capacity of Excellency; but a Being, by reason of his greatness considered alone, is the more excellent, because he partakes more of Being. Though if he be great, if he dissents from more general and extensive Being, or from Universal Being; he is the more odious for his greatness, because the dissent or contradiction to Being in general is so much the greater. It is more grating to see much Being dissent from Being than to see little; and his greatness, or the quantity of Being he partakes of, does nothing towards bettering his dissent from Being in general, because there is no proportion between Finite Being, however great, and Universal Being.

Coroll. 1. Hence it is impossible that God should be any otherwise, than excellent; for he is the Infinite, Universal and All-comprehending, Existence.

2. Hence God infinitely loves himself, because his Being is Infinite. He is in himself, if I may so say, an Infinite Quantity of Existence.

3. Hence we learn one reason, why persons, who view Death merely as Annihilation, have a great abhorrence of it, though they live a very afflicted life.

NOTES ON NATURAL SCIENCE OF THE PREJUDICES OF THE IMAGINATION

OF all prejudices, no one so fights with Natural Philosophy, and prevails more against it, than those of the Imagination. It is these, which make the vulgar so roar out, upon the mention of some very rational philosophical truths. And indeed I have known of some very learned men, that have pretended to a more than ordinary freedom from such prejudices, so overcome by them, that, merely because of them, they have believed things most absurd. And truly I hardly know of any other prejudices, that are more powerful against truth of any kind, than those; and I believe they will not give the hand to any in any case, except to those arising from our ruling self-interest, or the impetuosity of human passions. And there is very good reason for it; for opinions, arising

ing from imagination, take us as soon as we are born, are beat into us by every act of sensation, and so grow up with us from our very births, and by that means grow into us so fast, that it is almost impossible to root them out; being, as it were, so incorporated with our very minds, that whatsoever is objected contrary thereunto, is, as if it were dissonant to the very constitution of them. Hence men come to make what they can actually perceive by their senses, or by immediate and outside reflection into their own souls, the standard of possibility and impossibility; so that there must be no body, forsooth, bigger than they can conceive of, or less than they can see with their eyes: no motion, either much swifter, or slower, than they can imagine. As to the greatness, and distances of bodies, the learned world have pretty well conquered their imagination, with respect to them; neither will any body flatly deny, that it is possible for bodies to be of any degree of bigness that can be mentioned; yet imaginations of this kind, among the learned themselves, even of this learned age, have a very powerful secret influence, to cause them, either to reject things really true, as erroneous, or to embrace those that are truly so. Thus some men will yet say, they cannot conceive, how the Fixed Stars can be so distant as that the Earth's annual revolution should cause no parallax among them, and so are almost ready to fall back into antiquated Ptolemy his system, merely to ease their imagination.—Thus also, on the other hand, a very learned man and sagacious astronomer, upon consideration of the vast magnitude of the visible part of the universe, has, in the ecstasy of his imagination, been hurried on to pronounce the universal infinite; which I may say, out of veneration, was beneath such a man as he. As if it were any more an argument, because what he could see of the universe were so big, as he was assured it was. And suppose he had discovered the invisible universe, so vast as it is, to be as a globule of water to another Universe; the case is the same; as if it would have been any more of an argument, that that larger Universe was infinite, than if the visible part thereof were no bigger than a particle of the water of this. I think one is no nearer to infinite than the other.

OF BEING

THAT there should absolutely be Nothing at all, is utterly impossible. The mind, let it stretch its conceptions ever so far, can never so much as bring itself to conceive of a state of perfect Nothing. It puts the mind into mere convulsion and confusion, to think of such a state: and it contradicts the very nature of the soul, to think that such a state should be. It is the greatest of contradictions, and the aggregate of all contradictions, to say that *THING* should not be. It is true, we cannot so distinctly show the contradiction in words; because we cannot talk about it, without speaking stark nonsense, and contradicting ourselves at every way: and because Nothing is that, whereby we distinctly show other particular contradictions. But here we are run up to our first principle, and have no other to explain the nothingness, or not being of Nothing by. Indeed we can mean nothing else by Nothing, but a state of absolute contradiction; and if any man thinks, that he can conceive well enough how there should be Nothing, I will engage, that what he means by Nothing, is as much Something, as any thing that he ever thought of in his life; and I believe, that if he knew what Nothing was, it would be intuitively evident to him that it could not be.—Thus we see it is necessary that some being should eternally be. And it is a more palpable contradiction still to say, that there must be Being somewhere, and not elsewhere, for the words *Absolute Nothing*, and *Where*, contradict each other. And, besides, it gives as great a shock to the mind, to think of pure Nothing being in any one place, as it does to think of it in all places: and it is self-evident, that there can be Nothing in one place, as well as in another; and if there can be in one, there can be [in] all. So that we see that this Necessary, Eternal Being must be Infinite and Omnipresent.

This Infinite and Omnipresent being cannot be solid. Let us see how contradictory it is, to say that an Infinite being is solid; for solidity surely is nothing but resistance to other solidities.—Space is this necessary, eternal, infinite, and omnipresent being. We find that we can, with ease, conceive how all other beings should not be. We can remove them out of our minds, and place some

other in the room of them: but Space is the very thing, that we can never remove, and conceive of its not being. If a man would imagine Space any where to be divided, so as there should be nothing between the divided parts, there remains Space between, notwithstanding, and so the man contradicts himself. And it is self-evident I believe to every man, that Space is necessary, eternal, infinite, and omnipresent. But I had as good speak plain: I have already said as much as, that Space is God. And it is indeed clear to me, that all the Space there is, not proper to body, all the Space there is without the bounds of Creation, all the Space there was before the Creation, is God himself; and no body would in the least pick at it, if it were not because of the gross conceptions that we have of Space.

A state of absolute nothing is a state of absolute contradiction. Absolute nothing is the aggregate of all the contradictions in the world: a state, wherein there is neither body, nor spirit, nor space, neither empty space nor full space, neither little nor great, narrow nor broad, neither infinite space nor finite space, not even a mathematical point, neither up nor down, neither north nor south (I do not mean, as it is with respect to the body of the earth, or some other great body), but no contrary points, positions or directions, no such thing as either here or there, this way or that way, or any way. When we go about to form an idea of perfect Nothing, we must shut out all these things: we must shut out of our minds both space that has something in it, and space that has nothing in it. We must not allow ourselves to think of the least part of Space, be it ever so small. Nor must we suffer our thoughts to take sanctuary in a mathematical point. When [we] go to expel being out of our thoughts, we must be careful not to leave empty space in the room of it; and when we go to expel emptiness from our thoughts, we must not think to squeeze it out by any thing close, hard and solid; but we must think of the same, that the sleeping rocks do dream of; and not till then, shall we get a complete idea of Nothing.

When we go to inquire, Whether or no, there can be absolutely Nothing? we utter nonsense, in so inquiring. The stating of the question is nonsense; because we make

a disjunction where there is none. Either Being, or absolute Nothing, is no disjunction; no more than whether a triangle is a triangle, or not a triangle. There is no other way, but only for there to be existence: there is no such thing, as absolute Nothing. There is such a thing, as Nothing, with respect to this ink and paper: there is such a thing, as Nothing, with respect to you and me: there is such a thing, as Nothing, with respect to this globe of earth, and with respect to this Universe. There is another way, beside these things, having existence; but there is no such thing, as Nothing, with respect to Entity, of being, absolutely considered. We do not know what we say, if we say that we think it possible in itself, that there should not be Entity.

And how doth it grate upon the mind, to think that Something should be from all eternity, and yet Nothing all the while be conscious of it. To illustrate this: Let us suppose that the World had a being from all eternity, and had many great changes, and wonderful revolutions, and all the while Nothing knew it, there was no knowledge in the Universe of any such thing. How is it possible to bring the mind to imagine this? Yea, it is really impossible it should be, that any thing should exist, and Nothing know it. Then you will say, If it be so, it is, because Nothing has any existence but in consciousness: No, certainly, no where else, but either in created or uncreated consciousness.

Suppose there were another Universe, merely of bodies, created at a great distance from this; created in excellent order, harmonious motions, and a beautiful variety; and there was no created intelligence in it, nothing but senseless bodies, and nothing but God knew any thing of it. I demand where else that Universe would have a being, but only in the Divine consciousness? Certainly, in no other respect. There would be figures, and magnitudes, and motions, and proportions; but where, where else, except in the Almighty's knowledge? How is it possible there should?—But then you will say, For the same reason, in a room closely shut up, which nobody sees, there is nothing, except in God's knowledge.—I answer, Created beings are conscious of the effects of what is in the room; for, perhaps, there is not one leaf of a tree, nor a spire of grass,

but what produces effects, all over the Universe and will produce them, to the end of eternity. But any otherwise, there is nothing in a room so shut up, but only in God's consciousness. How can any thing be there, any other way? This will appear to be truly so, to any one who thinks of it, with the whole united strength of his mind. Let us suppose, for illustration, this impossibility, that all the spirits in the Universe were, for a time, deprived of their consciousness, and that God's consciousness, at the same time, were to be intermitted. I say the Universe, for that time, would cease to be, of itself; and this not merely, as we speak, because the Almighty could not attend to uphold it; but because God could know nothing of it. It is our foolish imagination that will not suffer us to see it. We fancy there may be figures and magnitudes, relations and properties, without any one knowing of it. But it is our imagination hurts us. We do not know what figures and properties are.

Our imagination makes us fancy that we see shapes, and colors, and magnitudes, though nobody is there to behold it. But to help our imagination, let us thus state the case: Let us suppose the creation deprived of every ray of light, so that there should not be the least glimmering of light in the Universe. Now all will own that, in such case, the Universe would really be immediately deprived of all its colors. No one part of the Universe is any more red, or blue, or green, or yellow, or black, or white, or light, or dark, or transparent, or opaque. There would be no visible distinction between the Universe and the rest of the incomprehensible void: yea, there would be no difference, in these respects, between the Universe and the infinite void; so that any part of that void would really be as light and as dark, as white and as black, as red and as green, as blue and as brown, as transparent and as opaque, as any part of the Universe: so that, in such case, there would be no difference, in these respects, between the Universe and Nothing. So also, there would be no difference, between one part of the Universe and another: all, in these respects, is alike confounded with, and undistinguished from, infinite emptiness.

At the same time, also, let us suppose the Universe to be altogether deprived of mo-

tion, and all parts of it to be at perfect rest. Then, the Universe would not differ from the void, in this respect: there would be no more motion in the one, than in the other. Then, also, solidity would cease. All that we mean, or can be meant, by solidity, is resistance; resistance to touch, the resistance of some parts of space. This is all the knowledge we get of solidity, by our senses, and, I am sure, all that we can get, any other way. But solidity shall be shown to be nothing else, more fully, hereafter. But there can be no resistance, if there is no motion. One body cannot resist another, when there is perfect rest among them. But, you will say, Though there is no actual resistance, yet there is potential resistance: that is, such and such parts of space would resist upon occasion. But this is all that I would have, that there is no solidity now; not but that God could cause there to be, on occasion. And if there is no solidity, there is no extension, for extension is the extendedness of solidity. Then, all figure, and magnitude, and proportion, immediately cease. Put, then, both these suppositions together: that is, deprive the Universe of light, and motion, and the case would stand thus, with the Universe: There would be neither white nor black, neither blue nor brown, neither bright nor shaded, pellucid nor opaque, no noise nor sound, neither heat nor cold, neither fluid nor solid, neither wet nor dry, neither hard nor soft, nor solidity, nor extension, nor figure, nor magnitude, nor proportion, nor body, nor spirit. What, then, is to become of the Universe? Certainly it exists no where, but in the Divine mind. This will be abundantly clearer to one, after having read what I have further to say of solidity, *etc.*: so that we see that a Universe, without motion, can exist no where else but in the mind—either infinite or finite.

Corollary. It follows from hence, that those beings which have knowledge and consciousness, are the only proper and real, and substantial beings; inasmuch as the being of other things is only by these. From hence, we may see the gross mistake of those who think material things the most substantial beings, and spirits more like a shadow; whereas, spirits only are properly substance.

THINGS TO BE CONSIDERED, OR
WRITTEN FULLY ABOUT

SECOND SERIES

47. SINCE, as has been shown, body is nothing but an infinite resistance, in some parts of space, caused by the immediate exercise of Divine power; it follows, that as great and as wonderful power is every moment exerted in the *upholding* of the world, as at first was exerted in its *creation*: the first creation being only the first exertion of this power, to cause such resistance, and the preservation, only the continuation or the repetition of this power, every moment to cause this resistance: so that the Universe is created out of nothing every moment. And, if it were not for our imaginations, which hinder us, we might see that wonderful work performed continually, which was seen by the morning stars, when they sang together.

SARAH PIERREPONT¹

THEY say there is a young lady in [New Haven] who is beloved of that Great Being, who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for any thing, except to meditate on him—that she expects after a while to be received up where he is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven; being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him, and to be ravished with his love and delight for ever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards it and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do any thing wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness, and universal benevo-

¹ Written, it is said, four years before Edwards's marriage to Sarah Pierrepont—*i.e.*, when he was twenty and she thirteen.

lence of mind; especially after this Great God has manifested himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly; and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure; and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE²

I HAD a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my childhood; but had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy, some years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation; and was abundant in duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious talk with other boys, and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous pleasure; and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I with some of my schoolmates joined together, and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer. And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself; and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element when engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.

But in process of time, my convictions and affections wore off; and I entirely lost all those affections and delights and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant performance of it; and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin.

² Written at some time after January, 1739 (see the concluding paragraph), probably within the following couple of years.

Indeed I was at times very uneasy, especially toward the latter part of my time at college; when it pleased God to seize me with the pleurisy; in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell. And yet, it was not long after my recovery before I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with my quietness; I had great and violent inward struggles, till, after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin; and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practice many religious duties; but without that kind of affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward struggles and conflicts, and self-reflections. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet, it seems to me, I sought after a miserable manner; which has made me sometimes since to question, whether ever it issued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt, whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation in a manner that I never was before; I felt a spirit to part with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ.—My concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper to express that concern by the name of terror.

From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But never could give an account, how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it.

However, my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, from that day to this; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God's showing mercy to whom he will show mercy, and hardening whom he will. God's absolute sovereignty and justice, with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet.

Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so.

The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words (I Timothy, i, 17): *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever, Amen.* As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought within myself, how excellent a being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapt up in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him for ever! I kept saying, and as it were singing over these words of Scripture to myself; and went to pray to God that I might enjoy him, and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do; with a new sort of affection. But it never came into my thought that there was any thing spiritual, or of a saving nature in this.

From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. An

inward, sweet sense of these things; at times, came into my heart; and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these subjects. Those words (Canticles, ii, 1) used to be abundantly with me, *I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys*. The words seemed to me sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me, and I used to be much in reading it, about that time; and found, from time to time, an inward sweetness, that would carry me away, in my contemplations. This I know not how to express otherwise, than by a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this world; and sometimes a kind of vision, or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in the mountains, or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapt and swallowed up in God. The sense I had of divine things, would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart; an ardor of soul, that I know not how to express.

Not long after I began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture for contemplation. And as I was walking there and looking up on the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious *majesty* and *grace* of God, that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together; it was a gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; a high, great, and holy gentleness.

After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast, or appearance of divine

glory, in almost every thing. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in every thing; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds, and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance; and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the mean time, singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce any thing, among all the works of nature, was so delightful to me as thunder and lightning; formerly, nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, so to speak, at the first appearance of a thunder storm; and used to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds, and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural to me to sing, or chant for my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.

I felt then great satisfaction, as to my good state; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break; which often brought to my mind the words of the Psalmist (Psalm cxix, 28): *My soul breaketh for the longing it hath*. I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods, and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath by

which the inward burnings of my heart had vent. The delights which I now felt in the things of religion, were of an exceedingly different kind from those before mentioned, that I had when a boy; and what I then had no more notion of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colors. They were of a more inward, pure, soul-animating, and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart; and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God; or any taste of the soul-satisfying and life-giving good there is in them.

My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase, until I went to preach at New York, which was about a year and a half after they began; and while I was there, I felt them, very sensibly, in a higher degree than I had done before. My longings after God and holiness were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly Christianity appeared exceedingly amiable to me. I felt a burning desire to be in every thing a complete Christian; and conform to the blessed image of Christ; and that I might live, in all things, according to the pure and blessed rules of the Gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things, which put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife day and night, and constant inquiry, how I should *be* more holy, and *live* more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I now sought an increase of grace and holiness, and a holy life, with much more earnestness than ever I sought grace before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself, and studying and contriving for likely ways and means how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness than ever I pursued any thing in my life; but yet with too great a dependence on my own strength; which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way; and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit there was in my heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more holiness, and conformity to Christ.

The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend my

eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments there; and living there in perfect holiness, humility, and love. And it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden, that what I felt within I could not express as I desired. The inward ardor of my soul seemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love; and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness; and said sometimes to myself, "I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the Gospel prescribes." It appeared to me that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely; the highest beauty and amiableness—a *divine* beauty; far purer than any thing here upon earth; and that every thing else was like mire and defilement, in comparison of it.

Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness, and rapture to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing as it were in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrant; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature holiness, that I had so great a sense of its loveliness, as humility, brokenness of heart and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing

that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this, to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be ALL, that I might become as a little child.

While at New York, I was sometimes much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious; and how wickedly I had lived till then; and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

On January 12, 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself, and all that I had to God; to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself, in any respect. And solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity; looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; engaging to fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider how much I have failed of answering my obligation.

I had then abundance of sweet religious conversation in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to those in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions, but such as were holy, and the disciples of the blessed Jesus. I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and my secret prayer used to be, in great part, taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of any thing that happened, in any part of the world, that appeared, in some respect or other, to have a favorable aspect on the interest of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly caught at it; and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be eager to read public news letters, mainly for that end; to see if I could not find some news favorable to the interest of religion in the world.

I very frequently used to retire into a solitary place, on the banks of Hudson's river, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on divine things, and secret converse with God; and had many sweet

hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converse on the things of God; and our conversation used to turn much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accomplish for his church in the latter days. I had then, and at other times, the greatest delight in the holy Scriptures, of any book whatsoever. Oftentimes in reading it, every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading; often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.

I came away from New York in the month of April, 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam Smith and her son. My heart seemed to sink within me at leaving the family and city where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant days. I went from New York to Weathersfield, by water, and as I sailed away I kept sight of the city as long as I could. However, that night, after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at Westchester, where we went ashore to lodge; and had a pleasant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear Christians in heaven, where we should never part more. At Saybrook we went ashore to lodge, on Saturday, and there kept the Sabbath; where I had a sweet and refreshing season, walking alone in the fields.

After I came home to Windsor, I remained much in a like frame of mind as when at New York; only sometimes I felt my heart ready to sink with the thoughts of my friends at New York. My support was in contemplations on the heavenly state; as I find in my Diary of May 1, 1723. It was a comfort to think of that state, where there is fullness of joy; where reigns heavenly, calm, and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where those persons who appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely and full of love to us. And how

sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never cease, but will last to all eternity! I continued much in the same frame, in the general, as when at New York, till I went to New Haven as tutor to the college; particularly once at Bolton, on a journey from Boston, while walking out alone in the fields. After I went to New Haven I sunk in religion; my mind being diverted from my eager pursuits after holiness, by some affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my thoughts.

In September, 1725, I was taken ill at New Haven, and while endeavoring to go home to Windsor, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further; where I lay sick for about a quarter of a year. In this sickness God was pleased to visit me again with the sweet influences of his Spirit. My mind was greatly engaged there in divine, pleasant contemplations, and longings of soul. I observed that those who watched with me, would often be looking out wishfully for the morning; which brought to my mind those words of the Psalmist, and which my soul with delight made its own language, *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I say, more than they that watch for the morning*; and when the light of day came in at the windows, it refreshed my soul from one morning to another. It seemed to be some image of the light of God's glory.

I remember, about that time, I used greatly to long for the conversion of some that I was concerned with; I could gladly honor them, and with delight be a servant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy. But, some time after this, I was again greatly diverted in my mind with some temporal concerns that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my soul; and went on through various exercises, that it would be tedious to relate, which gave me much more experience of my own heart, than ever I had before.

Since I came to this town,¹ I have often had sweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections and the excellency of

Jesus Christ. God has appeared to me a glorious and lovely being, chiefly on the account of his holiness. The holiness of God has always appeared to me the most lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God's absolute sovereignty, and free grace, in showing mercy to whom he would show mercy; and man's absolute dependence on the operations of God's Holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious doctrines. These doctrines have been much my delight. God's sovereignty has ever appeared to me great part of his glory. It has often been my delight to approach God, and adore him as a sovereign God, and ask sovereign mercy of him.

I have loved the doctrines of the Gospel; they have been to my soul like green pastures. The Gospel has seemed to me the richest treasure; the treasure that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of salvation by Christ has appeared, in a general way, glorious and excellent, most pleasant and most beautiful. It has often seemed to me that it would in a great measure spoil heaven, to receive it in any other way. That text has often been affecting and delightful to me. Isaiah, xxxii, 2: *A man shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, etc.*

It has often appeared to me delightful to be united to Christ; to have him for my head, and to be a member of his body; also to have Christ for my teacher and prophet. I very often think with sweetness, and longings, and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. That text, Matthew, xviii, 3, has often been sweet to me, *except ye be converted and become as little children, etc.* I love to think of coming to Christ, to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit, and quite empty of self, humbly exalting him alone; cut off entirely from my own root, in order to grow into, and out of Christ; to have God in Christ to be all in all; and to live by faith on the Son of God, a life of humble unfeigned confidence in him. That Scripture has often been sweet to me, Psalm cxv, 1: *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake.* And those words of Christ, Luke, x, 21: *In that hour Jesus re-*

¹ Northampton.

joiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. That sovereignty of God which Christ rejoiced in, seemed to me worthy of such joy; and that rejoicing seemed to show the excellency of Christ, and of what spirit he was.

Sometimes, only mentioning a single word caused my heart to burn within me; or only seeing the name of Christ, or the name of some attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious to me, on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he subsists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the Gospel. When I enjoy this sweetness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own estate; it seems at such times a loss that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious pleasant object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myself, and my own good estate.

My heart has been much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world. The histories of the past advancement of Christ's kingdom have been sweet to me. When I have read histories of past ages, the pleasantest thing in all my reading has been, to read of the kingdom of Christ being promoted. And when I have expected, in my reading, to come to any such thing, I have rejoiced in the prospect, all the way as I read. And my mind has been much entertained and delighted with the Scripture promises and prophecies, which relate to the future glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom upon earth.

I have sometimes had a sense of the excellent fullness of Christ, and his meetness and suitableness as a Savior; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten thousands. His blood and atonement have appeared sweet, and his righteousness sweet; which was always accompanied with ardency of spirit; and inward strugglings and breathings, and groanings that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myself, and swallowed up in Christ.

Once as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure, and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception—which continued as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have, several other times, had views very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects.

I have many times had a sense of the glory of the third person in the Trinity, in his office of Sanctifier; in his holy operations, communicating divine light and life to the soul. God, in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full, and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet communications; like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. And I have sometimes had an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God, as a word of life; as the light of life; a sweet, excellent, life-giving word; accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

Often, since I lived in this town, I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together; so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my own heart, than ever I had before

my conversion. It has often appeared to me, that if God should mark iniquity against me, I should appear the very worst of all mankind; of all that have been since the beginning of the world to this time; and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell. When others, that have come to talk with me about their soul concerns, have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness, by saying that it seemed to them, that they were as bad as the devil himself; I thought their expression seemed exceedingly faint and feeble, to represent my wickedness.

My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination; like an infinite deluge, or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often, for these many years, these expressions are in my mind, and in my mouth, "Infinite upon infinite—Infinite upon infinite!" When I look into my heart, and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fullness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself; far beyond the sight of every thing, but the eye of sovereign grace, that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet, it seems to me, that my conviction of sin is exceedingly small, and faint; it is enough to amaze me, that I have no more sense of my sin. I know certainly, that I have very little sense of my sinfulness. When I have had turns of weeping and crying for my sins, I thought I knew at the time, that my repentance was nothing to my sin.

I have greatly longed of late for a broken heart, and to lie low before God; and, when I ask for humility, I cannot bear the thoughts of being no more humble than other Christians. It seems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile self-exaltation to me, not to be the lowest in humility of all

mankind. Others speak of their longing to be "humbled to the dust." That may be a proper expression for them, but I always think of myself, that I ought, and it is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer, "to lie infinitely low before God." And it is affecting to think how ignorant I was, when a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy, and deceit, left in my heart.

I have a much greater sense of my universal, exceeding dependence on God's grace and strength, and mere good pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteousness. The very thought of any joy arising in me, on any consideration of my own amiableness, performances, or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, every where, all around me.

Though it seems to me, that, in some respects, I was a far better Christian, for two or three years after my first conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more constant delight and pleasure; yet, of late years, I have had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God, and a delight in that sovereignty; and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ, as a Mediator revealed in the Gospel. On one Saturday night, in particular, I had such a discovery of the excellency of the Gospel above all other doctrines, that I could not but say to myself, "This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine"; and of Christ, "This is my chosen Prophet." It appeared sweet, beyond all expression, to follow Christ, and to be taught, and enlightened, and instructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him. Another Saturday night (January, 1739), I had such a sense, how sweet and blessed a thing it was to walk in the way of duty; to do that which was right and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy mind of God; that it caused me to break forth into a kind of loud weeping, which held me some time, so that I was forced to shut myself up, and fasten the doors. I could not but, as it were,

cry out, "How happy are they which do that which is right in the sight of God! They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones!" I had, at the same time, a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleasure; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done.

THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM, or THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE A JOURNEY TOWARD HEAVEN

Hebrews, xi, 13, 14:

And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

THE apostle is here exhibiting the excellency of faith, by its glorious effects and happy issue in the saints of the Old Testament. Having enumerated examples of Abel, Enoch and Noah, of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Jacob, he relates that all "these died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth." In these words the apostle seems more immediately to refer to Abraham and Sarah, and their kindred who came with them from Haran, and from Ur of the Chaldees, as appears by the fifteenth verse, where he says, "and truly if they had been mindful of that country whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned."

Two things may be here observed.

1. The confession which they made concerning themselves to it, that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Of this we have a particular account concerning Abraham, "I am a stranger and a sojourner with you."¹ And it seems to have been a general sense of the patriarchs, by what Jacob says to Pharaoh. "And Jacob said to Pharaoh, the days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of

my life been, and have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."² "I am a stranger and a sojourner with thee, as all my fathers were."³

2. The inference that the apostle draws from hence, *viz.*, *that they sought another country as their home.* "For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country." In confessing that they were strangers, they plainly declared that this is not their country, that this is not the place where they are at home. And in confessing themselves to be pilgrims, they declared plainly that this is not their settled abode; but that they have respect to some other country, which they seek and to which they are traveling.

SECTION I

That this life ought to be so spent by us, as to be only a journey, or pilgrimage, toward heaven.

Here I would observe,

1. That we ought not to rest in the world and its enjoyments, but should desire heaven. We should *seek first the kingdom of God.*⁴ We ought above all things to desire a heavenly happiness, to be with God, and dwell with Jesus Christ. Though surrounded with outward enjoyments, and settled in families with desirable friends and relations; though we have companions whose society is delightful, and children in whom we see many promising qualifications; though we live by good neighbors, and are generally beloved where known; yet we ought not to take our rest in these things as our portion. We should be so far from resting in them that we should desire to leave them all, in God's due time. We ought to possess, enjoy, and use them, with no other view but readily to quit them, whenever we are called to it, and to change them willingly and cheerfully for heaven.

A traveler is not wont to rest in what he meets with, however comfortable and pleasing on the road. If he passes through pleasant places, flowery meadows, or shady groves, he does not take up his content in these things, but only takes a transient view

² Genesis, xlvii, 9.

³ Psalm xxxix, 12.

⁴ St. Matthew, vi, 33.

¹ Genesis, xxiii, 4.

of them as he goes along. He is not enticed by fine appearances to put off the thought of proceeding. No, but his journey's end is in his mind. If he meets with comfortable accommodations at an inn, he entertains no thoughts of settling there. He considers that these things are not his own, that he is but a stranger; and when he has refreshed himself, or tarried for a night, he is for going forward. And it is pleasant to him to think that so much of the way is gone.

So should we desire heaven more than the comforts and enjoyments of this life. The apostle mentions it as an encouraging, comfortable consideration to Christians, that they draw nearer their happiness. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Our hearts ought to be loose to these things, as that of a man on a journey, that we may as cheerfully part with them whenever God calls. "But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away."¹—These things, as only lent to us for a little while, to serve a present turn; but we should set our *hearts* on heaven, as our inheritance for ever.

2. We ought to seek heaven by traveling in the way that leads thither. This is a way of holiness. We should choose and desire to travel thither in this way and no other, and part with all those carnal appetites which as weights will tend to hinder us. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."² However pleasant the gratification of any appetite may be, we must lay it aside, if it be any hindrance, or a stumbling-block in the way to heaven.

We should travel on in the way of obedience to all God's commands, even the difficult as well as the easy, denying all our sinful inclinations and interests. The way to heaven is ascending; we must be content to travel up hill, though it be hard and tire-

some, and contrary to the natural bias of our flesh. We should follow Christ; the path he traveled was the right way to heaven. We should take up our cross and follow him, in meekness and lowliness of heart, obedience and charity, diligence to do good, and patience under afflictions. The way to heaven is a heavenly life, an imitation of those who are in heaven, in their holy enjoyments, loving, adoring, serving, and praising God and the Lamb. Even if we *could* go to heaven with the gratification of our lusts, we should prefer a way of holiness and conformity to the spiritual self-denying rules of the gospel.

3. We should travel on in this way in a laborious manner. Long journeys are attended with toil and fatigue, especially if through a wilderness. Persons, in such a case, expect no other than to suffer hardships and weariness. So we should travel in this way of holiness, improving our time and strength, to surmount the difficulties and obstacles that are in the way. The land we have to travel through is a wilderness; there are many mountains, rocks, and rough places that we must go over, and, therefore, there is a necessity that we should lay out our strength.

4. Our whole lives ought to be spent in traveling this road. We ought to begin *early*. This should be the *first* concern, when persons become capable of acting. When they first set out in the *world*, they should set out on *this* journey. And we ought to travel on with *assiduity*. It ought to be the work of every day. We should often think of our journey's end, and make it our daily work to travel on in the way that leads to it. He who is on a journey is often thinking of the destined place, and it is his daily care and business to get along, and to improve his time to get toward his journey's end. Thus should heaven be continually in our thoughts; and the immediate entrance or passage to it, *viz.*, death, should be present with us. We ought to *persevere* in this way as long as we live.

"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Though the road be difficult, and toilsome, we must hold out with patience, and be content to endure hardships. Though the journey be long, yet we must not stop short, but hold on till we

¹ I Corinthians, vii, 29-30.

² Hebrews, xii, 1.

arrive at the place we seek. Nor should we be discouraged with the length and difficulties of the way, as the children of Israel were, and be for turning back again. All our thought, and design, should be to press forward till we arrive.

5. We ought to be continually growing in holiness; and, in that respect, coming nearer and nearer to heaven. We should be endeavoring to come nearer to heaven in being more heavenly; becoming more and more like the inhabitants of heaven, in respect of holiness, and conformity to God; the knowledge of God and Christ; in clear views of the glory of God, the beauty of Christ, and the excellency of divine things, as we come nearer to the beatific vision. We should labor to be continually growing in divine love—that this may be an increasing flame in our hearts, till they ascend wholly in this flame—in obedience and an heavenly conversation; that we may do the will of God on earth, as the angels do in heaven: in comfort and spiritual joy; in sensible communion with God and Jesus Christ. Our path should be as “the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day.”¹ We ought to be hungering and thirsting after righteousness, after an increase in righteousness. “As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”² The perfection of heaven should be our mark. “This one thing I do: forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”³

6. All other concerns of life ought to be entirely subordinate to this. When a man is on a journey, all the steps he takes are subordinated to the aim of getting to his journey’s end. And, if he carries money or provisions with him, it is to supply him in his journey. So we ought wholly to subordinate all our other business, and all our temporal enjoyments, to this affair of traveling to heaven. When any thing we have becomes a clog and hindrance to us, we should quit it immediately. The use of our worldly enjoyments and possessions

should be with such a view, and in such a manner, as to further us in our way heavenward. Thus we should eat, and drink, and clothe ourselves, and improve the conversation and enjoyment of friends. And, whatever business we are setting about, whatever design we are engaging in, we should inquire with ourselves whether this business, or undertaking, will forward us in our way to heaven? And, if not, we should quit our design.

SECTION II

Why the Christian’s life is a journey or pilgrimage?

1. This world is not our abiding place. Our continuance here is but very short. Man’s days on the earth are as a shadow. It was never designed by God that this world should be our home. Neither did God give us these temporal accommodations for that end. If God has given us ample estates, and children, or other pleasant friends, it is with no such design that we should be furnished here as for a settled abode, but with a design that we should use them for the present, and then leave them in a very little time. When we are called to any secular business, or charged with the care of a family, if we improve our lives to any other purpose than as a journey toward heaven, all our labor will be lost. If we spend our lives in the pursuit of a temporal happiness; as riches, or sensual pleasures, credit and esteem from men, delight in our children, and the prospect of seeing them well brought up, and well settled, *etc.*—all these things will be of little significancy to us. Death will blow up all our hopes, and will put an end to these enjoyments. “The places that have known us will know us no more,” and “the eye that has seen us shall see us no more.” We must be taken away for ever from all these things; and it is uncertain when: it may be soon after we are put into the possession of them. And then, where will be all our worldly employments and enjoyments, when we are laid in the silent grave! “So man lieth down, and riseth not again, till the heavens be no more.”⁴

2. The future world was designed to be our settled and everlasting abode. There it

¹ Proverbs, iv, 18.

² I Peter, ii, 2.

³ Philippians, iii, 13-14.

⁴ Job, xiv, 12.

was intended that we should be fixed; and there alone is a lasting habitation, and a lasting inheritance. The present state is short and transitory, but our state in the other world is everlasting. And as we are there at first, so must we be without change. Our state in the future world, therefore, being eternal, is of so much greater importance than our state here that all our concerns in this world should be wholly subordinated to it.

3. Heaven is that place alone where our highest end and highest good is to be obtained. God hath made us for himself. "Of him, and through him, and to him are all things." Therefore, then do we attain to our highest end when we are brought to God: but that is by being brought to heaven; for that is God's throne, the place of his special presence. There is but a very imperfect union with God to be had in this world, a very imperfect knowledge of him in the midst of much darkness, a very imperfect conformity to God, mingled with abundance of estrangement. Here we can serve and glorify God, but in a very imperfect manner; our service being mingled with sin, which dishonors God. But when we get to heaven (if that ever be), we shall be brought to a perfect union with God, and have more clear views of him. There we shall be fully conformed to God, without any remaining sin: for "we shall see him as he is." There we shall serve God perfectly, and glorify him in an exalted manner, even to the utmost of the powers and capacity of our nature. Then we shall perfectly give up ourselves to God: our hearts will be pure and holy offerings, presented in a flame of divine love.

God is the highest good of the reasonable creature; and the enjoyment of him is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven fully to enjoy God, is *infinitely* better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of earthly friends, are but shadows; but the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are but scattered beams, but God is the sun. These are but streams, but God is the fountain. These are but drops, but God is the ocean. Therefore it becomes us to spend this life only as a

journey toward heaven, as it becomes us to make the seeking of our highest end and proper good the whole work of our lives, to which we should subordinate all other concerns of life. Why should we labor for, or set our hearts on any thing else, but that which is our proper end and true happiness?

4. Our present state, and all that belongs to it, is designed by him that made all things to be wholly in order to another world. This world was made for a place of preparation for another. Man's mortal life was given him that he might be prepared for his fixed state. And all that God has here given us is given to this purpose. The sun shines, and the rain falls upon us, and the earth yields her increase to us for this end. Civil, ecclesiastical, and family affairs, and all our personal concerns, are designed and ordered in subordination to a future world by the maker and disposer of all things. To this, therefore, they ought to be subordinated by us.

SECTION III

Instruction afforded by the consideration that life is a journey, or pilgrimage, toward heaven.

1. This doctrine may teach us moderation in our mourning for the loss of such dear friends who, while they lived, improved their lives to right purposes. If they lived a holy life, then their lives were a journey toward heaven. And why should we be immoderate in mourning, when they are got to their journey's end? Death, though it appears to us with a frightful aspect, is to them a great blessing. Their end is happy, and better than their beginning. "*The day of their death is better than the day of their birth.*"¹ While they lived, they desired heaven, and chose it above this world, or any of its enjoyments. For this they earnestly longed, and why should we grieve that they have obtained it? Now they have got to their Father's house. They find more comfort a thousand times, now they are got home, than they did in their journey. In this world they underwent much labor and toil; it was a wilderness they passed through. There were many difficulties in the way—mountains and rough places. It was labori-

¹ Ecclesiastes, vii, 1.

ous and fatiguing to travel the road, and they had many wearisome days and nights; but now they have got to their everlasting rest. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."¹ They look back upon the difficulties, and sorrows, and dangers of life, rejoicing that they have surmounted them all.

We are ready to look upon death as their calamity, and to mourn that those who were so dear to us should be in the dark grave; that they are there transformed to corruption and worms; taken away from their dear children and enjoyments, *etc.*, as though they were in awful circumstances. But this is owing to our infirmity; they are in a happy condition, inconceivably blessed. They do not mourn, but rejoice with exceeding joy: their mouths are filled with joyful songs, and they drink at rivers of pleasure. They find no mixture of grief that they have changed their earthly enjoyments, and the company of mortals, for heaven. Their life here, though in the best circumstances, was attended with much that was adverse and afflictive: but now there is an end to all adversity. "They shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."²

It is true, we shall see them no more in this world, yet we ought to consider that we are traveling toward the same place; and why should we break our hearts that they have got there before us? We are following after them, and hope, as soon as we get to our journey's end, to be with them again, in better circumstances. A degree of mourning for near relations when departed is not inconsistent with Christianity, but very agreeable to it; for as long as we are flesh and blood we have animal propensities and affections. But we have just reason that our mourning should be mingled with joy. "But I would not have you be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are

asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others that have no hope";³—*i. e.*, that they should not sorrow as the Heathen, who had no knowledge of a future happiness. This appears by the following verse: "*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.*"

2. If our lives ought to be only a journey toward heaven, how ill do they improve their lives that spend them in traveling toward hell? Some men spend their whole lives, from their infancy to their dying day, in going down the broad way to destruction. They not only draw nearer to hell as to time, but they every day grow more ripe for destruction; they are more assimilated to the inhabitants of the infernal world. While others press forward in the straight and narrow way to life, and laboriously travel up the hill toward Zion, against the inclinations and tendency of the flesh, these run with a swift career down to eternal death. This is the employment of every day, with all wicked men; and the whole day is spent in it. As soon as ever they awake in the morning they set out anew in the way to hell, and spend every waking moment in it. They begin in early days. "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies."⁴ They hold on it with perseverance. Many of them who live to be old are never weary in it; though they live to be an hundred years old, they will not cease traveling in the way to hell, till they arrive there. And all the concerns of life are subordinated to this employment. A wicked man is a servant of sin; his powers and faculties are employed in the service of sin, and in fitness for hell. And all his possessions are so used by him as to be subservient to the same purpose. Men spend their time in treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. Thus do all unclean persons, who live in lascivious practices in secret; all malicious persons; all profane persons, that neglect the duties of religion. Thus do all unjust persons, and those who are fraudulent and oppressive in their dealings. Thus do all backbiters and revilers; all covetous persons, that set their hearts chiefly on the riches of this world. Thus do

¹ Revelation, xiv, 13.

² Revelation, vii, 16-17.

³ 1 Thessalonians, iv, 13.

⁴ Psalm xlviii, 4.

tavern-haunters, and frequenters of evil company; and many other kinds that might be mentioned. Thus the bulk of mankind are hastening onward in the broad way to destruction; which is, as it were, filled up with the multitude that are going in it with one accord. And they are every day going to hell out of this broad way by thousands. Multitudes are continually flowing down into the great lake of fire and brimstone, as some mighty river constantly disembogues its water into the ocean.

3. Hence when persons are converted they do but begin their work, and set out in the way they have to go. They never till then do any thing at that work in which their whole lives ought to be spent. Persons before conversion never take a step that way. Then does a man first set out on his journey, when he is brought home to Christ; and so far is he from having done his work, that his care and labor in his Christian work and business is then but begun, in which he must spend the remaining part of his life.

Those persons do ill who, when they are converted, and have obtained a hope of their being in a good condition, do not strive as earnestly as they did before, while they were under awakenings. They ought, henceforward, as long as they live, to be as earnest and laborious, as watchful and careful as ever; yea, they should increase more and more. It is no just excuse, that now they have obtained conversion. Should not we be as diligent that we may serve and glorify God as that we ourselves may be happy? And if we have obtained grace, yet we ought to strive as much that we may obtain the other degrees that are before, as we did to obtain that small degree that is behind. The apostle tells us, that he forgot what was behind, and reached forth toward what was before.¹

Yea, those who are converted have now a further reason to strive for grace; for they have seen something of its excellency. A man who has once tasted the blessings of Canaan has more reason to press toward it than he had before. And they who are converted should strive to "make their calling and election sure." All those who are converted are not sure of it; and those who are sure, do not know that they shall

be always so; and still seeking and serving God with the utmost diligence is the way to have assurance, and to have it maintained.

SECTION IV

An exhortation so to spend the present life that it may only be a journey toward heaven.

Labor to obtain such a disposition of mind that you may choose heaven for your inheritance and home, and may earnestly long for it, and be willing to change this world, and all its enjoyments, for heaven. Labor to have your heart taken up so much about heaven, and heavenly enjoyments, as that you may rejoice when God calls you to leave your best earthly friends and comforts for heaven, there to enjoy God and Christ.

Be persuaded to travel in the way that leads to heaven; *viz.*, in holiness, self-denial, mortification, obedience to all the commands of God, following Christ's example, in a way of a heavenly life, or imitation of the saints and angels in heaven. Let it be your daily work, from morning till night, and hold out in it to the end; let nothing stop or discourage you, or turn you aside from this road. And let all other concerns be subordinated to this. Consider the reasons that have been mentioned why you should thus spend your life; that this world is not your abiding place, that the future world is to be your everlasting abode; and that the enjoyments and concerns of this world are given entirely in order to another. And consider further for motive,

1. How worthy is heaven that your life should be wholly spent as a journey toward it. To what better purpose can you spend your life, whether you respect your duty or your interest? What better end can you propose to your journey than to obtain heaven? You are placed in this world, with a choice given you, that you may travel which way you please; and one way leads to heaven. Now can you direct your course better than this way? All men have some aim or other in living. Some mainly seek worldly things; they spend their days in such pursuits. But is not heaven, where is fullness of joy for ever, much more worthy to be sought by you? How can you better employ your strength, use your means, and spend your days, than in traveling the road

¹ Philippians, iii, 13.

that leads to the everlasting enjoyment of God, to his glorious presence, to the new Jerusalem, to the heavenly Mount Zion, where all your desires will be filled, and no danger of ever losing your happiness? No man is at home in this world, whether he choose heaven or not; here he is but a transient person. Where can you choose your home better than in heaven?

2. This is the way to have death comfortable to us. To spend our lives so as to be only a-journeying toward heaven is the way to be free from bondage, and to have the prospect and forethought of death comfortable. Does the traveler think of his journey's end with fear and terror? Is it terrible to him to think that he has almost got to his journey's end? Were the children of Israel sorry, after forty years' travel in the wilderness, when they had almost got to Canaan? This is the way to be able to part with the world without grief. Does it grieve the traveler, when he has got home, to quit his staff and load of provisions that he had to sustain him by the way?

3. No more of your life will be pleasant to think of when you come to die, than has been spent after this manner. If you have spent none of your life this way, your whole life will be terrible to you to think of, unless you die under some great delusion. You will see then, that all of your life that has been spent otherwise is lost. You will then see the vanity of all other aims that you may have proposed to yourself. The thought of what you here possessed and enjoyed will not be pleasant to you, unless you can think also that you have subordinated them to this purpose.

4. Consider that those who are willing thus to spend their lives as a journey toward heaven, may have heaven. Heaven, however high and glorious, is attainable for such poor worthless creatures as we are. We may attain that glorious region which is the habitation of angels; yea, the dwelling-place of the Son of God; and where is the glorious presence of the great Jehovah. And we may have it freely, without money and without price; if we are but willing to travel the road that leads to it, and bend our course that way as long as we live, we may and shall have heaven for our eternal resting place.

5. Let it be considered, that if our lives be not a journey toward heaven they will be a journey to hell. All mankind, after they have been here a short while, go to either of the two great receptacles of all that depart out of this world; the one is *heaven*, whither a small number, in comparison, travel; and the other is *hell*, whither the bulk of mankind throng. And one or the other of these must be the issue of our course in this world.

I shall conclude by giving a few *directions*:

1. Labor to get a sense of the vanity of this world; on account of the little satisfaction that is to be enjoyed here; its short continuance, and unserviceableness when we most stand in need of help, *viz.*, on a death-bed. All men that live any considerable time in the world might see enough to convince them of its vanity, if they would but consider. Be persuaded, therefore, to exercise consideration when you see and hear, from time to time, of the death of others. Labor to turn your thoughts this way. See the vanity of the world in such a glass.

2. Labor to be much acquainted with heaven. If you are not acquainted with it, you will not be likely to spend your life as a journey thither. You will not be sensible of its worth, nor will you long for it. Unless you are much conversant in your mind with a better good, it will be exceeding difficult to you to have your hearts loose from these things, and to use them only in subordination to something else, and be ready to part with them for the sake of that better good. Labor, therefore, to obtain a realizing sense of a heavenly world, to get a firm belief of its reality, and to be very much conversant with it in your thoughts.

3. Seek heaven only by Jesus Christ. Christ tells us that he is the way, and the truth, and the life.¹ He tells that he is the door of the sheep. "I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved; and go in and out and find pasture."² If we, therefore, would improve our lives as a journey toward heaven, we must seek it by him, and not by our own righteousness; as expecting to obtain it only for his sake, looking to him, having our dependence on him, who has procured it for us by his merit.

¹ St. John, xiv, 6

² St. John, x, 9.

And expect strength to walk in holiness, the way that leads to heaven, only from him.

4. Let Christians help one another in going this journey. There are many ways whereby Christians might greatly forward one another in their way to heaven, as by religious conference, *etc.* Therefore let them be exhorted to go this journey as it were in company, conversing together, and assisting one another. Company is very desirable in a journey, but in none so much as this. Let them go united, and not fall out by the way, which would be to hinder one another; but use all means they can to help each other up the hill. This would insure a more successful traveling, and a more joyful meeting at their Father's house in glory.

SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD¹

Deuteronomy, xxxii, 35:

Their foot shall slide in due time.

IN this verse is threatened the vengeance of God on the wicked unbelieving Israelites, who were God's visible people, and who lived under the means of grace; but who, notwithstanding all God's wonderful works toward them, remained (as ver. 28) void of counsel, having no understanding in them. Under all the cultivations of heaven they brought forth bitter and poisonous fruit—as in the two verses next preceding the text.—The expression I have chosen for my text, *Their foot shall slide in due time*, seems to imply the following things, relating to the punishment and destruction to which these wicked Israelites were exposed.

1. That they were always exposed to *destruction*; as one that stands or walks in slippery places is always exposed to fall. This is implied in the manner of their destruction coming upon them, being represented by their foot sliding. The same is expressed, Psalm lxxiii, 18: "Surely thou

didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction."

2. It implies that they were always exposed to sudden, unexpected destruction. As he that walks in slippery places is every moment liable to fall, he cannot foresee one moment whether he shall stand or fall the next; and when he does fall, he falls at once without warning: Which is also expressed in Psalm lxxiii, 18, 19: "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction: How are they brought into desolation as in a moment!"

3. Another thing implied is, that they are liable to fall *of themselves*, without being thrown down by the hand of another; as he that stands or walks on slippery ground needs nothing but his own weight to throw him down.

4. That the reason why they are not fallen already, and do not fall now, is only that God's appointed time is not come. For it is said that when that due time, or appointed time comes, *their foot shall slide*. Then they shall be left to fall, as they are inclined by their own weight. God will not hold them up in these slippery places any longer, but will let them go; and then, at that very instant, they shall fall into destruction; as he that stands on such slippery declining ground, on the edge of a pit, he cannot stand alone, when he is let go he immediately falls and is lost.

The observation from the words that I would now insist upon is this: "There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God." By the *mere* pleasure of God, I mean his *sovereign* pleasure, his arbitrary will, restrained by no obligation, hindered by no manner of difficulty, any more than if nothing else but God's mere will had in the least degree, or in any respect whatsoever, any hand in the preservation of wicked men one moment. The truth of this observation may appear by the following considerations.

1. There is no want of *power* in God to cast wicked men into hell at any moment. Men's hands cannot be strong when God rises up. The strongest have no power to resist him, nor can any deliver out of his hands. He is not only able to cast wicked men into hell, but he can most easily do it.

¹ Preached at Enfield, 3 July, 1741, at a time of great awakenings, and attended with remarkable impressions on many of the hearers (Dwight). Published at Boston in the same year, at Edinburgh in 1745, and at New York in 1753. It is perhaps necessary to point out that the preceding sermon is as essential as this one to an understanding alike of Edwards's beliefs and of New England Puritanism.

Sometimes an earthly prince meets with a great deal of difficulty to subdue a rebel, who has found means to fortify himself, and has made himself strong by the numbers of his followers. But it is not so with God. There is no fortress that is any defense from the power of God. Though hand join in hand, and vast multitudes of God's enemies combine and associate themselves, they are easily broken in pieces. They are as great heaps of light chaff before the whirlwind, or large quantities of dry stubble before devouring flames. We find it easy to tread on and crush a worm that we see crawling on the earth; so it is easy for us to cut or singe a slender thread that any thing hangs by: thus easy is it for God, when he pleases, to cast his enemies down to hell. What are we, that we should think to stand before him, at whose rebuke the earth trembles, and before whom the rocks are thrown down?

2. They *deserve* to be cast into hell; so that divine justice never stands in the way, it makes no objection against God's using his power at any moment to destroy them. Yea, on the contrary, justice calls aloud for an infinite punishment of their sins: Divine justice says of the tree that brings forth such grapes of Sodom: "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" (Luke, xiii, 7.) The sword of divine justice is every moment brandished over their heads, and it is nothing but the hand of arbitrary mercy, and God's mere will, that holds it back.

3. They are already under a sentence of *condemnation* to hell. They do not only justly deserve to be cast down thither, but the sentence of the law of God, that eternal and immutable rule of righteousness that God has fixed between him and mankind, is gone out against them, and stands against them, so that they are bound over already to hell. John, iii, 18: "He that believeth not is condemned already." So that every unconverted man properly belongs to hell; that is his place; from thence he is. John, viii, 23: "Ye are from beneath." And thither he is bound; it is the place that justice, and God's word, and the sentence of his unchangeable law assign to him.

4. They are now the objects of that very same *anger* and wrath of God that is expressed in the torments of hell. And the

reason why they do not go down to hell at each moment is not because God, in whose power they are, is not then very angry with them; as he is with many miserable creatures now tormented in hell, who there feel and bear the fierceness of his wrath. Yea, God is a great deal more angry with great numbers that are now on earth: yea, doubtless, with many that are now in this congregation, who it may be are at ease, than he is with many of those who are now in the flames of hell.

So that it is not because God is unmindful of their wickedness, and does not resent it, that he does not let loose his hand and cut them off. God is not altogether such an one as themselves, though they may imagine him to be so. The wrath of God burns against them, their damnation does not slumber; the pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them; the flames do now rage and glow. The glittering sword is whet, and held over them, and the pit hath opened its mouth under them.

5. The *devil* stands ready to fall upon them, and seize them as his own, at what moment God shall permit him. They belong to him; he has their souls in his possession, and under his dominion. The Scripture represents them as his goods (Luke, xi, 12). The devils watch them; they are ever by them at their right hand; they stand waiting for them, like greedy hungry lions that see their prey, and expect to have it, but are for the present kept back. If God should withdraw his hand, by which they are restrained, they would in one moment fly upon their poor souls. The old serpent is gaping for them; hell opens its mouth wide to receive them; and if God should permit it they would be hastily swallowed up and lost.

6. There are in the souls of wicked men those hellish *principles* reigning, that would presently kindle and flame out into hell fire, if it were not for God's restraints. There is laid in the very nature of carnal men a foundation for the torments of hell. There are those corrupt principles in reigning power in them, and in full possession of them, that are seeds of hell fire. These principles are active and powerful, exceeding violent in their nature, and if it were not for the

restraining hand of God upon them they would soon break out, they would flame out after the same manner as the same corruptions, the same enmity does in the hearts of damned souls, and would beget the same torments as they do in them. The souls of the wicked are in Scripture compared to the troubled sea (Isaiah, lvii, 20). For the present, God restrains their wickedness by his mighty power, as he does the raging waves of the troubled sea, saying: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further"; but if God should withdraw that restraining power it would soon carry all before it. Sin is the ruin and misery of the soul; it is destructive in its nature; and if God should leave it without restraint there would need nothing else to make the soul perfectly miserable. The corruption of the heart of man is immoderate and boundless in its fury; and while wicked men live here it is like fire pent up by God's restraints, whereas if it were let loose it would set on fire the course of nature; and as the heart is now a sink of sin, so, if sin was not restrained, it would immediately turn the soul into a fiery oven, or a furnace of fire and brimstone.

7. It is no security to wicked men for one moment that there are no visible means of death at hand. It is no security to a natural man that he is now in health, and that he does not see which way he should now immediately go out of the world by any accident, and that there is no visible danger in any respect in his circumstances. The manifold and continual experience of the world in all ages shows this is no evidence that a man is not on the very brink of eternity, and that the next step will not be into another world. The unseen, unthought-of ways and means of persons going suddenly out of the world are innumerable and inconceivable. Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they will not bear their weight, and these places are not seen. The arrows of death fly unseen at noon-day; the sharpest sight cannot discern them. God has so many different unsearchable ways of taking wicked men out of the world and sending them to hell, that there is nothing to make it appear that God had need to be at the expense of a

miracle, or go out of the ordinary course of his providence, to destroy any wicked man, at any moment. All the means that there are of sinners going out of the world, are so in God's hands, and so universally and absolutely subject to his power and determination, that it does not depend at all the less on the mere will of God, whether sinners shall at any moment go to hell, than if means were never made use of, or at all concerned in the case.

8. Natural men's prudence and care to preserve their own lives, or the care of others to preserve them, do not secure them a moment. To this, divine providence and universal experience do also bear testimony. There is this clear evidence that men's own wisdom is no security to them from death: that if it were otherwise we should see some difference between the wise and politic men of the world, and others, with regard to their liableness to early and unexpected death: but how is it in fact? Ecclesiastes, ii, 16: "How dieth the wise man? even as the fool."

9. All wicked men's pains and *contrivance* which they use to escape hell, while they continue to reject Christ, and so remain wicked men, do not secure them from hell one moment. Almost every natural man that hears of hell flatters himself that he shall escape it; he depends upon himself for his own security; he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do. Every one lays out matters in his own mind how he shall avoid damnation, and flatters himself that he contrives well for himself, and that his schemes will not fail. They hear indeed that there are but few saved, and that the greater part of men that have died heretofore are gone to hell; but each one imagines that he lays out matters better for his own escape than others have done. He does not intend to come to that place of torment; he says within himself that he intends to take effectual care, and to order matters so for himself as not to fail.

But the foolish children of men miserably delude themselves in their own schemes, and in confidence in their own strength and wisdom; they trust to nothing but a shadow. The greater part of those who heretofore have lived under the same means of grace,

and are now dead, are undoubtedly gone to hell; and it was not because they were not as wise as those who are now alive; it was not because they did not lay out matters as well for themselves to secure their own escape. If we could speak with them, and inquire of them, one by one, whether they expected, when alive, and when they used to hear about hell, ever to be the subjects of that misery, we doubtless should hear one and another reply: "No, I never intended to come here; I had laid out matters otherwise in my mind; I thought I should contrive well for myself; I thought my scheme good. I intended to take effectual care; but it came upon me unexpected; I did not look for it at that time, and in that manner; it came as a thief: Death outwitted me: God's wrath was too quick for me. Oh, my cursed foolishness! I was flattering myself, and pleasing myself with vain dreams of what I would do hereafter; and when I was saying, Peace and safety, then suddenly destruction came upon me."

10. God has laid himself under *no obligation*, by any promise to keep any natural man out of hell one moment. God certainly has made no promises either of eternal life, or of any deliverance or preservation from eternal death, but what are contained in the covenant of grace, the promises that are given in Christ, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. But surely they have no interest in the promises of the covenant of grace who are not the children of the covenant, who do not believe in any of the promises, and have no interest in the Mediator of the covenant.

So that, whatever some have imagined and pretended about promises made to natural men's earnest seeking and knocking, it is plain and manifest that, whatever pains a natural man takes in religion, whatever prayers he makes, till he believes in Christ God is under no manner of obligation to keep him a moment from eternal destruction.

So that thus it is, that natural men are held in the hand of God, over the pit of hell; they have deserved the fiery pit, and are already sentenced to it; and God is dreadfully provoked, his anger is as great toward them as to those that are actually suffering the executions of the fierceness of his wrath in hell, and they have done nothing in the

least to appease or abate that anger, neither is God in the least bound by any promise to hold them up one moment; the devil is waiting for them, hell is gaping for them, the flames gather and flash about them, and would fain lay hold on them, and swallow them up; the fire pent up in their own hearts is struggling to break out; and they have no interest in any Mediator, there are no means within reach that can be any security to them. In short, they have no refuge, nothing to take hold of; all that preserves them every moment is the mere arbitrary will, and unconvenanted, unobliged forbearance of an incensed God.

APPLICATION

The use of this awful subject may be for awakening unconverted persons in this congregation. This that you have heard is the case of every one of you that are out of Christ. That world of misery, that lake of burning brimstone, is extended abroad under you. There is the dreadful pit of the glowing flames of the wrath of God; there is hell's wide gaping mouth open; and you have nothing to stand upon, nor any thing to take hold of; there is nothing between you and hell but the air; it is only the power and mere pleasure of God that holds you up.

You probably are not sensible of this; you find you are kept out of hell, but do not see the hand of God in it, but look at other things, as the good state of your bodily constitution, your care of your own life, and the means you use for your own preservation. But indeed these things are nothing; if God should withdraw his hand they would avail no more to keep you from falling than the thin air to hold up a person that is suspended in it.

Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downward with great weight and pressure toward hell; and if God should let you go you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf, and your healthy constitution, and your own care and prudence, and best contrivance, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you and keep you out of hell than a spider's web would have to stop a fallen rock. Were it not for the sovereign pleasure of God, the earth would not bear

you one moment; for you are a burden to it; the creation groans with you; the creature is made subject to the bondage of your corruption, not willingly; the sun does not willingly shine upon you to give you light to serve sin and Satan; the earth does not willingly yield her increase to satisfy your lusts; nor is it willingly a stage for your wickedness to be acted upon; the air does not willingly serve you for breath to maintain the flame of life in your vitals, while you spend your life in the service of God's enemies. God's creatures are good, and were made for men to serve God with, and do not willingly subserve to any other purpose, and groan when they are abused to purposes so directly contrary to their nature and end. And the world would spew you out, were it not for the sovereign hand of him who hath subjected it in hope. There are black clouds of God's wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder; and were it not for the restraining hand of God it would immediately burst forth upon you. The sovereign pleasure of God, for the present, stays his rough wind; otherwise it would come with fury, and your destruction would come like a whirlwind, and you would be like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose. It is true, that judgment against your evil works has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been withheld; but your guilt in the meantime is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are constantly rising, and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward. If God should only withdraw his hand from the flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power; and if your strength were ten

thousand times greater than it is, yea, ten thousand times greater than the strength of the stoutest, sturdiest devil in hell, it would be nothing to withstand or endure it.

The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood. Thus all you that never passed under a great change of heart, by the mighty power of the Spirit of God upon your souls; all you that were never born again, and made new creatures, and raised from being dead in sin, to a state of new, and before altogether unexperienced light and life, are in the hands of an angry God. However you may have reformed your life in many things, and may have had religious affections, and may keep up a form of religion in your families and closets, and in the house of God, it is nothing but his mere pleasure that keeps you from being this moment swallowed up in everlasting destruction. However unconvinced you may now be of the truth of what you hear, by and by you will be fully convinced of it. Those that are gone from being in the like circumstances with you see that it was so with them; for destruction came suddenly upon most of them, when they expected nothing of it, and while they were saying, Peace and safety; now they see that those things on which they depended for peace and safety were nothing but thin air and empty shadows.

The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath toward you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince; and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else that you did not go to hell the

last night; that you were suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no other reason to be given why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you have not gone to hell since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not this very moment drop down into hell.

O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: it is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment.— And consider here more particularly,

1. *Whose wrath it is:* it is the wrath of the infinite God. If it were only the wrath of man, though it were of the most potent prince, it would be comparatively little to be regarded. The wrath of kings is very much dreaded, especially of absolute monarchs, who have the possessions and lives of their subjects wholly in their power, to be disposed of at their mere will. Proverbs, xx, 2: "The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: Whoso provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul." The subject that very much enrages an arbitrary prince is liable to suffer the most extreme torments that human art can invent, or human power can inflict. But the greatest earthly potentates in their greatest majesty and strength, and when clothed in their greatest terrors, are but feeble, despicable worms of the dust in comparison of the great and almighty Creator and King of heaven and earth. It is but little that they can do, when most enraged, and when they have exerted the utmost of their fury. All the

kings of the earth, before God, are as grasshoppers; they are nothing, and less than nothing; both their love and their hatred is to be despised. The wrath of the great King of kings is as much more terrible than theirs as his majesty is greater. Luke xii, 4, 5: "And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."

2. It is the *fierceness* of his wrath that you are exposed to. We often read of the fury of God, as in Isaiah, lix, 18: "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries." So Isaiah, lxvi, 15: "For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire." And in many other places. So, Revelation, xix, 15, we read of "the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." The words are exceeding terrible. If it had only been said, "the wrath of God," the words would have implied that which is infinitely dreadful; but it is "the fierceness and wrath of God." The fury of God! the fierceness of Jehovah! Oh, how dreadful must that be! Who can utter or conceive what such expressions carry in them! But it is also "the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." As though there would be a very great manifestation of his almighty power in what the fierceness of his wrath should inflict, as though omnipotence should be as it were enraged, and exerted, as men are wont to exert their strength in the fierceness of their wrath. Oh! then, what will be the consequence! What will become of the poor worms that shall suffer it! Whose hands can be strong? And whose heart can endure? To what a dreadful, inexpressible, inconceivable depth of misery must the poor creature be sunk who shall be the subject of this!

Consider this, you that are here present, that yet remain in an unregenerate state. That God will execute the fierceness of his anger implies that he will inflict wrath without any pity. When God beholds the ineffable extremity of your case, and sees your torment to be so vastly disproportioned

to your strength, and sees how your poor soul is crushed, and sinks down, as it were, into an infinite gloom, he will have no compassion upon you, he will not forbear the executions of his wrath, or in the least lighten his hand; there shall be no moderation or mercy, nor will God then at all stay his rough wind; he will have no regard to your welfare, nor be at all careful lest you should suffer too much in any other sense, than only that you shall *not suffer beyond what strict justice requires*. Nothing shall be withheld, because it is so hard for you to bear. Ezekiel, viii, 18: "Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them." Now God stands ready to pity you; this is a day of mercy; you may cry now with some encouragement of obtaining mercy. But when once the day of mercy is past your most lamentable and dolorous cries and shrieks will be in vain; you will be wholly lost and thrown away of God, as to any regard to your welfare. God will have no other use to put you to but to suffer misery; you shall be continued in being to no other end; for you will be a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction; and there will be no other use of this vessel but to be filled full of wrath. God will be so far from pitying you when you cry to him, that it is said he will only "laugh and mock" (Proverbs, i, 25, 26, *etc.*).

How awful are those words, Isaiah, lxiii, 3, which are the words of the great God: "I will tread them in mine anger, and will trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." It is perhaps impossible to conceive of words that carry in them greater manifestation of these three things, *viz.*, contempt, and hatred, and fierceness of indignation. If you cry to God to pity you, he will be so far from pitying you in your doleful case, or showing you the least regard or favor, that, instead of that, he will only tread you under foot. And though he will know that you cannot bear the weight of omnipotence treading upon you, yet he will not regard that, but he will crush you under his feet without mercy; he will crush out your blood, and make it fly, and it shall be sprinkled on his garments,

so as to stain all his raiment. He will not only hate you, but he will have you in the utmost contempt; no place shall be thought fit for you, but under his feet to be trodden down as the mire of the streets.

3. The *misery* you are exposed to is that which God will inflict to that end that he might show what that wrath of Jehovah is. God hath had it on his heart to show to angels and men, both how excellent his love is, and also how terrible his wrath is. Sometimes earthly kings have a mind to show how terrible their wrath is, by the extreme punishments they would execute on those that would provoke them. Nebuchadnezzar, that mighty and haughty monarch of the Chaldean empire, was willing to show his wrath when enraged with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and accordingly gave orders that the burning fiery furnace should be heated seven times hotter than it was before; doubtless, it was raised to the utmost degree of fierceness that human art could raise it. But the great God is also willing to show his wrath, and magnify his awful majesty and mighty power in the extreme sufferings of his enemies. Romans, ix, 22: "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endure with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" And seeing this is his design, and what he has determined, even to show how terrible the unrestrained wrath, the fury and fierceness of Jehovah is, he will do it to effect. There will be something accomplished and brought to pass that will be dreadful with a witness. When the great and angry God hath risen up and executed his awful vengeance on the poor sinner, and the wretch is actually suffering the infinite weight and power of his indignation, then will God call upon the whole universe to behold that awful majesty and mighty power that is to be seen in it. Isaiah, xxxiii, 12-14: "And the people shall be as the burnings of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. Hear ye that are far off, what I have done; and ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites," *etc.*

Thus it will be with you that are in an unconverted state, if you continue in it; the infinite might, and majesty, and terrible-

ness of the omnipotent God shall be magnified upon you, in the ineffable strength of your torments. You shall be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and when you shall be in this state of suffering, the glorious inhabitants of heaven shall go forth and look on the awful spectacle, that they may see what the wrath and fierceness of the Almighty is; and when they have seen it, they will fall down and adore that great power and majesty. Isaiah, lxvi, 23, 24: "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

4. It is *everlasting* wrath. It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity. There will be no end to this exquisite, horrible misery. When you look forward, you shall see a long for-ever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts and amaze your soul; and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all. You will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, millions of millions of ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty merciless vengeance; and then, when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point to what remains. So that your punishment will indeed be infinite. Oh, who can express what the state of a soul in such circumstances is! All that we can possibly say about it gives but a very feeble, faint representation of it; it is inexpressible and inconceivable; for "who knows the power of God's anger?"

How dreadful is the state of those that are daily and hourly in the danger of this great wrath and infinite misery! But this is the dismal case of every soul in this congregation that has not been born again, however moral and strict, sober and religious, they may otherwise be. Oh, that you would

consider it, whether you be young or old! There is reason to think that there are many in this congregation now hearing this discourse, that will actually be the subjects of this very misery to all eternity. We know not who they are, or in what seats they sit, or what thoughts they now have. It may be they are now at ease, and hear all these things without much disturbance, and are now flattering themselves that they are not the persons, promising themselves that they shall escape. If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing would it be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight would it be to see such a person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But, alas! instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell? And it would be a wonder if some that are now present should not be in hell in a very short time, even before this year is out. And it would be no wonder if some persons that now sit here, in some seats of this meeting-house, in health, quiet and secure, should be there before to-morrow morning. Those of you that finally continue in a natural condition, that shall keep out of hell longest, will be there in a little time! Your damnation does not slumber; it will come swiftly and, in all probability, very suddenly upon many of you. You have reason to wonder that you are not already in hell. It is doubtless the case of some whom you have seen and known, that never deserved hell more than you, and that heretofore appeared as likely to have been now alive as you. Their case is past all hope; they are crying in extreme misery and perfect despair; but here you are in the land of the living and in the house of God, and have an opportunity to obtain salvation. What would not those poor damned hopeless souls give for one day's opportunity such as you now enjoy!

And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open, and stands in calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day wherein many are flocking to him, and pressing into the kingdom of God. Many are daily coming from the east, west, north, and south;

many that were very lately in the same miserable condition that you are in, are now in a happy state, with their hearts filled with love to him who has loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. How awful is it to be left behind at such a day! To see so many others feasting, while you are pining and perishing! To see so many rejoicing and singing for joy of heart, while you have cause to mourn for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit! How can you rest one moment in such a condition? Are not your souls as precious as the souls of the people at Suffield,¹ where they are flocking from day to day to Christ?

Are there not many here who have lived long in the world, and are not to this day born again? and so are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and have done nothing ever since they have lived but treasure up wrath against the day of wrath? Oh, sirs, your case, in an especial manner, is extremely dangerous. Your guilt and hardness of heart is extremely great. Do you not see how generally persons of your years are passed over and left, in the present remarkable and wonderful dispensation of God's mercy? You had need to consider yourselves, and awake thoroughly out of sleep. You cannot bear the fierceness and wrath of the infinite God.—And you, young men, and young women, will you neglect this precious season which you now enjoy, when so many others of your age are renouncing all youthful vanities, and flocking to Christ? You especially have now an extraordinary opportunity; but if you neglect it, it will soon be with you as with those persons who spent all the precious days of youth in sin, and are now come to such a dreadful pass in blindness and hardness.—And you, children, who are unconverted, do not you know that you are going down to hell, to bear the dreadful wrath of

that God who is now angry with you every day and every night? Will you be content to be the children of the devil, when so many other children in the land are converted and are become the holy and happy children of the King of kings?

And let every one that is yet [out] of Christ, and hanging over the pit of hell, whether they be old men and women, or middle aged, or young people, or little children, now harken to the loud calls of God's word and providence. This acceptable year of the Lord, a day of such great favors to some, will doubtless be a day of as remarkable vengeance to others. Men's hearts harden, and their guilt increases apace at such a day as this, if they neglect their souls; and never was there so great danger of such persons being given up to hardness of heart and blindness of mind. God seems now to be hastily gathering in his elect in all parts of the land; and probably the greater part of adult persons that ever shall be saved will be brought in now in a little time, and that it will be as it was on the great outpouring of the Spirit upon the Jews in the apostles' days; the election will obtain, and the rest will be blinded. If this should be the case with you, you will eternally curse this day, and will curse the day that ever you was born, to see such a season of the pouring out of God's Spirit, and will wish that you had died and gone to hell before you had seen it. Now undoubtedly it is as it was in the days of John the Baptist, the ax is in an extraordinary manner laid at the root of the trees, that every tree which brings not forth good fruit may be hewn down and cast into the fire.

Therefore, let every one that is out of Christ now awake and fly from the wrath to come. The wrath of Almighty God is now undoubtedly hanging over a great part of this congregation: Let every one fly out of Sodom: "Haste and escape for your lives, look not behind you, escape to the mountain, lest you be consumed."

¹ A town near Enfield.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706-1790)

A large portion of Franklin's own account of the earlier half of his life is here reprinted, and the classic story need not be summarized. But its readers should be aware that their author's later life was not less varied than the portion of which he treats, and, too, that it was full of larger triumphs. Franklin, because of the later limit of his *Autobiography*, is still too generally thought of as merely the archetype of the American self-made man—the tallow chandler's son and printer's boy who rose by his own efforts to prosperity, independence, and a position of local influence. And the prudential maxims gathered together from *Poor Richard's Almanac* in the celebrated *Way to Wealth* go properly enough with this picture, though some may feel that the form given to these maxims points to a nimbler wit than the mere successful money-maker usually commands. If so, it points correctly; and with that nimble wit went a sound sense of what is practically useful, a large public spirit, and a sane humanitarianism which informed a great public career to which the successful pursuit of the "almighty dollar" was but the prelude.

By the middle 1750's Franklin had already achieved a more than local fame both as a skillful negotiator and as an inventor and scientific discoverer, and he had fairly earned, by his "improvements in the electric branch of natural philosophy," honorary degrees from Yale and Harvard (later he received doctoral degrees from St. Andrews, Edinburgh, and Oxford). He had also perceived, under the stimulus of threatened war with France, and publicly urged, the necessity of a close union of all the British colonies. In 1757 he was, because of his many successes in the service of his colony, Pennsylvania's inevitable choice as her agent to present her case against the Proprietors to the authorities in London. He remained in England a little over five years, eventually succeeding in his mission, and, in the meantime, making many warm friends. To one of them he wrote in 1763, the year following his return to Philadelphia: "Of all the enviable things England has, I envy it most its people. Why should that petty island, which, compared to America, is but like a stepping-stone in a brook, scarce enough of it above water to keep one's shoes dry; why, I say, should that little island enjoy, in almost every neighborhood, more sensible, virtuous, and elegant minds than we can collect in ranging one hundred leagues of our vast forests?"

To the island whose cultured and intelligent people he found so thoroughly congenial he was again sent by Pennsylvania in 1764, and there he remained, acting after a while as agent also for other colonies (Georgia, New Jersey, Massachusetts), until 1775, when he could no longer be useful in London. Even he could not turn the tide of ignorance and folly which helped to bring on the Revolution, though he did all that one man could do to lessen British ignorance of the colonies. One illustration of his lighter manner of combating absurd misrepresentations must be quoted. In 1765 he wrote to the editor of a newspaper, pretending to defend "an honest set of writers, whose comfortable living depends on collecting and supplying the printers with news at the small price of sixpence an article, and who always show their regard to truth by contradicting in a subsequent article such as are wrong—for another sixpence." Englishmen might doubt these writers' reports of manufactories being set up in America, to the prejudice of industry in Great Britain, because, for instance, American sheep have but little wool. But, rejoined Franklin: "Do not let us suffer ourselves to be amused with such groundless objections. The very tails of the American sheep are so laden with wool that each has a little car or wagon on four little wheels, to support and keep it from trailing on the ground." And "this is as certainly true as the account said to be from Quebec, in all the papers of last week, that the inhabitants of Canada are making preparations for a cod and whale fishery this 'summer in the upper lakes.' Ignorant people may object that the upper lakes are fresh, and that cod and whale are salt-water fish; but let them know, Sir, that cod, like other fish when attacked by their enemies, fly into any water where they can be safest; that whales, when they have a mind to eat cod, pursue them wherever they fly; and that the grand leap of the whale in that chase up the fall of Niagara is esteemed, by all who have seen it, as one of the finest spectacles in nature."

This is merely fooling, but it must have been effective fooling, and Franklin's efforts, whether gay or grave, for better understanding were unrelenting and well considered—were those of a shrewd and capable diplomat. Nevertheless, they were unavailing, and in 1775 "that fine and noble China

vase, the British Empire," was about to break, and he came home to help break it. He was immediately made a member of the Second Continental Congress, and also Postmaster-General of the colonies, and he took his proper place as a leader in the preparations for war. This, most would feel, was enough for a man now seventy years old. But it was soon felt that no American could serve as well as he in the vitally necessary task of procuring aid from France, and accordingly he sailed for Paris in the fall of 1776. There he remained until 1785, completely at home in French society, almost idolized by his many friends, and showing himself an accomplished, urbane courtier, wise as well as witty, and eminently successful not only in achieving his official purposes, but also in winning for America a place in the hearts of generous Frenchmen. When he returned to Philadelphia, old, weak, and full of honors, he was still not allowed to rest from public service, but was immediately made President (*i.e.*, Governor) of Pennsylvania, and, after holding that office as long as the law permitted (three consecutive years), he was made a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1787. Three years later he died, on 17 April, 1790. He has been called our greatest diplomat; he was also a successful tradesman, a scientist, a philosopher, and a wise statesman. His experience of the world was singularly complete, and he was a gifted writer. Although practically all of his writings save the *Autobiography* are occasional and minor, he has made himself live in them, so that he remains for us a vivid, companionable figure, perhaps, as he has been called, the most perfectly representative man of letters of the eighteenth century.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY¹

* * * * *

JOSIAH, my father, married young, and carried his wife with three children into New England, about 1682. The conventicles having been forbidden by law, and frequently disturbed, induced some considerable men of his acquaintance to remove to that country, and he was prevailed with to accompany them thither, where they expected to enjoy their mode of religion with freedom. By the same wife he had four children more, born there; and by a second wife ten more, in all seventeen; of which I remember thirteen sitting at one time at his table, who all grew up to be men and women, and married; I was the youngest son, and the youngest child but two, and

was born in Boston, New England.² My mother, the second wife, was Abiah Folger, daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first settlers of New England, of whom honorable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his church history of that country entitled *Magnalia Christi Americana*, as "a godly, learned Englishman," if I remember the words rightly. I have heard that he wrote sundry small occasional pieces, but only one of them was printed, which I saw now many years since. It was written in 1675, in the home-spun verse of that time and people, and addressed to those then concerned in the government there. It was in favor of liberty of conscience, and in behalf of the Baptists, Quakers, and other sectaries that had been under persecution, ascribing the Indian wars, and other distresses that had befallen the country, to that persecution, as so many judgments of God to punish so heinous an offense, and exhorting a repeal of those uncharitable laws. The whole appeared to me as written with a good deal of decent plainness and manly freedom. The six concluding lines I remember, though I have forgotten the two first of the stanza; but the purport of them was, that his censures proceeded from good will, and therefore he would be known to be the author.

Because to be a libeler (says he)

I hate it with my heart;

From Sherburne town, where now I dwell,

My name I do put here;

¹ The earlier portion, comprising rather more than a third of the whole, was written in 1771, and was addressed in the fashion of a letter to Franklin's natural son, William, the royal governor of New Jersey. It was not intended for publication, but for the author's descendants. When Franklin went to France in 1776 he left his papers behind him. The account of his life from 1706 to 1730 somehow fell into the hands of his friend Abel James, a Quaker, who in 1782 wrote, urging Franklin to continue the narrative. Another friend also urged him to complete it for publication, and accordingly in 1784, when he was living at Passy, he wrote a further installment. But again the task was laid aside, and was not resumed until 1788. At this time he carried the narrative down to his arrival in London in July, 1757. Later, in the last year of his life, he wrote an additional short passage, in which he very briefly covered the years from 1757 to 1762. By a strange series of misfortunes the *Autobiography* was never printed correctly or in full until 1868 (though there had been many imperfect editions, beginning with a French translation published in 1791).

² On 17 January, 1706 (6 January, old style).

Without offense your real friend,
It is Peter Folger.¹

My elder brothers were all put apprentices to different trades. I was put to the grammar-school at eight years of age, my father intending to devote me, as the tithe of his sons, to the service of the Church. My early readiness in learning to read (which must have been very early, as I do not remember when I could not read), and the opinion of all his friends, that I should certainly make a good scholar, encouraged him in this purpose of his. My uncle Benjamin, too, approved of it, and proposed to give me all his short-hand volumes of sermons, I suppose as a stock to set up with, if I would learn his character.² I continued, however, at the grammar-school not quite one year, though in that time I had risen gradually from the middle of the class of that year to be the head of it, and farther was removed into the next class above it, in order to go with that into the third at the end of the year. But my father, in the meantime, from a view of the expense of a college education, which having so large a family he could not well afford, and the mean living many so educated were afterwards able to obtain,—reasons that he gave to his friends in my hearing,—altered his first intention, took me from the grammar-school, and sent me to a school for writing and arithmetic, kept by a then famous man, Mr. George Brownell, very successful in his profession generally, and that by mild, encouraging methods. Under him I acquired fair writing pretty soon, but I failed in the arithmetic, and made no progress in it. At ten years old I was taken home to assist my father in his business, which was that of a tallow-chandler and soap-boiler; a business

he was not bred to, but had assumed on his arrival in New England, and on finding his dyeing trade would not maintain his family, being in little request. Accordingly, I was employed in cutting wick for the candles, filling the dipping mold and the molds for cast candles, attending the shop, going of errands, *etc.*

I disliked the trade, and had a strong inclination for the sea, but my father declared against it; however, living near the water, I was much in and about it, learned early to swim well, and to manage boats; and when in a boat or canoe with other boys I was commonly allowed to govern, especially in any case of difficulty; and upon other occasions I was generally a leader among the boys, and sometimes led them into scrapes, of which I will mention one instance, as it shows an early projecting public spirit, though not then justly conducted.

There was a salt-marsh that bounded part of the mill-pond, on the edge of which, at high water, we used to stand to fish for minnows. By much trampling, we had made it a mere quagmire. My proposal was to build a wharf there fit for us to stand upon, and I showed my comrades a large heap of stones, which were intended for a new house near the marsh, and which would very well suit our purpose. Accordingly, in the evening, when the workmen were gone, I assembled a number of my play-fellows, and working with them diligently like so many emmets, sometimes two or three to a stone, we brought them all away and built our little wharf. The next morning the workmen were surprised at missing the stones, which were found in our wharf. Inquiry was made after the removers; we were discovered and complained of; several of us were corrected by our fathers; and, though I pleaded the usefulness of the work, mine convinced me that nothing was useful which was not honest.

* * * * *

I continued thus employed in my father's business for two years, that is, till I was twelve years old; and my brother John, who was bred to that business, having left my father, married, and set up for himself at Rhode Island, there was all appearance that I was destined to supply his place, and

¹ The preceding lines are as follows:

"I am for peace and not for war,
And that's the reason why
I write more plain than some men do,
That use to daub and lie.
But I shall cease, and set my name
To what I here insert,
Because to be a libeler
I hate it with my heart."

The title of the piece is *A Looking-Glass for the Times; or, The Former Spirit of New England Revived in this Generation*, published 1676. "Sherburne" is now Nantucket.

² *I.e.*, his method, which was of his own invention.

become a tallow-chandler. But my dislike to the trade continuing, my father was under apprehensions that if he did not find one for me more agreeable, I should break away and get to sea, as his son Josiah had done, to his great vexation. He therefore sometimes took me to walk with him, and see joiners, bricklayers, turners, braziers, *etc.*, at their work, that he might observe my inclination, and endeavor to fix it on some trade or other on land. It has ever since been a pleasure to me to see good workmen handle their tools; and it has been useful to me, having learned so much by it as to be able to do little jobs myself in my house when a workman could not readily be got, and to construct little machines for my experiments, while the intention of making the experiment was fresh and warm in my mind. My father at last fixed upon the cutler's trade, and my uncle Benjamin's son Samuel, who was bred to that business in London, being about that time established in Boston, I was sent to be with him some time on liking. But his expectations of a fee with me displeasing my father, I was taken home again.

From a child I was fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was ever laid out in books. Pleased with the *Pilgrim's Progress*, my first collection was of John Bunyan's works in separate little volumes. I afterward sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's *Historical Collections*; they were small chapmen's books, and cheap, forty or fifty in all.¹ My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read, and have since often regretted that, at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way, since it was now resolved I should not be a clergyman. Plutarch's *Lives* there was in which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of De Foe's, called an *Essay on Projects*, and another of Dr. Mather's, called *Essays to do Good*, which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life.

¹ They were published in London at intervals from 1681 to 1736. Dr. Johnson thought them "very proper to allure backward readers."

This bookish inclination at length determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already one son (James) of that profession. In 1717 my brother James returned from England with a press and letters to set up his business in Boston. I liked it much better than that of my father, but still had a hankering for the sea. To prevent the apprehended effect of such an inclination, my father was impatient to have me bound to my brother. I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded, and signed the indentures when I was yet but twelve years old. I was to serve as an apprentice till I was twenty-one years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year. In a little time I made great proficiency in the business, and became a useful hand to my brother. I now had access to better books. An acquaintance with the apprentices of booksellers enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my room reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed in the evening and to be returned early in the morning, lest it should be missed or wanted.

And after some time an ingenious tradesman, Mr. Matthew Adams, who had a pretty collection of books, and who frequented our printing-house, took notice of me, invited me to his library, and very kindly lent me such books as I chose to read. I now took a fancy to poetry, and made some little pieces; my brother, thinking it might turn to account, encouraged me, and put me on composing occasional ballads. One was called *The Lighthouse Tragedy*, and contained an account of the drowning of Captain Worthilake, with his two daughters; the other was a sailor's song, on the taking of *Teach* (or Blackbeard) the pirate. They were wretched stuff, in the Grub-street-ballad style; and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully; the event, being recent, having made a great noise. This flattered my vanity; but my father discouraged me by ridiculing my performances, and telling me verse-makers were generally beggars. So I escaped being a poet, most probably a very bad one; but as prose writing has been of great use to me in the

course of my life, and was a principal means of my advancement, I shall tell you how, in such a situation, I acquired what little ability I have in that way.

There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another, which disputatious turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad habit, making people often extremely disagreeable in company by the contradiction that is necessary to bring it into practice; and thence, besides souring and spoiling the conversation, is productive of disgusts and, perhaps, enmities where you may have occasion for friendship. I had caught it by reading my father's books of dispute about religion. Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and men of all sorts that have been bred at Edinborough.

A question was once, somehow or other, started between Collins and me, of the propriety of educating the female sex in learning, and their abilities for study. He was of opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary side, perhaps a little for dispute's sake. He was naturally more eloquent, had a ready plenty of words, and sometimes, as I thought, bore me down more by his fluency than by the strength of his reasons. As we parted without settling the point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my arguments in writing, which I copied fair and sent to him. He answered, and I replied. Three or four letters of a side had passed, when my father happened to find my papers and read them. Without entering into the discussion, he took occasion to talk to me about the manner of my writing; observed that, though I had the advantage of my antagonist in correct spelling and pointing (which I owed to the printing-house), I fell far short in elegance of expression, in method and in perspicuity, of which he convinced me by several instances. I saw the justice of his remarks, and thence grew more attentive to the manner in writing, and determined to endeavor at improvement.

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and, making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales and turned them into verse; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collections of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and complete the paper. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discovered my faults and amended them; but I sometimes had the pleasure of fancying that, in certain particulars of small import, I had been lucky enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious. My time for these exercises and for reading was at night, after work or before it began in the morning, or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the printing-house alone, evading as much as I could the common attendance on public worship which my father used to exact of me when I was under his care, and which indeed I still

thought a duty, though I could not, as it seemed to me, afford time to practice it.

When about sixteen years of age I happened to meet with a book, written by one Tryon, recommending a vegetable diet. I determined to go into it. My brother, being yet unmarried, did not keep house, but boarded himself and his apprentices in another family. My refusing to eat flesh occasioned an inconveniency, and I was frequently chid for my singularity. I made myself acquainted with Tryon's manner of preparing some of his dishes, such as boiling potatoes or rice, making hasty pudding, and a few others, and then proposed to my brother that if he would give me, weekly, half the money he paid for my board, I would board myself. He instantly agreed to it, and I presently found that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional fund for buying books. But I had another advantage in it. My brother and the rest going from the printing-house to their meals, I remained there alone, and, dispatching presently my light repast, which often was no more than a biscuit or a slice of bread, a handful of raisins, or a tart from the pastry-cook's, and a glass of water, had the rest of the time, till their return, for study, in which I made the greater progress, from that greater clearness of head and quicker apprehension which usually attend temperance in eating and drinking.

And now it was that, being on some occasion made ashamed of my ignorance in figures, which I had twice failed in learning when at school, I took Cocker's book of Arithmetic, and went through the whole by myself with great ease. I also read Seller's and Shermy's books of Navigation, and became acquainted with the little geometry they contain; but never proceeded far in that science. And I read about this time Locke *On Human Understanding*, and the *Art of Thinking*, by Messrs. du Port Royal.¹

While I was intent on improving my language, I met with an English grammar (I think it was Greenwood's), at the end of which there were two little sketches of the arts of rhetoric and logic, the latter finishing with a specimen of a dispute in the Socratic

method, and soon after I procured Xenophon's *Memorable Things of Socrates*, wherein there are many instances of the same method. I was charmed with it, adopted it, dropped my abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation, and put on the humble inquirer and doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftesbury and Collins,² become a real doubter in many points of our religious doctrine, I found this method safest for myself, and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it; therefore I took a delight in it, practiced it continually, and grew very artful and expert in drawing people, even of superior knowledge, into concessions, the consequences of which they did not foresee, entangling them in difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved. I continued this method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence, never using, when I advanced any thing that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion, but rather say, I conceive or apprehend a thing to be so and so; it appears to me, or *I should think it so or so*, for such and such reasons; or *I imagine it to be so*; or *it is so, if I am not mistaken*. This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions, and persuade men into measures that I have been from time to time engaged in promoting; and, as the chief ends of conversation are to *inform* or to be *informed*, to *please* or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning, sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good by a positive, assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat every one of those purposes for which speech was given to us,—to wit, giving or receiving information or pleasure. For, if you would inform, a positive and dogmatical manner in advancing your sentiments may provoke contradiction and prevent a candid attention. If you wish information and

¹ An English translation of one of the books produced by the Jansenists, of the Abbey of Port Royal, near Paris.

² Deists, the former author of *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711), the latter of *A Discourse of Free-thinking* (1713) and of *A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* (1724).

improvement from the knowledge of others, and yet at the same time express yourself as firmly fixed in your present opinions, modest, sensible men, who do not love disputation, will probably leave you undisturbed in the possession of your error. And by such a manner, you can seldom hope to recommend yourself in *pleasing* your hearers, or to persuade those whose concurrence you desire. Pope says, judiciously:

*Men should be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown proposed as things forgot;*

farther recommending to us

To speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence.

And he might have coupled with this line that which he has coupled with another, I think, less properly:

For want of modesty is want of sense.

If you ask, Why less properly? I must repeat the lines:

Immodest words admit of no defense,
For want of modesty is want of sense.

Now, is not *want of sense* (where a man is so unfortunate as to want it) some apology for his *want of modesty*? and would not the lines stand more justly thus?

Immodest words admit *but* this defense,
That want of modesty is want of sense.

This, however, I should submit to better judgments.

My brother had, in 1720 or 1721, begun to print a newspaper. It was the second that appeared in America,¹ and was called the *New England Courant*. The only one before it was the *Boston News-Letter*. I remember his being dissuaded by some of his friends from the undertaking, as not likely to succeed, one newspaper being, in their judgment, enough for America. At this time [1771] there are not less than five-and-twenty. He went on, however, with the undertaking, and after having worked in composing the types and printing off the sheets, I was employed to carry the papers through the streets to the customers.

He had some ingenious men among his friends, who amused themselves by writing little pieces for this paper, which gained it credit and made it more in demand, and these gentlemen often visited us. Hearing their conversations, and their accounts of the approbation their papers were received with, I was excited to try my hand among them; but, being still a boy, and suspecting that my brother would object to printing any thing of mine in his paper if he knew it to be mine, I contrived to disguise my hand, and, writing an anonymous paper, I put it in at night, under the door of the printing-house. It was found in the morning, and communicated to his writing friends when they called in as usual. They read it, commented on it in my hearing, and I had the exquisite pleasure of finding it met with their approbation, and that, in their different guesses at the author, none were named but men of some character among us for learning and ingenuity. I suppose now that I was rather lucky in my judges, and that perhaps they were not really so very good ones as I then esteemed them.

Encouraged, however, by this, I wrote and conveyed in the same way to the press several more papers, which were equally approved; and I kept my secret till my small fund of sense for such performances was pretty well exhausted, and then I discovered it, when I began to be considered a little more by my brother's acquaintance, and in a manner that did not quite please him, as he thought, probably with reason, that it tended to make me too vain. And, perhaps, this might be one occasion of the differences that we began to have about this time. Though a brother, he considered himself as my master, and me as his apprentice, and, accordingly, expected the same services from me as he would from another, while I thought he demeaned me too much in some he required of me, who from a brother expected more indulgence. Our disputes were often brought before our father, and I fancy I was either generally in the right, or else a better pleader, because the judgment was generally in my favor. But my brother was passionate, and had often beaten me, which I took extremely amiss; and, thinking my apprenticeship very tedious, I was continually wishing

¹ Really the fourth. Franklin's brother had been printer of the second, the *Boston Gazette*, which commenced on 21 December, 1719. The *Courant* first appeared on 21 August, 1721.

for some opportunity of shortening it, which at length offered in a manner unexpected.¹

One of the pieces in our newspaper on some political point, which I have now forgotten, gave offense to the Assembly. He was taken up, censured, and imprisoned for a month, by the Speaker's warrant, I suppose, because he would not discover his author. I too was taken up and examined before the council; but, though I did not give them any satisfaction, they contented themselves with admonishing me, and dismissed me, considering me, perhaps, as an apprentice, who was bound to keep his master's secrets.

During my brother's confinement, which I resented a good deal, notwithstanding our private differences, I had the management of the paper; and I made bold to give our rulers some rubs in it, which my brother took very kindly, while others began to consider me in an unfavorable light, as a young genius that had a turn for libeling and satire. My brother's discharge was accompanied with an order of the House (a very odd one), that "*James Franklin should no longer print the paper called the New England Courant.*"

There was a consultation held in our printing-house among his friends, what he should do in this case. Some proposed to evade the order by changing the name of the paper; but my brother, seeing inconveniences in that, it was finally concluded on as a better way, to let it be printed for the future under the name of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN; and to avoid the censure of the Assembly that might fall on him as still printing it by his apprentice, the contrivance was that my old indenture should be returned to me, with a full discharge on the back of it, to be shown on occasion, but, to secure to him the benefit of my service, I was to sign new indentures for the remainder of the term, which were to be kept private. A very flimsy scheme it was; however, it was immediately executed, and the paper went on accordingly under my name for several months.

At length, a fresh difference arising be-

¹ I fancy his harsh and tyrannical treatment of me might be a means of impressing me with that aversion to arbitrary power that has stuck to me through my whole life. (Franklin's note.)

tween my brother and me, I took upon me to assert my freedom, presuming that he would not venture to produce the new indentures. It was not fair in me to take this advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first errata of my life; but the unfairness of it weighed little with me, when under the impressions of resentment for the blows his passion too often urged him to bestow upon me, though he was otherwise not an ill-natured man: perhaps I was too saucy and provoking.

When he found I would leave him, he took care to prevent my getting employment in any other printing-house of the town, by going round and speaking to every master, who accordingly refused to give me work. I then thought of going to New York, as the nearest place where there was a printer; and I was rather inclined to leave Boston when I reflected that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing party, and, from the arbitrary proceedings of the Assembly in my brother's case, it was likely it might, if I stayed, soon bring myself into scrapes; and farther, that my indiscreet disputations about religion began to make me pointed at with horror by good people as an infidel or atheist. I determined on the point, but my father now siding with my brother, I was sensible that, if I attempted to go openly, means would be used to prevent me. My friend Collins, therefore, undertook to manage a little for me. He agreed with the captain of a New York sloop for my passage, under the notion of my being a young acquaintance of his that had got a naughty girl with child, whose friends would compel me to marry her, and therefore I could not appear or come away publicly. So I sold some of my books to raise a little money, was taken on board privately, and as we had a fair wind, in three days I found myself in New York, near 300 miles from home, a boy of but seventeen,² without the least recommendation to, or knowledge of, any person in the place, and with very little money in my pocket.

My inclinations for the sea were by this time worn out, or I might now have gratified them. But, having a trade, and supposing myself a pretty good workman, I offered

² The time was October, 1723.

my service to the printer in the place, old Mr. William Bradford, who had been the first printer in Pennsylvania, but removed from thence upon the quarrel of George Keith. He could give me no employment, having little to do, and help enough already; but says he: "My son at Philadelphia has lately lost his principal hand, Aquila Rose, by death; if you go thither, I believe he may employ you." Philadelphia was 100 miles farther; I set out, however, in a boat for Amboy, leaving my chest and things to follow me round by sea.

In crossing the bay, we met with a squall that tore our rotten sails to pieces, prevented our getting into the Kill¹ and drove us upon Long Island. In our way, a drunken Dutchman, who was a passenger too, fell overboard; when he was sinking, I reached through the water to his shock pate, and drew him up, so that we got him in again. His ducking sobered him a little, and he went to sleep, taking first out of his pocket a book, which he desired I would dry for him. It proved to be my old favorite author, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* in Dutch, finely printed, on good paper, with copper cuts, a dress better than I had ever seen it wear in its own language. I have since found that it has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and suppose it has been more generally read than any other book, except perhaps the Bible. Honest John was the first that I know of who mixed narration and dialogue, a method of writing very engaging to the reader, who, in the most interesting parts, finds himself, as it were, brought into the company, and present at the discourse. De Foe, in his *Crusoe*, his *Moll Flanders*, *Religious Courtship*, *Family Instructor*, and other pieces, has imitated it with success, and Richardson has done the same in his *Pamela*, etc.

When we drew near the island, we found it was at a place where there could be no landing, there being a great surf on the stony beach. So we dropped anchor and swung round towards the shore. Some people came down to the water edge and halloed to us, as we did to them, but the wind was so high, and the surf so loud, that we could not hear so as to understand each

other. There were canoes on the shore, and we made signs and halloed that they should fetch us, but they either did not understand us, or thought it impracticable, so they went away, and night coming on, we had no remedy but to wait till the wind should abate; and, in the mean time, the boatman and I concluded to sleep, if we could; and so crowded into the scuttle, with the Dutchman, who was still wet, and the spray beating over the head of our boat, leaked through to us, so that we were soon almost as wet as he. In this manner we lay all night with very little rest; but, the wind abating the next day, we made a shift to reach Amboy before night, having been thirty hours on the water, without victuals, or any drink but a bottle of filthy rum, the water we sailed on being salt.

In the evening I found myself very feverish, and went in to bed; but, having read somewhere that cold water drank plentifully was good for a fever, I followed the prescription, sweat plentifully most of the night, my fever left me, and in the morning, crossing the ferry, I proceeded on my journey on foot, having fifty miles to Burlington, where I was told I should find boats that would carry me the rest of the way to Philadelphia.

It rained very hard all the day; I was thoroughly soaked, and by noon a good deal tired; so I stopped at a poor inn, where I stayed all night, beginning now to wish that I had never left home. I cut so miserable a figure, too, that I found, by the questions asked me, I was suspected to be some runaway servant, and in danger of being taken up on that suspicion. However, I proceeded the next day, and got in the evening to an inn, within eight or ten miles of Burlington, kept by one Dr. Brown. He entered into conversation with me while I took some refreshment, and, finding I had read a little, became very sociable and friendly. Our acquaintance continued as long as he lived. He had been, I imagine, an itinerant doctor, for there was no town in England, or country in Europe, of which he could not give a very particular account. He had some letters, and was ingenious, but much of an unbeliever, and wickedly undertook, some years after, to travesty the Bible in doggerel verse, as Cotton had done Virgil. By this

¹ Dutch for Channel, in this case the passage north and west of Staten Island.

means he set many of the facts in a very ridiculous light, and might have hurt weak minds if his work had been published; but it never was.

At his house I lay that night, and the next morning reached Burlington, but had the mortification to find that the regular boats were gone a little before my coming, and no other expected to go before Tuesday, this being Saturday; wherefore I returned to an old woman in the town, of whom I had bought gingerbread to eat on the water, and I asked her advice. She invited me to lodge at her house till a passage by water should offer; and being tired with my foot traveling, I accepted the invitation. She understanding I was a printer, would have had me stay at that town and follow my business, being ignorant of the stock necessary to begin with. She was very hospitable, gave me a dinner of ox-cheek with great good will, accepting only of a pot of ale in return; and I thought myself fixed till Tuesday should come. However, walking in the evening by the side of the river, a boat came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia, with several people in her. They took me in, and, as there was no wind, we rowed all the way; and about midnight, not having yet seen the city, some of the company were confident we must have passed it, and would row no farther; the others knew not where we were; so we put towards the shore, got into a creek, landed near an old fence, with the rails of which we made a fire, the night being cold, in October, and there we remained till daylight. Then one of the company knew the place to be Cooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the creek, and arrived there about eight or nine o'clock on the Sunday morning, and landed at the Market-street wharf.

I have been the more particular in this description of my journey, and shall be so of my first entry into that city, that you may in your mind compare such unlikely beginnings with the figure I have since made there. I was in my working dress, my best clothes being to come round by sea. I was dirty from my journey; my pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no soul nor where to look for lodging. I was fatigued with traveling, rowing, and want of rest; I was very hungry; and

my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar, and about a shilling in copper. The latter I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first refused it, on account of my rowing; but I insisted on their taking it. A man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps through fear of being thought to have but little.

Then I walked up the street, gazing about till near the market-house I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second-street, and asked for biscuit, intending such as we had in Boston; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none such. So not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I bade him give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market-street as far as Fourth-street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut-street and part of Walnut-street, eating my roll all the way, and, coming round, found myself again at Market-street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.

Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was,

therefore, the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia.

Walking down again towards the river, and looking in the faces of people, I met a young Quaker man whose countenance I liked, and accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get lodging. We were then near the sign of the Three Mariners. "Here," says he, "is one place that entertains strangers, but it is not a reputable house; if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better." He brought me to the Crooked Billet in Water-street. Here I got a dinner, and, while I was eating it, several sly questions were asked me, as it seemed to be suspected, from my youth and appearance, that I might be some runaway.

After dinner, my sleepiness returned, and, being shown to a bed, I lay down without undressing, and slept till six in the evening; was called to supper, went to bed again very early, and slept soundly till next morning. Then I made myself as tidy as I could, and went to Andrew Bradford the printer's. I found in the shop the old man, his father, whom I had seen in New York, and who, traveling on horseback, had got to Philadelphia before me. He introduced me to his son, who received me civilly, gave me a breakfast, but told me he did not at present want a hand, being lately supplied with one; but there was another printer in town, lately set up, one Keimer, who, perhaps, might employ me; if not, I should be welcome to lodge at his house, and he would give me a little work to do now and then till fuller business should offer.

The old gentleman said he would go with me to the new printer; and when we found him, "Neighbor," says Bradford, "I have brought to see you a young man of your business; perhaps you may want such a one." He asked me a few questions, put a composing stick in my hand to see how I worked, and then said he would employ me soon, though he had just then nothing for me to do; and taking old Bradford, whom he had never seen before, to be one of the town's people that had a good will for him, entered into a conversation on his present undertaking and prospects; while Bradford, not discovering that he was the other printer's father, on Keimer's saying he expected soon to get the greatest part of

the business into his own hands, drew him on by artful questions and starting little doubts, to explain all his views, what interest he relied on, and in what manner he intended to proceed. I, who stood by and heard all, saw immediately that one of them was a crafty old sophister, and the other a mere novice. Bradford left me with Keimer, who was greatly surprised when I told him who the old man was.

Keimer's printing-house, I found, consisted of an old shattered press, and one small, worn-out font of English, which he was then using himself, composing an *Elegy on Aquila Rose*, before mentioned, an ingenious young man, of excellent character, much respected in the town, clerk of the Assembly, and a pretty poet. Keimer made verses too, but very indifferently. He could not be said to write them, for his manner was to compose them in the types directly out of his head. So there being no copy, but one pair of cases, and the *Elegy* likely to require all the "letter," no one could help him. I endeavored to put his press (which he had not yet used, and of which he understood nothing) into order fit to be worked with; and, promising to come and print off his *Elegy* as soon as he should have got it ready, I returned to Bradford's, who gave me a little job to do for the present, and there I lodged and dieted. A few days after, Keimer sent for me to print off the *Elegy*. And now he had got another pair of cases, and a pamphlet to reprint, on which he set me to work.

These two printers I found poorly qualified for their business. Bradford had not been bred to it, and was very illiterate; and Keimer, though something of a scholar, was a mere compositor, knowing nothing of presswork. He had been one of the French prophets, and could act their enthusiastic agitations.¹ At this time he did not profess any particular religion, but something of all on occasion; was very ignorant of the world, and had, as I afterward found, a good deal of the knave in his composition. He did not like my lodging at Bradford's while I worked with him. He had a house indeed, but without furniture, so he could not lodge me;

¹ It is supposed that he was one of the Camisards, Protestants of southern France who were driven into fanaticism by the persecution of Louis XIV.

but he got me a lodging at Mr. Read's, before mentioned, who was the owner of his house; and, my chest and clothes being come by this time, I made rather a more respectable appearance in the eyes of Miss Read than I had done when she first happened to see me eating my roll in the street.

I began now to have some acquaintance among the young people of the town, that were lovers of reading, with whom I spent my evenings very pleasantly; and gaining money by my industry and frugality, I lived very agreeably, forgetting Boston as much as I could, and not desiring that any there should know where I resided except my friend Collins, who was in my secret, and kept it when I wrote to him. At length, an incident happened that sent me back again much sooner than I had intended. I had a brother-in-law, Robert Holmes, master of a sloop that traded between Boston and Delaware. He being at Newcastle, forty miles below Philadelphia, heard there of me, and wrote me a letter mentioning the concern of my friends in Boston at my abrupt departure, assuring me of their good will to me, and that every thing would be accommodated to my mind if I would return, to which he exhorted me very earnestly. I wrote an answer to his letter, thanked him for his advice, but stated my reasons for quitting Boston fully and in such a light as to convince him I was not so wrong as he had apprehended.

Sir William Keith, governor of the province, was then at Newcastle, and Captain Holmes, happening to be in company with him when my letter came to hand, spoke to him of me, and showed him the letter. The governor read it, and seemed surprised when he was told my age. He said I appeared a young man of promising parts, and therefore should be encouraged; the printers at Philadelphia were wretched ones; and, if I would set up there, he made no doubt I should succeed; for his part, he would procure me the public business, and do me every other service in his power. This my brother-in-law afterwards told me in Boston, but I knew as yet nothing of it; when, one day, Keimer and I being at work together near the window, we saw the governor and another gentleman (which proved to be Colonel French, of Newcastle), finely

dressed, come directly across the street to our house, and heard them at the door.

Keimer ran down immediately, thinking it a visit to him; but the governor inquired for me, came up, and with a condescension and politeness I had been quite unused to, made me many compliments, desired to be acquainted with me, blamed me kindly for not having made myself known to him when I first came to the place, and would have me away with him to the tavern, where he was going with Colonel French to taste, as he said, some excellent Madeira. I was not a little surprised, and Keimer stared like a pig poisoned. I went, however, with the governor and Colonel French to a tavern, at the corner of Third-street, and over the Madeira he proposed my setting up my business, laid before me the probabilities of success, and both he and Colonel French assured me I should have their interest and influence in procuring the public business of both governments.¹ On my doubting whether my father would assist me in it, Sir William said he would give me a letter to him, in which he would state the advantages, and he did not doubt of prevailing with him. So it was concluded I should return to Boston in the first vessel, with the governor's letter recommending me to my father. In the mean time the intention was to be kept a secret, and I went on working with Keimer as usual, the governor sending for me now and then to dine with him, a very great honor I thought it, and conversing with me in the most affable, familiar, and friendly manner imaginable.

About the end of April, 1724, a little vessel offered for Boston. I took leave of Keimer as going to see my friends. The governor gave me an ample letter, saying many flattering things of me to my father, and strongly recommending the project of my setting up at Philadelphia as a thing that must make my fortune. We struck on a shoal in going down the bay, and sprung a leak; we had a blustering time at sea, and were obliged to pump almost continually, at which I took my turn. We arrived safe, however, at Boston in about a fortnight. I had been absent seven months, and my friends had heard nothing of me; for my

¹ Pennsylvania and Delaware.

brother Holmes was not yet returned, and had not written about me. My unexpected appearance surprised the family; all were, however, very glad to see me, and made me welcome, except my brother. I went to see him at his printing-house. I was better dressed than ever while in his service, having a genteel new suit from head to foot, a watch, and my pockets lined with near five pounds sterling in silver. He received me not very frankly, looked me all over, and turned to his work again.

The journeymen were inquisitive where I had been, what sort of a country it was, and how I liked it. I praised it much, and the happy life I led in it, expressing strongly my intention of returning to it; and, one of them asking what kind of money we had there, I produced a handful of silver, and spread it before them, which was a kind of raree-show they had not been used to, paper being the money of Boston. Then I took an opportunity of letting them see my watch; and, lastly (my brother still grum and sullen), I gave them a piece of eight¹ to drink, and took my leave. This visit of mine offended him extremely; for, when my mother some time after spoke to him of a reconciliation, and of her wishes to see us on good terms together, and that we might live for the future as brothers, he said I had insulted him in such a manner before his people that he could never forget or forgive it. In this, however, he was mistaken.

My father received the governor's letter with some apparent surprise, but said little of it to me for some days, when Captain Holmes returning he showed it to him, asked him if he knew Keith, and what kind of man he was; adding his opinion that he must be of small discretion to think of setting a boy up in business who wanted yet three years of being at man's estate. Holmes said what he could in favor of the project, but my father was clear in the impropriety of it, and at last gave a flat denial to it. Then he wrote a civil letter to Sir William, thanking him for the patronage he had so kindly offered me, but declining to assist me

as yet in setting up, I being, in his opinion, too young to be trusted with the management of a business so important, and for which the preparation must be so expensive.

My friend and companion Collins, who was a clerk in the post-office, pleased with the account I gave him of my new country, determined to go thither also; and, while I waited for my father's determination, he set out before me by land to Rhode Island, leaving his books, which were a pretty collection of mathematics and natural philosophy, to come with mine and me to New York, where he proposed to wait for me.

My father, though he did not approve Sir William's proposition, was yet pleased that I had been able to obtain so advantageous a character from a person of such note where I had resided, and that I had been so industrious and careful as to equip myself so handsomely in so short a time; therefore, seeing no prospect of an accommodation between my brother and me, he gave his consent to my returning again to Philadelphia, advised me to behave respectfully to the people there, endeavor to obtain the general esteem, and avoid lampooning and libeling, to which he thought I had too much inclination; telling me that by steady industry and a prudent parsimony I might save enough by the time I was one-and-twenty to set me up; and that, if I came near the matter, he would help me out with the rest. This was all I could obtain, except some small gifts as tokens of his and my mother's love, when I embarked again for New York, now with their approbation and their blessing.

The sloop putting in at Newport, Rhode Island, I visited my brother John, who had been married and settled there some years. He received me very affectionately, for he always loved me. A friend of his, one Vernon, having some money due to him in Pennsylvania, about thirty-five pounds currency, desired I would receive it for him, and keep it till I had his directions what to remit it in. Accordingly he gave me an order. This afterwards occasioned me a good deal of uneasiness.

At Newport we took in a number of passengers for New York, among which were two young women, companions, and a grave, sensible, matron-like Quaker woman, with

¹ Spanish dollar. (John Bigelow, who first printed the *Autobiography* from the original manuscript, has "him" in this sentence, in place of "them," but apparently all editors have concurred in making the substitution.)

her attendants. I had shown an obliging readiness to do her some little services, which impressed her I suppose with a degree of good will towards me; therefore, when she saw a daily growing familiarity between me and the two young women, which they appeared to encourage, she took me aside, and said: "Young man, I am concerned for thee, as thou has no friend with thee, and seems not to know much of the world, or of the snares youth is exposed to; depend upon it, those are very bad women; I can see it in all their actions; and if thee art not upon thy guard, they will draw thee into some danger; they are strangers to thee, and I advise thee, in a friendly concern for thy welfare, to have no acquaintance with them." As I seemed at first not to think so ill of them as she did, she mentioned some things she had observed and heard that had escaped my notice, but now convinced me she was right. I thanked her for her kind advice, and promised to follow it. When we arrived at New York, they told me where they lived, and invited me to come and see them; but I avoided it, and it was well I did; for the next day the captain missed a silver spoon and some other things, that had been taken out of his cabin, and knowing that these were a couple of strumpets, he got a warrant to search their lodgings, found the stolen goods, and had the thieves punished. So, though we had escaped a sunken rock, which we scraped upon in the passage, I thought this escape of rather more importance to me.

At New York I found my friend Collins, who had arrived there some time before me. We had been intimate from children, and had read the same books together; but he had the advantage of more time for reading and studying, and a wonderful genius for mathematical learning, in which he far outstripped me. While I lived in Boston, most of my hours of leisure for conversation were spent with him, and he continued a sober as well as an industrious lad; was much respected for his learning by several of the clergy and other gentlemen, and seemed to promise making a good figure in life. But, during my absence, he had acquired a habit of sopping with brandy; and I found by his own account, and what I heard from others, that he had been drunk every day since his

arrival at New York, and behaved very oddly. He had gamed, too, and lost his money, so that I was obliged to discharge his lodgings, and defray his expenses to and at Philadelphia, which proved extremely inconvenient to me.

The then governor of New York, Burnet (son of Bishop Burnet), hearing from the captain that a young man, one of his passengers, had a great many books, desired he would bring me to see him. I waited upon him accordingly, and should have taken Collins with me, but that he was not sober. The governor treated me with great civility, showed me his library, which was a very large one, and we had a good deal of conversation about books and authors. This was the second governor who had done me the honor to take notice of me, which, to a poor boy like me, was very pleasing.

We proceeded to Philadelphia. I received on the way Vernon's money, without which we could hardly have finished our journey. Collins wished to be employed in some counting-house, but, whether they discovered his dramming by his breath, or by his behavior, though he had some recommendations, he met with no success in any application, and continued lodging and boarding at the same house with me, and at my expense. Knowing I had that money of Vernon's, he was continually borrowing of me, still promising repayment as soon as he should be in business. At length he had got so much of it that I was distressed to think what I should do in case of being called on to remit it.

His drinking continued, about which we sometimes quarreled, for, when a little intoxicated, he was very fractious. Once, in a boat on the Delaware with some other young men, he refused to row in his turn. "I will be rowed home," says he. "We will not row you," says I. "You must, or stay all night on the water," says he, "just as you please." The others said: "Let us row: what signifies it?" But my mind being soured with his other conduct, I continued to refuse. So he swore he would make me row, or throw me overboard; and coming along, stepping on the thwarts, towards me, when he came up and struck at me, I clapped my hand under his crotch, and rising, pitched him head-foremost into

the river. I knew he was a good swimmer, and so was under little concern about him; but before he could get round to lay hold of the boat, we had, with a few strokes, pulled her out of his reach, and ever when he drew near the boat, we asked if he would row, striking a few strokes to slide her away from him. He was ready to die with vexation, and obstinately would not promise to row. However, seeing him at last beginning to tire, we lifted him in, and brought him home dripping wet in the evening. We hardly exchanged a civil word afterwards, and a West India captain, who had a commission to procure a tutor for the sons of a gentleman at Barbadoes, happening to meet with him, agreed to carry him thither. He left me then, promising to remit me the first money he should receive, in order to discharge the debt, but I never heard of him after.

The breaking into this money of Vernon's was one of the first great errata of my life, and this affair showed that my father was not much out in his judgment when he supposed me too young to manage business of importance. But Sir William, on reading his letter, said he was too prudent. There was great difference in persons, and discretion did not always accompany years, nor was youth always without it. "And since he will not set you up," says he, "I will do it myself. Give me an inventory of the things necessary to be had from England, and I will send for them. You shall repay me when you are able; I am resolved to have a good printer here, and I am sure you must succeed." This was spoken with such an appearance of cordiality, that I had not the least doubt of his meaning what he said. I had hitherto kept the proposition of my setting up a secret in Philadelphia, and I still kept it. Had it been known that I depended on the governor, probably some friend that knew him better would have advised me not to rely on him, as I afterwards heard it as his known character to be liberal of promises which he never meant to keep. Yet, unsolicited as he was by me, how could I think his generous offers insincere? I believed him one of the best men in the world.

I presented him an inventory of a little printing-house, amounting by my computa-

tion to about one hundred pounds sterling. He liked it, but asked me if my being on the spot in England to choose the types, and see that every thing was good of the kind, might not be of some advantage. "Then," says he, "when there, you may make acquaintances, and establish correspondences in the bookselling and stationery way." I agreed that this might be advantageous. "Then," says he, "get yourself ready to go with Annis"; which was the annual ship,¹ and the only one at that time usually passing between London and Philadelphia. But it would be some months before Annis sailed, so I continued working with Keimer, fretting about the money Collins had got from me, and in daily apprehensions of being called upon by Vernon, which, however, did not happen for some years after.

I believe I have omitted mentioning that, in my first voyage from Boston, being becalmed off Block Island, our people set about catching cod, and hauled up a great many. Hitherto I had stuck to my resolution of not eating animal food, and on this occasion I considered, with my master Tryon, the taking every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had, or ever could do us any injury that might justify the slaughter. All this seemed very reasonable. But I had formerly been a great lover of fish, and, when this came hot out of the frying-pan, it smelled admirably well. I balanced some time between principle and inclination, till I recollected that, when the fish were opened, I saw smaller fish taken out of their stomachs; then thought I, "If you eat one another, I don't see why we may n't eat you." So I dined upon cod very heartily, and continued to eat with other people, returning only now and then occasionally to a vegetable diet. So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable creature*, since it enables one to find or make a reason for every thing one has a mind to do.

Keimer and I lived on a pretty good familiar footing, and agreed tolerably well, for he suspected nothing of my setting up. He retained a great deal of his old enthusiasms and loved argumentation. We therefore had many disputations. I used to work him so with my Socratic method, and had

¹ Annis was its commander; the ship was called the *London-Hope*.

trepanned him so often by questions apparently so distant from any point we had in hand, and yet by degrees led to the point, and brought him into difficulties and contradictions, that at last he grew ridiculously cautious, and would hardly answer me the most common question, without asking first: "*What do you intend to infer from that?*" However, it gave him so high an opinion of my abilities in the confuting way, that he seriously proposed my being his colleague in a project he had of setting up a new sect. He was to preach the doctrines, and I was to confound all opponents. When he came to explain with me upon the doctrines, I found several conundrums which I objected to, unless I might have my way a little too, and introduce some of mine.

Keimer wore his beard at full length, because somewhere in the Mosaic law it is said: "*Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard.*"¹ He likewise kept the Seventh day, Sabbath; and these two points were essentials with him. I disliked both; but agreed to admit them upon condition of his adopting the doctrine of using no animal food. "I doubt," said he, "my constitution will not bear that." I assured him it would, and that he would be the better for it. He was usually a great glutton, and I promised myself some diversion in half starving him. He agreed to try the practice, if I would keep him company. I did so, and we held it for three months. We had our victuals dressed, and brought to us regularly by a woman in the neighborhood, who had from me a list of forty dishes, to be prepared for us at different times, in all which there was neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, and the whim suited me the better at this time from the cheapness of it, not costing us above eighteen pence sterling each per week. I have since kept several Lents most strictly, leaving the common diet for that, and that for the common, abruptly, without the least inconvenience, so that I think there is little in the advice of making those changes by easy gradations. I went on pleasantly, but poor Keimer suffered grievously, tired of the project, longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt,² and ordered a roast pig. He invited me and two women friends to dine with him; but,

it being brought too soon upon table, he could not resist the temptation, and ate the whole before we came.

I had made some courtship during this time to Miss Read. I had a great respect and affection for her, and had some reason to believe she had the same for me; but, as I was about to take a long voyage, and we were both very young, only a little above eighteen, it was thought most prudent by her mother to prevent our going too far at present, as a marriage, if it was to take place, would be more convenient after my return, when I should be, as I expected, set up in my business. Perhaps, too, she thought my expectations not so well founded as I imagined them to be.

My chief acquaintances at this time were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph, all lovers of reading. The two first were clerks to an eminent scrivener or conveyancer in the town, Charles Brogden; the other was clerk to a merchant. Watson was a pious, sensible young man, of great integrity; the others rather more lax in their principles of religion, particularly Ralph, who, as well as Collins, had been unsettled by me, for which they both made me suffer. Osborne was sensible, candid, frank; sincere and affectionate to his friends; but, in literary matters, too fond of criticizing. Ralph was ingenious, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent; I think I never knew a prettier talker. Both of them great admirers of poetry, and began to try their hands in little pieces. Many pleasant walks we four had together on Sundays into the woods, near Schuylkill, where we read to one another, and conferred on what we read.

Ralph was inclined to pursue the study of poetry, not doubting but he might become eminent in it, and make his fortune by it, alleging that the best poets must, when they first begin to write, make as many faults as he did. Osborne dissuaded him, assured him he had no genius for poetry, and advised him to think of nothing beyond the business he was bred to; that, in the mercantile way, though he had no stock, he might, by his diligence and punctuality, recommend himself to employment as a factor, and in time acquire wherewith to trade on his own account. I approved the

¹ Leviticus, xix, 27.

² Exodus, xvi, 3.

amusing one's self with poetry now and then, so far as to improve one's language, but no farther.

On this it was proposed that we should each of us, at our next meeting, produce a piece of our own composing, in order to improve by our mutual observations, criticisms, and corrections. As language and expression were what we had in view, we excluded all considerations of invention by agreeing that the task should be a version of the eighteenth Psalm, which describes the descent of a Deity. When the time of our meeting drew nigh, Ralph called on me first, and let me know his piece was ready. I told him I had been busy, and, having little inclination, had done nothing. He then showed me his piece for my opinion, and I much approved it, as it appeared to me to have great merit. "Now," says he, "Osborne never will allow the least merit in any thing of mine, but makes a thousand criticisms out of mere envy. He is not so jealous of you; I wish, therefore, you would take this piece, and produce it as yours; I will pretend not to have had time, and so produce nothing. We shall then see what he will say to it." It was agreed, and I immediately transcribed it, that it might appear in my own hand.

We met; Watson's performance was read; there were some beauties in it, but many defects. Osborne's was read; it was much better; Ralph did it justice; remarked some faults, but applauded the beauties. He himself had nothing to produce. I was backward; seemed desirous of being excused; had not had sufficient time to correct, *etc.*; but no excuse could be admitted; produce I must. It was read and repeated; Watson and Osborne gave up the contest, and joined in applauding it. Ralph only made some criticisms, and proposed some amendments; but I defended my text. Osborne was against Ralph, and told him he was no better a critic than poet, so he dropped the argument. As they two went home together, Osborne expressed himself still more strongly in favor of what he thought my production; having restrained himself before, as he said, lest I should think it flattery. "But who would have imagined," said he, "that Franklin had been capable of such a performance; such painting, such force, such fire! He

has even improved the original. In his common conversation he seems to have no choice of words; he hesitates and blunders; and yet, good God! how he writes!" When we next met, Ralph discovered the trick we had played him, and Osborne was a little laughed at.

This transaction fixed Ralph in his resolution of becoming a poet. I did all I could to dissuade him from it, but he continued scribbling verses till Pope cured him.¹ He became, however, a pretty good prose writer. More of him hereafter. But, as I may not have occasion again to mention the other two, I shall just remark here, that Watson died in my arms a few years after, much lamented, being the best of our set. Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became an eminent lawyer and made money, but died young. He and I had made a serious agreement that the one who happened first to die should, if possible, make a friendly visit to the other, and acquaint him how he found things in that separate state. But he never fulfilled his promise.

The governor, seeming to like my company, had me frequently to his house, and his setting me up was always mentioned as a fixed thing. I was to take with me letters recommendatory to a number of his friends, besides the letter of credit to furnish me with the necessary money for purchasing the press and types, paper, *etc.* For these letters I was appointed to call at different times, when they were to be ready; but a future time was still named. Thus he went on till the ship, whose departure too had been several times postponed, was on the point of sailing. Then, when I called to take my leave and receive the letters, his secretary, Dr. Bard, came out to me and said the governor was extremely busy in writing, but would be

¹ Two allusions to James Ralph were inserted by Pope in later editions of the *Dunciad*. The first is in the following couplet (I, 215-6):

"And see! the very Gazetteers give o'er,
E'en Ralph repents, and Henley writes no more."

The second is the one which "cured" him (III, 165-6).

"Silence, ye Wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
And makes night hideous—Answer him, ye Owls!"

As a political writer Ralph was successful. Pope and others agree in the accusation that he sold his services to the highest bidder, but at least the bidding was high, as he managed to secure a pension of £600 the year.

down at Newcastle before the ship, and there the letters would be delivered to me.

Ralph, though married, and having one child, had determined to accompany me in this voyage. It was thought he intended to establish a correspondence, and obtain goods to sell on commission; but I found afterwards, that, through some discontent with his wife's relations, he purposed to leave her on their hands, and never return again. Having taken leave of my friends, and interchanged some promises with Miss Read, I left Philadelphia in the ship, which anchored at Newcastle. The governor was there; but when I went to his lodging the secretary came to me from him with the civillest message in the world, that he could not then see me, being engaged in business of the utmost importance, but should send the letters to me on board, wished me heartily a good voyage and a speedy return, *etc.* I returned on board a little puzzled, but still not doubting.

Mr. Andrew Hamilton, a famous lawyer of Philadelphia, had taken passage in the same ship for himself and son, and with Mr. Denham, a Quaker merchant, and Messrs. Onion and Russel, masters of an iron work in Maryland, had engaged the great cabin; so that Ralph and I were forced to take up with a berth in the steerage, and none on board knowing us, were considered as ordinary persons. But Mr. Hamilton and his son (it was James, since governor) returned from Newcastle to Philadelphia, the father being recalled by a great fee to plead for a seized ship; and, just before we sailed, Colonel French coming on board, and showing me great respect, I was more taken notice of, and, with my friend Ralph, invited by the other gentlemen to come into the cabin, there being now room. Accordingly, we removed thither.

Understanding that Colonel French had brought on board the governor's dispatches, I asked the captain for those letters that were to be under my care. He said all were put into the bag together and he could not then come at them; but before we landed in England I should have an opportunity of picking them out; so I was satisfied for the present, and we proceeded on our voyage. We had a sociable company in the cabin, and lived uncommonly well, having the

addition of all Mr. Hamilton's stores, who had laid in plentifully. In this passage Mr. Denham contracted a friendship for me that continued during his life. The voyage was otherwise not a pleasant one, as we had a great deal of bad weather.

When we came into the Channel, the captain kept his word with me, and gave me an opportunity of examining the bag for the governor's letters. I found none upon which my name was put as under my care. I picked out six or seven, that, by the handwriting, I thought might be the promised letters, especially as one of them was directed to Basket, the king's printer, and another to some stationer. We arrived in London on the 24th of December, 1724. I waited upon the stationer, who came first in my way, delivering the letter as from Governor Keith. "I don't know such a person," says he; but, opening the letter, "Oh! this is from Riddlesden. I have lately found him to be a complete rascal, and I will have nothing to do with him, nor receive any letters from him." So, putting the letter into my hand, he turned on his heel and left me to serve some customer. I was surprised to find these were not the governor's letters; and after recollecting and comparing circumstances, I began to doubt his sincerity. I found my friend Denham, and opened the whole affair to him. He let me into Keith's character; told me there was not the least probability that he had written any letters for me; that no one who knew him had the smallest dependence on him; and he laughed at the notion of the governor's giving me a letter of credit, having, as he said, no credit to give. On my expressing some concern about what I should do, he advised me to endeavor getting some employment in the way of my business. "Among the printers here," said he, "you will improve yourself, and when you return to America, you will set up to greater advantage."

We both of us happened to know, as well as the stationer, that Riddlesden, the attorney, was a very knave. He had half ruined Miss Read's father by persuading him to be bound for him.¹ By this letter it appeared there was a secret scheme on foot to the prejudice of Hamilton (sup-

¹ *I.e.*, to become responsible for payment of a note.

posed to be then coming over with us); and that Keith was concerned in it with Riddlesden. Denham, who was a friend of Hamilton's, thought he ought to be acquainted with it; so, when he arrived in England, which was soon after, partly from resentment and ill-will to Keith and Riddlesden, and partly from good-will to him, I waited on him, and gave him the letter. He thanked me cordially, the information being of importance to him; and from that time he became my friend, greatly to my advantage afterwards on many occasions.

But what shall we think of a governor's playing such pitiful tricks, and imposing so grossly on a poor ignorant boy! It was a habit he had acquired. He wished to please everybody; and, having little to give, he gave expectations. He was otherwise an ingenious, sensible man, a pretty good writer, and a good governor for the people, though not for his constituents, the proprietaries,¹ whose instructions he sometimes disregarded. Several of our best laws were of his planning and passed during his administration.

Ralph and I were inseparable companions. We took lodgings together in Little Britain at three shillings and sixpence a week—as much as we could then afford. He found some relations, but they were poor, and unable to assist him. He now let me know his intentions of remaining in London, and that he never meant to return to Philadelphia. He had brought no money with him, the whole he could muster having been expended in paying his passage. I had fifteen pistoles; so he borrowed occasionally of me to subsist, while he was looking out for business. He first endeavored to get into the playhouse, believing himself qualified for an actor; but Wilkes,² to whom he applied, advised him candidly not to think of that employment, as it was impossible he should succeed in it. Then he proposed to Roberts, a publisher in Paternoster Row, to write for him a weekly paper like the *Spectator*, on certain conditions, which Roberts did not approve. Then he endeavored to get employment as a hackney writer, to copy for the stationers and lawyers about the Temple, but could find no vacancy.

I immediately got into work at Palmer's,

then a famous printing-house in Bartholomew Close, and here I continued near a year. I was pretty diligent, but spent with Ralph a good deal of my earnings in going to plays and other places of amusement. We had together consumed all my pistoles, and now just rubbed on from hand to mouth. He seemed quite to forget his wife and child, and I, by degrees, my engagements with Miss Read, to whom I never wrote more than one letter, and that was to let her know I was not likely soon to return. This was another of the great errata of my life, which I should wish to correct if I were to live it over again. In fact, by our expenses, I was constantly kept unable to pay my passage.

At Palmer's I was employed in composing for the second edition of Wollaston's *Religion of Nature*.³ Some of his reasonings not appearing to me well founded, I wrote a little metaphysical piece in which I made remarks on them. It was entitled *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*. I inscribed it to my friend Ralph; I printed a small number. It occasioned my being more considered by Mr. Palmer as a young man of some ingenuity, though he seriously expostulated with me upon the principles of my pamphlet, which to him appeared abominable. My printing this pamphlet was another erratum. While I lodged in Little Britain, I made an acquaintance with one Wilcox, a bookseller, whose shop was at the next door. He had an immense collection of second-hand books. Circulating libraries were not then in use; but we agreed that, on certain reasonable terms, which I have now forgotten, I might take, read, and return any of his books. This I esteemed a great advantage, and I made as much use of it as I could.

My pamphlet by some means falling into the hands of one Lyons, a surgeon, author of a book entitled *The Infallibility of Human Judgment*, it occasioned an acquaintance between us. He took great notice of me, called on me often to converse on those subjects, carried me to the Horns, a pale-alehouse in — Lane, Cheapside, and introduced me to Dr. Mandeville, author of the *Fable of the Bees*, who had a club there, of which he was the soul, being a most face-

¹ Proprietors, sons of William Penn.

² A comedian.

³ First ed'n, 1722; second, 1726. Copies of the latter are not uncommon.

tious, entertaining companion. Lyons, too, introduced me to Dr. Pemberton, at Batson's Coffee-house, who promised to give me an opportunity, some time or other, of seeing Sir Isaac Newton, of which I was extremely desirous; but this never happened.

I had brought over a few curiosities, among which the principal was a purse made of the asbestos, which purifies by fire. Sir Hans Sloane heard of it, came to see me, and invited me to his house in Bloomsbury Square, where he showed me all his curiosities, and persuaded me to let him add that to the number, for which he paid me handsomely.¹

In our house there lodged a young woman, a milliner, who, I think, had a shop in the Cloisters. She had been genteelly bred, was sensible and lively, and of most pleasing conversation. Ralph read plays to her in the evenings, they grew intimate, she took another lodging, and he followed her. They lived together some time; but, he being still out of business, and her income not sufficient to maintain them with her child, he took a resolution of going from London, to try for a country school, which he thought himself well qualified to undertake, as he wrote an excellent hand, and was a master of arithmetic and accounts. This, however, he deemed a business below him, and confident of future better fortune, when he should be unwilling to have it known that he once was so meanly employed, he changed his name, and did me the honor to assume mine; for I soon after had a letter from him, acquainting me that he was settled in a small village (in Berkshire, I think it was, where he taught reading and writing to ten or a dozen boys, at sixpence each per week), recommending Mrs. T—— to my care, and desiring me to write to him, directing for Mr. Franklin, school-master, at such a place.

He continued to write frequently, sending me large specimens of an epic poem which he was then composing, and desiring my remarks and corrections. These I gave him from time to time, but endeavored rather to discourage his proceeding. One of Young's *Satires* was then just published. I copied and sent him a great part of it, which set in a strong light the folly of pursuing the Muses

with any hope of advancement by them.² All was in vain; sheets of the poem continued to come by every post. In the mean time, Mrs. T——, having on his account lost her friends and business, was often in distresses, and used to send for me, and borrow what I could spare to help her out of them. I grew fond of her company, and, being at that time under no religious restraint and presuming upon my importance to her, I attempted familiarities (another erratum) which she repulsed with a proper resentment, and acquainted him with my behavior. This made a breach between us; and when he returned again to London, he let me know he thought I had canceled all the obligations he had been under to me. So I found I was never to expect his repaying me what I lent to him, or advanced for him. This, however, was not then of much consequence, as he was totally unable; and in the loss of his friendship I found myself relieved from a burden. I now began to think of getting a little money beforehand, and, expecting better work, I left Palmer's to work at Watts's, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, a still greater printing-house. Here I continued all the rest of my stay in London.

At my first admission into this printing-house I took to working at press,³ imagining I felt a want of the bodily exercise I had been used to in America, where presswork is mixed with composing. I drank only water; the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great guzzlers of beer. On occasion, I carried up and down stairs a large form of types in each hand, when others carried but one in both hands. They wondered to see, from this and several instances, that the *Water-American*, as they called me, was *stronger* than themselves, who drank *strong* beer! We had an alehouse boy who attended always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint

² Edward Young published separately, as they were written, a series of seven satires with the general title, *Love of Fame, the Universal Passion*, 1725-1728. The one of which Franklin copied a great part must have been Satire IV.

³ The press which Franklin worked at Watts's was acquired in 1841 by an American, and is now in the Patent Office, Washington.

¹ Franklin had, in fact, written to the famous collector, offering to sell him the purse.

in the afternoon about six o'clock, and another when he had done his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom; but it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer, that he might be *strong* to labor. I endeavored to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer could only be in proportion to the grain or flour of the barley dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a pennyworth of bread; and therefore, if he would eat that with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer. He drank on, however, and had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages every Saturday night for that muddling liquor; an expense I was free from. And thus these poor devils keep themselves always under.

Watts, after some weeks, desiring to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen; a new *bienvvenu* or sum for drink, being five shillings, was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid below; the master thought so too, and forbade my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accordingly considered as an excommunicate, and had so many little pieces of private mischief done me, by mixing my sorts, transposing my pages, breaking my matter, *etc.*, *etc.*, if I were ever so little out of the room, and all ascribed to the chapel¹ ghost, which they said ever haunted those not regularly admitted, that, notwithstanding the master's protection, I found myself obliged to comply and pay the money, convinced of the folly of being on ill terms with those one is to live with continually.

I was now on a fair footing with them, and soon acquired considerable influence. I proposed some reasonable alterations in their chapel laws, and carried them against all opposition. From my example, a great part of them left their muddling breakfast of beer, and bread, and cheese, finding they could with me be supplied from a neighboring house with a large porringer of hot water-gruel, sprinkled with pepper, crumbed

with bread, and a bit of butter in it, for the price of a pint of beer, *viz.*, three half-pence. This was a more comfortable as well as cheaper breakfast, and kept their heads clearer. Those who continued sopping with beer all day, were often, by not paying, out of credit at the alehouse, and used to make interest with me to get beer; their *light*, as they phrased it, *being out*. I watched the pay-table on Saturday night, and collected what I stood engaged for them, having to pay sometimes near thirty shillings a week on their account. This, and my being esteemed a pretty good *riggite*, that is, a jocular verbal satirist, supported my consequence in the society. My constant attendance (I never making a St. Monday²) recommended me to the master; and my uncommon quickness at composing occasioned my being put upon all work of dispatch, which was generally better paid. So I went on now very agreeably.

My lodging in Little Britain being too remote, I found another in Duke-street, opposite to the Romish Chapel. It was two pair of stairs backwards, at an Italian warehouse.³ A widow lady kept the house; she had a daughter, and a maid servant, and a journeyman who attended the warehouse, but lodged abroad. After sending to inquire my character at the house where I last lodged, she agreed to take me in at the same rate, 3*s.* 6*d.* per week; cheaper, as she said, from the protection she expected in having a man lodge in the house. She was a widow, an elderly woman; had been bred a Protestant, being a clergyman's daughter, but was converted to the Catholic religion by her husband, whose memory she much revered; had lived much among people of distinction, and knew a thousand anecdotes of them as far back as the times of Charles the Second. She was lame in her knees with the gout, and, therefore, seldom stirred out of her room, so sometimes wanted company; and hers was so highly amusing to me, that I was sure to spend an evening with her whenever she desired it. Our supper was only half an anchovy each, on a very little strip of bread and butter, and half a pint of ale between us; but the entertainment was

¹ Printing-houses were formerly called chapels in England. It has been suggested that this arose from the fact that the earliest English printer, Caxton, set up his press in a building, inside the precincts of Westminster Abbey, which, according to tradition, had anciently been a chapel.

² *I.e.*, an idle Monday.

³ *I.e.*, a shop having Italian wares.

in her conversation. My always keeping good hours, and giving little trouble in the family, made her unwilling to part with me; so that, when I talked of a lodging I had heard of, nearer my business, for two shillings a week, which, intent as I now was on saving money, made some difference, she bid me not think of it, for she would abate me two shillings a week for the future; so I remained with her at one shilling and sixpence as long as I stayed in London.

In a garret of her house there lived a maiden lady of seventy, in the most retired manner, of whom my landlady gave me this account: that she was a Roman Catholic, had been sent abroad when young, and lodged in a nunnery with an intent of becoming a nun; but, the country not agreeing with her, she returned to England, where, there being no nunnery, she had vowed to lead the life of a nun, as near as might be done in those circumstances. Accordingly, she had given all her estate to charitable uses, reserving only twelve pounds a year to live on, and out of this sum she still gave a great deal in charity, living herself on water-gruel only, and using no fire but to boil it. She had lived many years in that garret, being permitted to remain there gratis by successive Catholic tenants of the house below, as they deemed it a blessing to have her there. A priest visited her to confess her every day. "I have asked her," says my landlady, "how she, as she lived, could possibly find so much employment for a confessor?" "Oh," said she, "it is impossible to avoid *vain thoughts*." I was permitted once to visit her. She was cheerful and polite, and conversed pleasantly. The room was clean, but had no other furniture than a mattress, a table with a crucifix and book, a stool which she gave me to sit on, and a picture over the chimney of Saint Veronica displaying her handkerchief, with the miraculous figure of Christ's bleeding face on it, which she explained to me with great seriousness.¹ She looked pale, but was never sick; and I give it as another instance on how small an income life and health may be supported.

¹ The tradition is that when Jesus was on his way to Calvary a woman whom he passed lent him her handkerchief. He wiped his face with it, and afterwards it was miraculously impressed with his likeness.

At Watts's printing-house I contracted an acquaintance with an ingenious young man, one Wygate, who, having wealthy relations, had been better educated than most printers; was a tolerable Latinist, spoke French, and loved reading. I taught him and a friend of his to swim at twice going into the river, and they soon became good swimmers. They introduced me to some gentlemen from the country, who went to Chelsea by water to see the College and Don Saltero's curiosities.² In our return, at the request of the company, whose curiosity Wygate had excited, I stripped and leaped into the river, and swam from near Chelsea to Blackfriars, performing on the way many feats of activity, both upon and under water, that surprised and pleased those to whom they were novelties.

I had from a child been ever delighted with this exercise, had studied and practiced all Thévenot's³ motions and positions, added some of my own, aiming at the graceful and easy as well as the useful. All these I took this occasion of exhibiting to the company, and was much flattered by their admiration; and Wygate, who was desirous of becoming a master, grew more and more attached to me on that account, as well as from the similarity of our studies. He at length proposed to me traveling all over Europe together, supporting ourselves everywhere by working at our business. I was once inclined to it; but, mentioning it to my good friend Mr. Denham, with whom I often spent an hour when I had leisure, he dissuaded me from it, advising me to think only of returning to Pennsylvania, which he was now about to do.

I must record one trait of this good man's character. He had formerly been in business at Bristol, but failed in debt to a number of people, compounded, and went to America. There, by a close application to business as a merchant, he acquired a plentiful fortune in a few years. Returning to England in the ship with me, he invited his old creditors to an entertainment, at which he thanked them for the easy composition they had

² The "college" was probably Chelsea Hospital. Don Saltero was the proprietor of a Chelsea coffee-house. He had been a servant of Sir Hans Sloane, who had given him a number of curiosities.

³ Author of a treatise on swimming.

avored him with, and, when they expected nothing but the treat, every man at the first remove found under his plate an order on a banker for the full amount of the unpaid remainder, with interest.

He now told me he was about to return to Philadelphia, and should carry over a great quantity of goods in order to open a store there. He proposed to take me over as his clerk, to keep his books, in which he would instruct me, copy his letters, and attend the store. He added, that, as soon as I should be acquainted with mercantile business, he would promote me by sending me with a cargo of flour and bread, *etc.*, to the West Indies, and procure me commissions from others which would be profitable; and, if I managed well, would establish me handsomely. The thing pleased me; for I was grown tired of London, remembered with pleasure the happy months I had spent in Pennsylvania, and wished again to see it; therefore I immediately agreed on the terms of fifty pounds a year, Pennsylvania money; less, indeed, than my present gettings as a compositor, but affording a better prospect.

I now took leave of printing, as I thought, for ever, and was daily employed in my new business, going about with Mr. Denham among the tradesmen to purchase various articles, and seeing them packed up, doing errands, calling upon workmen to dispatch, *etc.*; and, when all was on board, I had a few days' leisure. On one of these days, I was, to my surprise, sent for by a great man I knew only by name, a Sir William Wyndham, and I waited upon him. He had heard by some means or other of my swimming from Chelsea to Blackfriars, and of my teaching Wygate and another young man to swim in a few hours. He had two sons about to set out on their travels; he wished to have them first taught swimming, and proposed to gratify me handsomely if I would teach them. They were not yet come to town, and my stay was uncertain, so I could not undertake it; but, from this incident, I thought it likely that if I were to remain in England and open a swimming-school, I might get a good deal of money; and it struck me so strongly, that, had the overture been sooner made me, probably I should not so soon have returned to America. After many years, you and I had something

of more importance to do with one of these sons of Sir William Wyndham, become Earl of Egremont, which I shall mention in its place.

Thus I spent about eighteen months in London; most part of the time I worked hard at my business, and spent but little upon myself except in seeing plays and in books. My friend Ralph had kept me poor; he owed me about twenty-seven pounds, which I was now never likely to receive; a great sum out of my small earnings! I loved him, notwithstanding, for he had many amiable qualities. I had by no means improved my fortune; but I had picked up some very ingenious acquaintance, whose conversation was of great advantage to me; and I had read considerably.

We sailed from Gravesend on the 23d of July, 1726. * * * * *

We landed in Philadelphia on the 11th of October, where I found sundry alterations. Keith was no longer governor, being superseded by Major Gordon. I met him walking the streets as a common citizen. He seemed a little ashamed at seeing me, but passed without saying any thing. I should have been as much ashamed at seeing Miss Read, had not her friends, despairing with reason of my return after the receipt of my letter, persuaded her to marry another, one Rogers, a potter, which was done in my absence. With him, however, she was never happy, and soon parted from him, refusing to cohabit with him or bear his name, it being now said that he had another wife. He was a worthless fellow, though an excellent workman, which was the temptation to her friends. He got into debt, ran away in 1727 or 1728, went to the West Indies, and died there. Keimer had got a better house, a shop well supplied with stationery, plenty of new types, a number of hands, though none good, and seemed to have a great deal of business.

Mr. Denham took a store in Water-street, where we opened our goods; I attended the business diligently, studied accounts, and grew, in a little time, expert at selling. We lodged and boarded together; he counseled me as a father, having a sincere regard for me. I respected and loved him, and we might have gone on together very happy; but, in the beginning of February, 1727,

when I had just passed my twenty-first year, we both were taken ill. My distemper was a pleurisy, which very nearly carried me off. I suffered a good deal, gave up the point in my own mind, and was rather disappointed when I found myself recovering, regretting, in some degree, that I must now, some time or other, have all that disagreeable work to do over again. I forget what his distemper was; it held him a long time, and at length carried him off. He left me a small legacy in a nuncupative will, as a token of his kindness for me, and he left me once more to the wide world; for the store was taken into the care of his executors, and my employment under him ended.

My brother-in-law, Holmes, being now at Philadelphia, advised my return to my business; and Keimer tempted me, with an offer of large wages by the year, to come and take the management of his printing-house, that he might better attend his stationer's shop. I had heard a bad character of him in London from his wife and her friends, and was not fond of having any more to do with him. I tried for farther employment as a merchant's clerk; but, not readily meeting with any, I closed again with Keimer. I found in his house these hands: Hugh Meredith, a Welsh Pennsylvanian, thirty years of age, bred to country work; honest, sensible, had a great deal of solid observation, was something of a reader, but given to drink. Stephen Potts, a young countryman of full age, bred to the same, of uncommon natural parts, and great wit and humor, but a little idle. These he had agreed with at extreme low wages per week, to be raised a shilling every three months, as they would deserve by improving in their business; and the expectation of these high wages, to come on hereafter, was what he had drawn them in with. Meredith was to work at press, Potts at book-binding, which he, by agreement, was to teach them, though he knew neither one nor t'other. John —, a wild Irishman, brought up to no business, whose service, for four years, Keimer had purchased from the captain of a ship; he, too, was to be made a pressman. George Webb, an Oxford scholar, whose time for four years he had likewise bought, intending him for a compositor, of whom more presently; and

David Harry, a country boy, whom he had taken apprentice.

I soon perceived that the intention of engaging me at wages so much higher than he had been used to give, was, to have these raw, cheap hands formed through me; and, as soon as I had instructed them, then they being all articed to him, he should be able to do without me. I went on, however, very cheerfully, put his printing-house in order, which had been in great confusion, and brought his hands by degrees to mind their business and to do it better.

It was an odd thing to find an Oxford scholar in the situation of a bought servant. He was not more than eighteen years of age, and gave me this account of himself: that he was born in Gloucester, educated at a grammar-school there, had been distinguished among the scholars for some apparent superiority in performing his part, when they exhibited plays; belonged to the Witty Club there, and had written some pieces in prose and verse, which were printed in the Gloucester newspapers; thence he was sent to Oxford; where he continued about a year, but not well satisfied, wishing of all things to see London, and become a player. At length, receiving his quarterly allowance of fifteen guineas, instead of discharging his debts he walked out of town, hid his gown in a furze bush, and footed it to London, where, having no friend to advise him, he fell into bad company, soon spent his guineas, found no means of being introduced among the players, grew necessitous, pawned his clothes, and wanted bread. Walking the street very hungry, and not knowing what to do with himself, a crimp's bill was put into his hand, offering immediate entertainment and encouragement to such as would bind themselves to serve in America. He went directly, signed indentures, was put into the ship, and came over, never writing a line to acquaint his friends what was become of him. He was lively, witty, good-natured, and a pleasant companion, but idle, thoughtless, and imprudent to the last degree.

John, the Irishman, soon ran away; with the rest I began to live very agreeably, for they all respected me the more, as they found Keimer incapable of instructing them, and that from me they learned something

daily. We never worked on Saturday, that being Keimer's Sabbath, so I had two days for reading. My acquaintance with ingenious people in the town increased. Keimer himself treated me with great civility and apparent regard, and nothing now made me uneasy but my debt to Vernon, which I was yet unable to pay, being hitherto but a poor economist. He, however, kindly made no demand of it.

Our printing-house often wanted sorts, and there was no letter-founder in America; I had seen types cast at James's in London, but without much attention to the manner; however, I now contrived a mold, made use of the letters we had as puncheons, struck the matrices in lead, and thus supplied in a pretty tolerable way all deficiencies. I also engraved several things on occasion; I made the ink; I was warehouseman, and everything, and, in short, quite a factotum.

But, however serviceable I might be, I found that my services became every day of less importance, as the other hands improved in the business; and, when Keimer paid my second quarter's wages, he let me know that he felt them too heavy, and thought I should make an abatement. He grew by degrees less civil, put on more of the master, frequently found fault, was captious, and seemed ready for an outbreaking. I went on, nevertheless, with a good deal of patience, thinking that his encumbered circumstances were partly the cause. At length a trifle snapped our connections; for, a great noise happening near the court-house, I put my head out of the window to see what was the matter. Keimer, being in the street, looked up and saw me, called out to me in a loud voice and angry tone to mind my business, adding some reproachful words, that nettled me the more for their publicity, all the neighbors who were looking out on the same occasion, being witnesses how I was treated. He came up immediately into the printing-house, continued the quarrel, high words passed on both sides, he gave me the quarter's warning we had stipulated, expressing a wish that he had not been obliged to so long a warning. I told him his wish was unnecessary, for I would leave him that instant; and so, taking my hat, walked out of doors, desiring Meredith, whom I saw below, to take care

of some things I left, and bring them to my lodgings.

Meredith came accordingly in the evening, when we talked my affair over. He had conceived a great regard for me, and was very unwilling that I should leave the house while he remained in it. He dissuaded me from returning to my native country, which I began to think of; he reminded me that Keimer was in debt for all he possessed; that his creditors began to be uneasy; that he kept his shop miserably, sold often without profit for ready money, and often trusted without keeping accounts; that he must therefore fail, which would make a vacancy I might profit of. I objected my want of money. He then let me know that his father had a high opinion of me, and, from some discourse that had passed between them, he was sure would advance money to set us up, if I would enter into partnership with him. "My time," says he, "will be out with Keimer in the spring; by that time we may have our press and types in from London. I am sensible I am no workman; if you like it, your skill in the business shall be set against the stock I furnish, and we will share the profits equally."

The proposal was agreeable, and I consented; his father was in town and approved of it; the more as he saw I had great influence with his son, had prevailed on him to abstain long from dram-drinking, and he hoped might break him of that wretched habit entirely, when we came to be so closely connected. I gave an inventory to the father, who carried it to a merchant; the things were sent for, the secret was to be kept till they should arrive, and in the mean time I was to get work, if I could, at the other printing-house. But I found no vacancy there, and so remained idle a few days, when Keimer, on a prospect of being employed to print some paper money in New Jersey, which would require cuts and various types that I only could supply, and apprehending Bradford might engage me and get the job from him, sent me a very civil message, that old friends should not part for a few words, the effect of sudden passion, and wishing me to return. Meredith persuaded me to comply, as it would give more opportunity for his improvement under my daily instructions; so I returned, and

we went on more smoothly than for some time before. The New Jersey job was obtained, I contrived a copper-plate press for it, the first that had been seen in the country; I cut several ornaments and checks for the bills. We went together to Burlington, where I executed the whole to satisfaction; and he received so large a sum for the work as to be enabled thereby to keep his head much longer above water.

At Burlington I made an acquaintance with many principal people of the province. Several of them had been appointed by the Assembly a committee to attend the press, and take care that no more bills were printed than the law directed. They were therefore, by turns, constantly with us, and generally he who attended brought with him a friend or two for company. My mind having been much more improved by reading than Keimer's, I suppose it was for that reason my conversation seemed to be more valued. They had me to their houses, introduced me to their friends, and showed me much civility; while he, though the master, was a little neglected. In truth, he was an odd fish, ignorant of common life, fond of rudely opposing received opinions, slovenly to extreme dirtiness, enthusiastic in some points of religion, and a little knavish withal.

We continued there near three months; and by that time I could reckon among my acquired friends Judge Allen, Samuel Bustill, the secretary of the province, Isaac Pearson, Joseph Cooper, and several of the Smiths, members of Assembly, and Isaac Decow, the surveyor-general. The latter was a shrewd, sagacious old man, who told me that he began for himself, when young, by wheeling clay for the brickmakers; learned to write after he was of age, carried the chain for surveyors who taught him surveying and he had now by his industry acquired a good estate; and, says he, "I foresee that you will soon work this man out of his business, and make a fortune at it in Philadelphia." He had not then the least intimation of my intention to set up there or anywhere. These friends were afterwards of great use to me, as I occasionally was to some of them. They all continued their regard for me as long as they lived.

Before I enter upon my public appearance in business, it may be well to let you know

the then state of my mind with regard to my principles and morals, that you may see how far those influenced the future events of my life. My parents had early given me religious impressions, and brought me through my childhood piously in the Dissenting way. But I was scarce fifteen when, after doubting by turns of several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of Revelation itself. Some books against Deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's Lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them; for the arguments of the Deists, which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations; in short, I soon became a thorough Deist. My arguments perverted some others, particularly Collins and Ralph; but each of them having afterwards wronged me greatly without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct towards me (who was another freethinker), and my own towards Vernon and Miss Read, which at times gave me great trouble, I began to suspect that this doctrine, though it might be true, was not very useful. My London pamphlet,¹ which had for its motto these lines of Dryden:

Whatever is, is right. Though purblind man
Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest link:
His eyes not carrying to the equal beam,
That poises all above;²

and from the attributes of God, his infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, concluded that nothing could possibly be wrong in the world, and that vice and virtue were empty distinctions, no such things existing, appeared now not so clever a performance as I once thought it; and I doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceived into my argument, so as to infect all that followed, as is common in metaphysical reasonings.

¹ The occasion of its composition has earlier been mentioned. It was printed in 1725.

² From Dryden's *Ædipus*, III, i (p. 184 of Vol. V⁴ of the Scott-Saintsbury ed'n). Quoted very inexact. Franklin gives Pope's famous assertion (*Essay on Man*, I, 294; IV, 145, 394). Dryden's words are:

"Whatever is, is in its causes just;
Since all things are by fate."

I grew convinced that *truth, sincerity, and integrity* in dealings between man and man were of the utmost importance to the felicity of life; and I formed written resolutions, which still remain in my journal book, to practice them ever while I lived. Revelation had indeed no weight with me, as such; but I entertained an opinion that, though certain actions might not be bad *because* they were forbidden by it, or good *because* it commanded them, yet probably those actions might be forbidden *because* they were bad for us, or commanded *because* they were beneficial to us, in their own natures, all the circumstances of things considered. And this persuasion, with the kind hand of Providence, or some guardian angel, or accidental favorable circumstances and situations, or all together, preserved me, through this dangerous time of youth, and the hazardous situations I was sometimes in among strangers remote from the eye and advice of my father, without any willful gross immorality or injustice that might have been expected from my want of religion.¹ I say willful, because the instances I have mentioned had something of *necessity* in them, from my youth, inexperience, and the knavery of others. I had therefore a tolerable character to begin with; I valued it properly, and determined to preserve it.

We had not been long returned to Philadelphia before the new types arrived from London. We settled with Keimer, and left him by his consent before he heard of it. We found a house to hire near the market, and took it. To lessen the rent, which was then but twenty-four pounds a year, though I have since known it to let for seventy, we took in Thomas Godfrey, a glazier, and his family, who were to pay a considerable part of it to us, and we to board with them. We had scarce opened our letters and put our press in order, before George House, an acquaintance of mine, brought a countryman to see us, whom he had met in the street inquiring for a printer. All our cash

was now expended in the variety of particulars we had been obliged to procure, and this countryman's five shillings, being our first-fruits, and coming so seasonably, gave me more pleasure than any crown I have since earned; and the gratitude I felt towards House has made me often more ready than perhaps I should otherwise have been to assist young beginners.

There are croakers in every country, always boding its ruin. Such a one then lived in Philadelphia; a person of note, an elderly man with a wise look and a very grave manner of speaking; his name was Samuel Mickle. This gentleman, a stranger to me, stopped one day at my door, and asked me if I was the young man who had lately opened a new printing-house. Being answered in the affirmative, he said he was sorry for me, because it was an expensive undertaking and the expense would be lost; for Philadelphia was a sinking place, the people already half bankrupts or near being so; all appearances to the contrary, such as new buildings and the rise of rents, being to his certain knowledge fallacious; for they were, in fact, among the things that would soon ruin us. And he gave me such a detail of misfortunes now existing, or that were soon to exist, that he left me half melancholy. Had I known him before I engaged in this business, probably I never should have done it. This man continued to live in this decaying place, and to declaim in the same strain, refusing for many years to buy a house there, because all was going to destruction; and at last I had the pleasure of seeing him give five times as much for one as he might have bought it for when he first began his croaking.

I should have mentioned before, that, in the autumn of the preceding year, I had formed most of my ingenious acquaintance into a club of mutual improvement which we called the JUNTO;² we met on Friday evenings. The rules that I drew up required that every member in his turn should produce one or more queries on any point of Morals, Politics, or Natural Philosophy, to be discussed by the company; and once in three months produce and read an essay of

¹ Originally these words followed here: "Some foolish intrigues with low women excepted, which from the expense were rather more prejudicial to me than to them." But Franklin crossed this out; and substituted for it in the margin the sentence which follows in the text.

² The impulse to do this Franklin may have derived from Cotton Mather's *Essays to do Good*, a book whose influence upon him he has earlier mentioned.

his own writing, on any subject he pleased. Our debates were to be under the direction of a president, and to be conducted in the sincere spirit of inquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute or desire of victory; and, to prevent warmth, all expressions of positiveness in opinions or direct contradiction were after some time made contraband and prohibited under small pecuniary penalties.

The first members were Joseph Breintnal, a copier of deeds for the scriveners, a good-natured, friendly, middle-aged man, a great lover of poetry, reading all he could meet with, and writing some that was tolerable; very ingenious in many little Nicknackeries, and of sensible conversation.

Thomas Godfrey, a self-taught mathematician, great in his way, and afterward inventor of what is now called Hadley's Quadrant. But he knew little out of his way, and was not a pleasing companion; as, like most great mathematicians I have met with, he expected universal precision in every thing said, or was for ever denying or distinguishing upon trifles, to the disturbance of all conversation. He soon left us.

Nicholas Scull, a surveyor, afterward surveyor-general, who loved books and sometimes made a few verses.

William Parsons, bred a shoemaker, but, loving reading, had acquired a considerable share of mathematics, which he first studied with a view to astrology, that he afterwards laughed at. He also became surveyor-general.

William Maugridge, a joiner, a most exquisite mechanic, and a solid, sensible man.

Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb I have characterized before.

Robert Grace, a young gentleman of some fortune, generous, lively, and witty; a lover of punning and of his friends.

And William Coleman, then a merchant's clerk, about my age, who had the coolest, clearest head, the best heart, and the exactest morals of almost any man I ever met with. He became afterwards a merchant of great note, and one of our provincial judges. Our friendship continued without interruption to his death, upward of forty years; and the club continued almost as long, and was the best school of philosophy,

morality, and politics that then existed in the province; for our queries, which were read the week preceding their discussion, put us upon reading with attention upon the several subjects, that we might speak more to the purpose; and here, too, we acquired better habits of conversation, every thing being studied in our rules which might prevent our disgusting each other. From hence the long continuance of the club, which I shall have frequent occasion to speak further of hereafter.

But my giving this account of it here is to show something of the interest I had, every one of these exerting themselves in recommending business to us. Breintnal, particularly, procured us from the Quakers the printing forty sheets of their history, the rest being to be done by Keimer; and upon this we worked exceedingly hard, for the price was low. It was a folio, pro patria size in pica, with long primer notes. I composed of it a sheet a day, and Meredith worked it off at press; it was often eleven at night, and sometimes later, before I had finished my distribution for the next day's work, for the little jobs sent in by our other friends now and then put us back. But so determined I was to continue doing a sheet a day of the folio, that one night, when, having imposed my forms, I thought my day's work over, one of them by accident was broken, and two pages reduced to pi, I immediately distributed and composed it over again before I went to bed; and this industry, visible to our neighbors, began to give us character and credit; particularly, I was told, that mention being made of the new printing-office at the merchants' Every-night club, the general opinion was that it must fail, there being already two printers in the place, Keimer and Bradford; but Dr. Baird (whom you and I saw many years after at his native place, St. Andrews in Scotland) gave a contrary opinion: "For the industry of that Franklin," says he, "is superior to any thing I ever saw of the kind; I see him still at work when I go home from club, and he is at work again before his neighbors are out of bed." This struck the rest, and we soon after had offers from one of them to supply us with stationery; but as yet we did not choose to engage in shop business.

I mention this industry the more particularly and the more freely, though it seems to be talking in my own praise, that those of my posterity, who shall read it, may know the use of that virtue, when they see its effects in my favor throughout this relation.

George Webb, who had found a female friend that lent him wherewith to purchase his time of Keimer, now came to offer himself as a journeyman to us. We could not then employ him; but I foolishly let him know as a secret that I soon intended to begin a newspaper, and might then have work for him. My hopes of success, as I told him, were founded on this, that the then only newspaper, printed by Bradford, was a paltry thing, wretchedly managed, no way entertaining, and yet was profitable to him; I therefore thought a good paper would scarcely fail of good encouragement. I requested Webb not to mention it; but he told it to Keimer, who immediately, to be beforehand with me, published proposals for printing one himself, on which Webb was to be employed. I resented this; and, to counteract them, as I could not yet begin our paper, I wrote several pieces of entertainment for Bradford's paper, under the title of the BUSY BODY which Breintnal continued some months. By this means the attention of the public was fixed on that paper, and Keimer's proposals, which we burlesqued and ridiculed, were disregarded. He began his paper, however, and, after carrying it on three quarters of a year, with at most, only ninety subscribers, he offered it to me for a trifle; and I, having been ready some time to go on with it, took it in hand directly; and it proved in a few years extremely profitable to me.¹

I perceive that I am apt to speak in the singular number, though our partnership still continued; the reason may be that, in fact, the whole management of the business lay upon me. Meredith was no compositor, a poor pressman, and seldom sober. My friends lamented my connection with him, but I was to make the best of it.

Our first papers made a quite different

¹ Keimer's paper was called *The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences and Pennsylvania Gazette*. Franklin's first issue appeared on 2 October, 1729, with the title, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*.

appearance from any before in the province; a better type, and better printed; but some spirited remarks of my writing, on the dispute then going on between Governor Burnet and the Massachusetts Assembly,² struck the principal people, occasioned the paper and the manager of it to be much talked of, and in a few weeks brought them all to be our subscribers.

Their example was followed by many, and our number went on growing continually. This was one of the first good effects of my having learned a little to scribble; another was, that the leading men, seeing a newspaper now in the hands of one who could also handle a pen, thought it convenient to oblige and encourage me. Bradford still printed the votes, and laws, and other public business. He had printed an address of the House to the governor, in a coarse, blundering manner; we reprinted it elegantly and correctly, and sent one to every member. They were sensible of the difference; it strengthened the hands of our friends in the House, and they voted us their printers for the year ensuing.

Among my friends in the House I must not forget Mr. Hamilton, before mentioned, who was then returned from England, and had a seat in it. He interested himself for me strongly in that instance, as he did in many others afterward, continuing his patronage till his death.³

Mr. Vernon, about this time, put me in mind of the debt I owed him, but did not press me. I wrote him an ingenuous letter of acknowledgment, craved his forbearance a little longer, which he allowed me, and as soon as I was able, I paid the principal with interest, and many thanks; so that erratum was in some degree corrected.

But now another difficulty came upon me which I had never the least reason to expect. Mr. Meredith's father, who was to have paid for our printing-house, according to the expectations given me, was able to advance only one hundred pounds currency, which had been paid; and a hundred more was due

² Concerning the governor's salary. The Assembly was insisting on its right to fix the amount, and Franklin supported its "ardent spirit of liberty" and "undaunted courage."

³ I got his son once £500. (Franklin's note.)

to the merchant, who grew impatient, and sued us all. We gave bail, but saw that, if the money could not be raised in time, the suit must soon come to a judgment and execution, and our hopeful prospects must, with us, be ruined, as the press and letters must be sold for payment, perhaps at half price.

In this distress two true friends, whose kindness I have never forgotten, nor ever shall forget while I can remember any thing, came to me separately, unknown to each other and without any application from me, offering each of them to advance me all the money that should be necessary to enable me to take the whole business upon myself, if that should be practicable; but they did not like my continuing the partnership with Meredith, who, as they said, was often seen drunk in the streets, and playing at low games in alehouses, much to our discredit. These two friends were William Coleman and Robert Grace. I told them I could not propose a separation while any prospect remained of the Merediths' fulfilling their part of our agreement, because I thought myself under great obligations to them for what they had done, and would do if they could; but, if they finally failed in their performance, and our partnership must be dissolved, I should then think myself at liberty to accept the assistance of my friends.

Thus the matter rested for some time, when I said to my partner: "Perhaps your father is dissatisfied at the part you have undertaken in this affair of ours, and is unwilling to advance for you and me what he would for you alone. If that is the case, tell me, and I will resign the whole to you, and go about my business." "No," said he, "my father has really been disappointed, and is really unable; and I am unwilling to distress him farther. I see this is a business I am not fit for. I was bred a farmer, and it was a folly in me to come to town, and put myself, at thirty years of age, an apprentice to learn a new trade. Many of our Welsh people are going to settle in North Carolina where land is cheap. I am inclined to go with them, and follow my old employment. You may find friends to assist you. If you will take the debts of the company upon you; return to my father the hundred

pound he has advanced; pay my little personal debts and give me thirty pounds and a new saddle, I will relinquish the partnership, and leave the whole in your hands." I agreed to this proposal; it was drawn up in writing, signed and sealed immediately. I gave him what he demanded, and he went soon after to Carolina, from whence he sent me next year two long letters containing the best account that had been given of that country, the climate, the soil, husbandry, *etc.*, for in those matters he was very judicious. I printed them in the papers, and they gave great satisfaction to the public.

As soon as he was gone I recurred to my two friends; and because I would not give an unkind preference to either I took half of what each had offered and I wanted of one, and half of the other; paid off the company's debts and went on with the business in my own name, advertising that the partnership was dissolved. I think this was in or about the year 1729.¹

About this time there was a cry among the people for more paper money, only fifteen thousand pounds being extant in the province, and that soon to be sunk. The wealthy inhabitants opposed any addition, being against all paper currency, from an apprehension that it would depreciate, as it had done in New England, to the prejudice of all creditors. We had discussed this point in our Junto where I was on the side of an addition, being persuaded that the first small sum struck in 1723 had done much good by increasing the trade, employment, and number of inhabitants in the province, since I now saw all the old houses inhabited, and many new ones building; whereas I remembered well, that when I first walked about the streets of Philadelphia, eating my roll, I saw most of the houses in Walnut-street, between Second and Front streets, with bills on their doors, "To be let"; and many likewise in Chestnut-street and other streets, which made me then think the inhabitants of the city were deserting it one after another.

Our debates possessed me so fully of the subject, that I wrote and printed an anonymous pamphlet on it, entitled *The Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency*. It was well

¹ The agreement of dissolution (examined by Sparks) shows that it occurred on 14 July, 1730.

received by the common people in general; but the rich men disliked it, for it increased and strengthened the clamor for more money, and they happening to have no writers among them that were able to answer it, their opposition slackened, and the point was carried by a majority in the House. My friends there who conceived I had been of some service, thought fit to reward me by employing me in printing the money; a very profitable job and a great help to me. This was another advantage gained by my being able to write.

The utility of this currency became by time and experience so evident as never afterwards to be much disputed; so that it grew soon to fifty-five thousand pounds, and in 1739 to eighty thousand pounds, since which it arose during the war to upwards of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, trade, building, and inhabitants all the while increasing, though I now think there are limits beyond which the quantity may be hurtful.

I soon after obtained, through my friend Hamilton, the printing of the Newcastle paper money, another profitable job as I then thought it; small things appearing great to those in small circumstances; and these, to me, were really great advantages as they were great encouragements. He procured for me, also, the printing of the laws and votes of that government,¹ which continued in my hands as long as I followed the business.

I now opened a little stationer's shop. I had in it blanks of all sorts, the correctest that ever appeared among us, being assisted in that by my friend Breintnal. I had also paper, parchment, chapmen's books, *etc.* One Whitemash, a compositor I had known in London, an excellent workman, now came to me, and worked with me constantly and diligently; and I took an apprentice, the son of Aquila Rose.

I began now gradually to pay off the debt I was under for the printing-house. In order to secure my credit and character as a tradesman, I took care not only to be in *reality* industrious and frugal, but to avoid all appearances to the contrary. I dressed plainly; I was seen at no places of idle

diversion. I never went out a-fishing or shooting; a book, indeed, sometimes debauched me from my work, but that was seldom, snug, and gave no scandal, and, to show that I was not above my business, I sometimes brought home the paper I purchased at the stores through the streets on a wheelbarrow. Thus being esteemed an industrious, thriving young man, and paying duly for what I bought, the merchants who imported stationery solicited my custom; others proposed supplying me with books, and I went on swimmingly. In the mean time, Keimer's credit and business declining daily, he was at last forced to sell his printing-house to satisfy his creditors. He went to Barbadoes, and there lived some years in very poor circumstances.

His apprentice, David Harry, whom I had instructed while I worked with him, set up in his place at Philadelphia, having bought his materials. I was at first apprehensive of a powerful rival in Harry, as his friends were very able, and had a good deal of interest. I therefore proposed a partnership to him, which he, fortunately for me, rejected with scorn. He was very proud, dressed like a gentleman, lived expensively, took much diversion and pleasure abroad, ran in debt, and neglected his business; upon which, all business left him; and, finding nothing to do, he followed Keimer to Barbadoes, taking the printing-house with him. There this apprentice employed his former master as a journeyman; they quarreled often; Harry went continually behindhand, and at length was forced to sell his types and return to his country work in Pennsylvania. The person that bought them employed Keimer to use them, but in a few years he died.

There remained now no competitor with me at Philadelphia but the old one, Bradford; who was rich and easy, did a little printing now and then by straggling hands, but was not very anxious about the business. However, as he kept the post-office, it was imagined he had better opportunities of obtaining news; his paper was thought a better distributor of advertisements than mine, and therefore had many more, which was a profitable thing to him, and a disadvantage to me; for, though I did indeed receive and send papers by the post, yet the public

¹ Delaware.

opinion was otherwise, for what I did send was by bribing the riders, who took them privately, Bradford being unkind enough to forbid it, which occasioned some resentment on my part; and I thought so meanly of him for it, that, when I afterward came into his situation, I took care never to imitate it.

I had hitherto continued to board with Godfrey, who lived in part of my house with his wife and children, and had one side of the shop for his glazier's business, though he worked little, being always absorbed in his mathematics. Mrs. Godfrey projected a match for me with a relation's daughter, took opportunities of bringing us often together, till a serious courtship on my part ensued, the girl being in herself very deserving. The old folks encouraged me by continual invitations to supper, and by leaving us together, till at length it was time to explain. Mrs. Godfrey managed our little treaty. I let her know that I expected as much money with their daughter as would pay off my remaining debt for the printing-house, which I believe was not then above a hundred pounds. She brought me word they had no such sum to spare; I said they might mortgage their house in the loan-office. The answer to this, after some days, was, that they did not approve the match; that, on inquiry of Bradford, they had been informed the printing business was not a profitable one; the types would soon be worn out, and more wanted; that S. Keimer and D. Harry had failed one after the other, and I should probably soon follow them; and, therefore, I was forbidden the house, and the daughter shut up.

Whether this was a real change of sentiment or only artifice, on a supposition of our being too far engaged in affection to retract, and therefore that we should steal a marriage, which would leave them at liberty to give or withhold what they pleased, I know not; but I suspected the latter, resented it, and went no more. Mrs. Godfrey brought me afterward some more favorable accounts of their disposition, and would have drawn me on again; but I declared absolutely my resolution to have nothing more to do with that family. This was resented by the Godfreys; we differed, and they removed, leaving me the whole house, and I resolved to take no more inmates.

But this affair having turned my thoughts to marriage, I looked round me and made overtures of acquaintance in other places; but soon found that, the business of a printer being generally thought a poor one, I was not to expect money with a wife, unless with such a one as I should not otherwise think agreeable. In the mean time, that hard-to-be-governed passion of youth hurried me frequently into intrigues with low women that fell in my way, which were attended with some expense and great inconvenience, besides a continual risk to my health by a distemper which of all things I dreaded, though by great good luck I escaped it. A friendly correspondence as neighbors and old acquaintances had continued between me and Mrs. Read's family, who all had a regard for me from the time of my first lodging in their house. I was often invited there and consulted in their affairs, wherein I sometimes was of service. I pitied poor Miss Read's unfortunate situation, who was generally dejected, seldom cheerful, and avoided company. I considered my giddiness and inconsistency when in London as in a great degree the cause of her unhappiness, though the mother was good enough to think the fault more her own than mine, as she had prevented our marrying before I went thither, and persuaded the other match in my absence. Our mutual affection was revived, but there were now great objections to our union. The match¹ was indeed looked upon as invalid, a preceding wife being said to be living in England; but this could not easily be proved, because of the distance; and, though there was a report of his death, it was not certain. Then, though it should be true, he had left many debts, which his successor might be called upon to pay. We ventured, however, over all these difficulties, and I took her to wife, September 1st, 1730. None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended; she proved a good and faithful helpmate, assisted me much by attending the shop; we throve together, and have ever mutually endeavored to make each other happy. Thus I corrected that great erratum as well as I could.

About this time, our club meeting, not at a tavern, but in a little room of Mr.

¹ *I.e.*, Miss Read's marriage while Franklin was in London.

Grace's, set apart for that purpose, a proposition was made by me, that, since our books were often referred to in our disquisitions upon the queries, it might be convenient to us to have them altogether where we met, that upon occasion they might be consulted; and by thus clubbing our books to a common library, we should, while we liked to keep them together, have each of us the advantage of using the books of all the other members, which would be nearly as beneficial as if each owned the whole. It was liked and agreed to, and we filled one end of the room with such books as we could best spare. The number was not so great as we expected; and though they had been of great use, yet some inconveniences occurring for want of due care of them, the collection, after about a year, was separated, and each took his books home again.

And now I set on foot my first project of a public nature, that for a subscription library. I drew up the proposals, got them put into form by our great scrivener, Brockden, and, by the help of my friends in the Junto, procured fifty subscribers of forty shillings each to begin with, and ten shillings a year for fifty years, the term our company was to continue. We afterwards obtained a charter, the company being increased to one hundred: this was the mother of all the North American subscription libraries, now so numerous. It is become a great thing itself, and continually increasing. These libraries have improved the general conversation of the Americans, made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries, and perhaps have contributed in some degree to the stand so generally made throughout the colonies in defense of their privileges.¹

* * * * *

Though I seldom attended any public worship, I had still an opinion of its propriety, and of its utility when rightly conducted, and I regularly paid my annual subscription for the support of the only Presbyterian minister or meeting we had in Philadelphia. He used to visit me sometimes as a friend, and admonish me to attend his administrations, and I was now and then

¹ This concludes the portion of the *Autobiography* written in 1771.

prevailed on to do so, once for five Sundays successively. Had he been in my opinion a good preacher, perhaps I might have continued, notwithstanding the occasion I had for the Sunday's leisure in my course of study; but his discourses were chiefly either polemic arguments, or explications of the peculiar doctrines of our sect, and were all to me very dry, uninteresting, and unedifying, since not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforced, their aim seeming to be rather to make us Presbyterians than good citizens.

At length he took for his text that verse of the fourth chapter of Philippians: "*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things.*" And I imagined, in a sermon on such a text, we could not miss of having some morality. But he confined himself to five points only, as meant by the apostle, *viz.*: 1. Keeping holy the Sabbath day. 2. Being diligent in reading the holy Scriptures. 3. Attending duly the public worship. 4. Partaking of the Sacrament. 5. Paying a due respect to God's ministers. These might be all good things; but, as they were not the kind of good things that I expected from that text, I despaired of ever meeting with them from any other, was disgusted, and attended his preaching no more. I had some years before composed a little Liturgy, or form of prayer, for my own private use (*viz.*, in 1728), entitled *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion*. I returned to the use of this, and went no more to the public assemblies. My conduct might be blamable, but I leave it, without attempting further to excuse it; my present purpose being to relate facts, and not to make apologies for them.

It was about this time I conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wished to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employed in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another;

habit took the advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method.

In the various enumerations of the moral virtues I had met with in my reading, I found the catalogue more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. Temperance, for example, was by some confined to eating and drinking, while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I proposed to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annexed to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occurred to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully expressed the extent I gave to its meaning.

These names of virtues, with their precepts, were:

1. TEMPERANCE

Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

2. SILENCE

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

3. ORDER

Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. RESOLUTION

Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. FRUGALITY

Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; *i. e.*, waste nothing.

6. INDUSTRY

Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. SINCERITY

Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. JUSTICE

Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. MODERATION

Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. CLEANLINESS

Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.

11. TRANQUILLITY

Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. CHASTITY

Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

13. HUMILITY

Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the *habitude* of all these virtues, I judged it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then proceed to another, and so on till I had gone through the thirteen; and, as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arranged them with that view, as they stand above. Temperance first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head, which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquired and established, Silence would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improved in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtained rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave *Silence* the second place. This and the next, *Order*, I expected would allow me more

time for attending to my project and my studies. *Resolution*, once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavors to obtain all the subsequent virtues; *Frugality* and *Industry* freeing me from my remaining debt, and producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of *Sincerity* and *Justice*, *etc.*, *etc.* Conceiving, then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras in his *Golden Verses*, daily examination would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.

I made a little book,¹ in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I ruled each

Form of the Pages

TEMPERANCE.							
EAT NOT TO DULLNESS; DRINK NOT TO ELEVATION.							
	S.	M.	T.	W.	T.	F.	S.
T.							
S.	*	*		*		*	
O.	**	*	*		*	*	*
R.			*			*	
F.		*			*		
I.			*				
S.							
J.							
M.							
C.							
T.							
C.							
H.							

page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I crossed these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might

mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every the least offense against *Temperance*, leaving the other virtues to their ordinary chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T, clear of spots, I supposed the habit of that virtue so much strengthened, and its opposite weakened, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could go through a course complete in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplished the first, proceeds to a second, so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress I made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots, till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato*:

Here will I hold. If there's a power above us
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud
Through all her works), He must delight in virtue;
And that which He delights in must be happy.

Another from Cicero:

*O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutum indagatrix
expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex
præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est
anteponendus.*²

Another from the Proverbs of Solomon, speaking of wisdom or virtue:

Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.—iii, 16, 17.

² O philosophy, guide of life! O searcher after the good and banisher of vices! One day spent well and in accordance with your commands is to be preferred to an immortality of sin. (*Tusc. Quæst.*, IV, 31.)

¹ On 1 July, 1733.

And conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to solicit his assistance for obtaining it; to this end I formed the following little prayer, which was prefixed to my tables of examination, for daily use.

O powerful Goodness! bountiful Father! merciful Guide! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolutions to perform what that wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to thy other children as the only return in my power for thy continual favors to me.

I used also sometimes a little prayer which I took from Thomson's *Poems*, viz.:

Father of light and life, thou Good Supreme!
O teach me what is good; teach me Thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and fill my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!¹

The precept of *Order* requiring that *every part of my business should have its allotted time*, one page in my little book contained the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.

THE MORNING Question. What good shall I do this day?	{	5	{	Rise, wash, and ad-
		6		dress <i>Powerful Good-</i>
				<i>ness!</i> Contrive day's
				business, and take the
NOON.	{		{	resolution of the day;
		7		prosecute the present
		8		study, and breakfast.
		9		
		10		Work.
		11		
EVENING Question. What good have I done to-day?	{	12	{	Read, or overlook
		1		my accounts, and dine.
		2		
		3		
NIGHT	{	4	{	Work.
		5		
		6		Put things in their
		7		places. Supper. Mu-
		8		sic or diversion, or
		9		conversation. Exam-
				ination of the day.
		10		
		11		
		12		
		1	{	Sleep.
		2		
		3		
		4		

I entered upon the execution of this plan for self-examination, and continued it with occasional intermissions for some time. I was surprised to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the trouble of renewing now and then my little book, which, by scraping out the marks on the paper of old faults to make room for new ones in a new course, became full of holes, I transferred my tables and precepts to the ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on which the lines were drawn with red ink that made a durable stain, and on those lined I marked my faults with a black-lead pencil, which marks I could easily wipe out with a wet sponge. After a while I went through one course only in a year, and afterward only one in several years, till at length I omitted them entirely, being employed in voyages and business abroad, with a multiplicity of affairs that interfered; but I always carried my little book with me.

My scheme of *ORDER* gave me the most trouble; and I found that, though it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master who must mix with the world and often receive people of business at their own hours. *Order*, too, with regard to places for things, papers, *etc.*, I found extremely difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to it, and, having an exceeding good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore, cost me so much painful attention and my faults in it vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses that I was almost ready to give up the attempt, and content myself with a faulty character in that respect, like the man who, in buying an ax of a smith, my neighbor, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him if he would turn the wheel; he turned while the smith pressed the broad face of the ax hard and heavily on the stone which made the turning of it very fatiguing. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on and at length would

¹ *The Seasons*, Winter, ll. 217-222. In the fourth line of the prayer "fill" should be "feed."

take his ax as it was, without farther grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on; we shall have it bright by and by; as yet, it is only speckled." "Yes," says the man, "*but I think I like a speckled ax best.*" And I believe this may have been the case with many who, having, for want of some such means as I employed, found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that "*a speckled ax was best*"; for something, that pretended to be reason, was every now and then suggesting to me that such extreme nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself, to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to Order; and now I am grown old and my memory bad, I feel very sensibly the want of it. But, on the whole, though I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavor, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, though they never reach the wished-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavor, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor owed the constant felicity of his life, down to his seventy-ninth year, in which this is written. What reverses may attend the remainder is in the hand of Providence; but, if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoyed ought to help his bearing them with more resignation. To Temperance he ascribes his long-continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution; to Industry and Frugality, the early easiness of his circumstances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned; to Sincerity and Justice, the confi-

dence of his country, and the honorable employs it conferred upon him; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and that cheerfulness in conversation, which makes his company still sought for and agreeable even to his younger acquaintances. I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit.

* * * * *

In 1739 arrived among us from Ireland the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, who had made himself remarkable there as an itinerant preacher. He was at first permitted to preach in some of our churches; but the clergy, taking a dislike to him, soon refused him their pulpits, and he was obliged to preach in the fields. The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was matter of speculation to me, who was one of the number, to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them by assuring them they were naturally *half beasts and half devils*. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street.

And it being found inconvenient to assemble in the open air, subject to its inclemencies, the building of a house to meet in was no sooner proposed, and persons appointed to receive contributions, but sufficient sums were soon received to procure the ground and erect the building, which was one hundred feet long and seventy broad, about the size of Westminster Hall; and the work was carried on with such spirit as to be finished in a much shorter time than could have been expected. Both house and ground were vested in trustees expressly for the use of any preacher of any religious persuasion who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia; the design in building not being to accommodate any par-

ticular sect, but the inhabitants in general; so that even if the Mufti of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Mohammedanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service.

Mr. Whitefield in leaving us, went preaching all the way through the colonies, to Georgia. The settlement of that province had lately been begun but, instead of being made with hardy, industrious husbandmen, accustomed to labor, the only people fit for such an enterprise, it was with families of broken shop-keepers and other insolvent debtors, many of indolent and idle habits, taken out of the jails, who, being set down in the woods, unqualified for clearing land, and unable to endure the hardships of a new settlement, perished in numbers, leaving many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspired the benevolent heart of Mr. Whitefield with the idea of building an Orphan House there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preached up this charity and made large collections, for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers of which I myself was an instance.

I did not disapprove of the design, but as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at a great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house here and brought the children to it. This I advised; but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel and I therefore refused to contribute. I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften and concluded to give the coppers. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon there was also one of our club who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia and suspecting a collection might be intended, had, by precaution, emptied his

pockets before he came from home. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong desire to give and applied to a neighbor who stood near him to borrow some money for the purpose. The application was unfortunately [made] to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was: "*At any other time, Friend Hopkinson, I would lend to thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to be out of thy right senses.*"

Some of Mr. Whitefield's enemies affected to suppose that he would apply these collections to his own private emolument; but I, who was intimately acquainted with him (being employed in printing his Sermons and Journals, etc.), never had the least suspicion of his integrity but am to this day decidedly of opinion that he was in all his conduct a perfectly *honest man*; and methinks my testimony in his favor ought to have the more weight as we had no religious connection. He used, indeed, sometimes to pray for my conversion but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death.¹

The following instance will show something of the terms on which we stood. Upon one of his arrivals from England at Boston, he wrote to me that he should come soon to Philadelphia but knew not where he could lodge when there as he understood his old friend and host, Mr. Benezet, was removed to Germantown. My answer was: "You know my house; if you can make shift with its scanty accommodations, you will be most heartily welcome." He replied, that if I made that kind offer for Christ's sake, I should not miss of a reward. And I returned: "*Don't let me be mistaken; it was not for Christ's sake, but for your sake.*" One of our common acquaintance jocosely remarked that, knowing it to be the custom of the saints when they received any favor, to shift the burden of the obligation from off their own shoulders and place it in heaven, I had contrived to fix it on earth.

The last time I saw Mr. Whitefield was in London, when he consulted me about his

¹ In 1770, at Newburyport, Massachusetts.

Orphan House concern and his purpose of appropriating it to the establishment of a college.

He had a loud and clear voice and articulated his words and sentences so perfectly that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his auditories, however numerous, observed the most exact silence. He preached one evening from the top of the Court-house steps, which are in the middle of Market-street and on the west side of Second-street which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market-street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front-street when some noise in that street obscured it. Imagining then a semicircle, of which my distance should be the radius and that it were filled with auditors, to each of whom I allowed two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields and to the ancient histories of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.

By hearing him often, I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly composed, and those which he had often preached in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetitions that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turned and well placed that without being interested in the subject one could not help being pleased with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that received from an excellent piece of music. This is an advantage itinerant preachers have over those who are stationary, as the latter cannot well improve their delivery of a sermon by so many rehearsals.

His writing and printing from time to time gave great advantage to his enemies; unguarded expressions, and even erroneous opinions, delivered in preaching, might have been afterwards explained or qualified by supposing others that might have accompanied them, or they might have been

denied; but *litera scripta manet*.¹ Critics attacked his writings violently, and with so much appearance of reason as to diminish the number of his votaries and prevent their increase; so that I am of opinion if he had never written any thing he would have left behind him a much more numerous and important sect and his reputation might in that case have been still growing, even after his death, as, there being nothing of his writing on which to found a censure and give him a lower character, his proselytes would be left at liberty to feign for him as great a variety of excellences as their enthusiastic admiration might wish him to have possessed.

* * * * *

In order of time, I should have mentioned before, that having, in 1742, invented an open stove for the better warming of rooms, and at the same time saving fuel, as the fresh air admitted was warmed in entering, I made a present of the model to Mr. Robert Grace, one of my early friends, who, having an iron-furnace, found the casting of the plates for these stoves a profitable thing, as they were growing in demand. To promote that demand, I wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled *An Account of the new-invented Pennsylvania Fireplaces; wherein their Construction and Manner of Operation is particularly explained; their Advantages above every other Method of warming Rooms demonstrated: and all Objections that have been raised against the Use of them answered and obviated, etc.* This pamphlet had a good effect. Governor Thomas was so pleased with the construction of this stove, as described in it, that he offered to give me a patent for the sole vending of them for a term of years; but I declined it from a principle which has ever weighed with me on such occasions, viz.: *That, as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any invention of ours; and this we should do freely and generously.*

An ironmonger in London, however, assuming a good deal of my pamphlet, and working it up into his own and making some small changes in the machine, which rather hurt its operation, got a patent for it there

¹ The written word endures.

and made, as I was told, a little fortune by it. And this is not the only instance of patents taken out for my inventions by others, though not always with the same success, which I never contested, as having no desire of profiting by patents myself, and hating disputes. The use of these fireplaces in very many houses, both of this and the neighboring colonies, has been, and is, a great saving of wood to the inhabitants.

Peace being concluded, and the association business therefore at an end, I turned my thoughts again to the affair of establishing an academy.¹ The first step I took was to associate in the design a number of active friends, of whom the Junto furnished a good part; the next was to write and publish a pamphlet, entitled *Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*. This I distributed among the principal inhabitants gratis; and as soon as I could suppose their minds a little prepared by the perusal of it, I set on foot a subscription for opening and supporting an academy: it was to be paid in quotas yearly for five years; by so dividing it, I judged the subscription might be larger and I believe it was so, amounting to no less, if I remember right, than five thousand pounds.

In the introduction to these proposals, I stated their publication, not as an act of mine, but of some *public-spirited gentlemen*, avoiding as much as I could, according to my usual rule, the presenting myself to the public as the author of any scheme for their benefit.

The subscribers, to carry the project into immediate execution, chose out of their number twenty-four trustees and appointed Mr. Francis, then attorney-general, and myself to draw up constitutions for the government of the academy; which being done and signed, a house was hired, masters engaged, and the schools opened, I think, in the same year, 1749.

The scholars increasing fast, the house was soon found too small and we were look-

ing out for a piece of ground properly situated, with intention to build, when Providence threw into our way a large house ready built which, with a few alterations, might well serve our purpose. This was the building before mentioned, erected by the hearers of Mr. Whitefield, and was obtained for us in the following manner.

It is to be noted that the contributions to this building being made by people of different sects, care was taken in the nomination of trustees, in whom the building and ground were to be vested, that a predominancy should not be given to any sect, lest in time that predominancy might be a means of appropriating the whole to the use of such sect, contrary to the original intention. It was therefore that one of each sect was appointed, *viz.*, one Church-of-England man, one Presbyterian, one Baptist, one Moravian, *etc.*, those, in case of vacancy by death, were to fill it by election from among the contributors. The Moravian happened not to please his colleagues and on his death they resolved to have no other of that sect. The difficulty then was, how to avoid having two of some other sect, by means of the new choice.

Several persons were named, and for that reason not agreed to. At length one mentioned me with the observation that I was merely an honest man, and of no sect at all, which prevailed with them to choose me. The enthusiasm which existed when the house was built had long since abated, and its trustees had not been able to procure fresh contributions for paying the ground-rent and discharging some other debts the building had occasioned, which embarrassed them greatly. Being now a member of both sets of trustees, that for the building and that for the academy, I had a good opportunity of negotiating with both, and brought them finally to an agreement, by which the trustees for the building were to cede it to those of the academy, the latter undertaking to discharge the debt, to keep forever open in the building a large hall for occasional preachers according to the original intention and maintain a free-school for the instruction of poor children. Writings were accordingly drawn and on paying the debts, the trustees of the academy were put into possession of the premises; and by dividing the great and

¹ The allusions in this sentence are to a preceding portion of the *Autobiography* here omitted. The "peace" was that which followed the French war of the middle 1740's. The "association business" was Franklin's formation of a voluntary militia for defensive purposes. And he had first attempted, unsuccessfully, to establish an academy in 1743.

lofty hall into stories, and different rooms above and below for the several schools and purchasing some additional ground the whole was soon made fit for our purpose, and the scholars removed into the building. The care and trouble of agreeing with the workmen, purchasing materials and superintending the work, fell upon me; and I went through it the more cheerfully, as it did not then interfere with my private business, having the year before taken a very able, industrious, and honest partner, Mr. David Hall, with whose character I was well acquainted as he had worked for me four years. He took off my hands all care of the printing-office, paying me punctually my share of the profits. This partnership continued eighteen years, successfully for us both.

The trustees of the academy, after a while, were incorporated by a charter from the governor; their funds were increased by contributions in Britain and grants of land from the proprietaries, to which the Assembly has since made considerable addition; and thus was established the present University of Philadelphia. I have been continued one of its trustees from the beginning, now near forty years, and have had the very great pleasure of seeing a number of the youth who have received their education in it, distinguished by their improved abilities, serviceable in public stations, and ornaments to their country.

When I disengaged myself, as above mentioned, from private business, I flattered myself that, by the sufficient though moderate fortune I had acquired, I had secured leisure during the rest of my life for philosophical studies and amusements. I purchased all Dr. Spence's apparatus, who had come from England to lecture here, and I proceeded in my electrical experiments with great alacrity; but the public, now considering me as a man of leisure, laid hold of me for their purposes; every part of our civil government, and almost at the same time, imposing some duty upon me. The governor put me into the commission of the peace, the corporation of the city chose me of the common council, and soon after an alderman, and the citizens at large chose me a Burgess to represent them in Assembly. This latter station was the more agreeable to me, as I was at length tired with sitting

there to hear debates, in which, as clerk, I could take no part, and which were so often unentertaining that I was induced to amuse myself with making magic squares or circles, or any thing to avoid weariness; and I conceived my becoming a member would enlarge my power of doing good. I would not, however, insinuate that my ambition was not flattered by all these promotions; it certainly was; for, considering my low beginning, they were great things to me and they were still more pleasing as being so many spontaneous testimonies of the public good opinion, and by me entirely unsolicited.

The office of justice of the peace I tried a little, by attending a few courts, and sitting on the bench to hear causes, but finding that more knowledge of the common law than I possessed was necessary to act in that station with credit, I gradually withdrew from it, excusing myself by my being obliged to attend the higher duties of a legislator in the Assembly. My election to this trust was repeated every year for ten years without my ever asking any elector for his vote or signifying, either directly or indirectly, any desire of being chosen.¹ On taking my seat in the House, my son was appointed their clerk.

The year following, a treaty being to be held with the Indians at Carlisle, the governor sent a message to the House, proposing that they should nominate some of their members, to be joined with some members of council, as commissioners for that purpose. The House named the speaker (Mr. Norris) and myself; and, being commissioned, we went to Carlisle, and met the Indians accordingly.

As those people are extremely apt to get drunk and, when so, are very quarrelsome and disorderly, we strictly forbade the selling any liquor to them; and when they complained of this restriction, we told them that if they would continue sober during the treaty we would give them plenty of

¹ Franklin wrote, in another portion of the *Autobiography*: "I had read or heard of some public man who made it a rule never to ask for an office, and never to refuse one when offered to him. 'I approve,' says I, 'of his rule, and will practice it with a small addition; I shall never *ask*, never *refuse*, nor ever *resign* an office.'" (He was answering an acquaintance who had advised him to resign the clerkship of the Assembly in order to avoid the risk of being turned out.)

rum when business was over. They promised this and they kept their promise because they could get no liquor, and the treaty was conducted very orderly and concluded to mutual satisfaction. They then claimed and received the rum; this was in the afternoon; they were near one hundred men, women, and children, and were lodged in temporary cabins built in the form of a square, just without the town. In the evening, hearing a great noise among them, the commissioners walked out to see what was the matter. We found they had made a great bonfire in the middle of the square; they were all drunk, men and women, quarreling and fighting. Their dark-colored bodies half naked, seen only by the gloomy light of the bonfire, running after and beating one another with firebrands, accompanied by their horrid yellings, formed a scene the most resembling our ideas of hell that could well be imagined; there was no appeasing the tumult, and we retired to our lodging. At midnight a number of them came thundering at our door, demanding more rum, of which we took no notice.

The next day, sensible they had misbehaved in giving us that disturbance, they sent three of their old counselors to make their apology. The orator acknowledged the fault, but laid it upon the rum; and then endeavored to excuse the rum by saying: "*The Great Spirit, who made all things, made every thing for some use, and whatever use he designed any thing for, that use it should always be put to. Now, when he made rum, he said, 'Let this be for the Indians to get drunk with,' and it must be so.*" And, indeed, if it be the design of Providence to extirpate these savages in order to make room for cultivators of the earth, it seems not improbable that rum may be the appointed means. It has already annihilated all the tribes who formerly inhabited the sea-coast.

In 1751, Dr. Thomas Bond, a particular friend of mine, conceived the idea of establishing a hospital in Philadelphia (a very beneficent design, which has been ascribed to me, but was originally his), for the reception and cure of poor sick persons, whether inhabitants of the province or strangers. He was zealous and active in endeavoring to procure subscriptions for it, but the proposal

being a novelty in America, and at first not well understood, he met with small success.

At length he came to me with the compliment that he found there was no such thing as carrying a public-spirited project through without my being concerned in it. "For," says he, "I am often asked by those to whom I propose subscribing, Have you consulted Franklin upon this business? And what does he think of it? And when I tell them that I have not (supposing it rather out of your line), they do not subscribe, but say they will consider of it." I inquired into the nature and probable utility of his scheme, and receiving from him a very satisfactory explanation, I not only subscribed to it myself, but engaged heartily in the design of procuring subscriptions from others. Previously, however, to the solicitation, I endeavored to prepare the minds of the people by writing on the subject in newspapers, which was my usual custom in such cases but which he had omitted.

The subscriptions afterwards were more free and generous, but beginning to flag, I saw they would be insufficient without some assistance from the Assembly and therefore proposed to petition for it, which was done. The country members did not at first relish the project; they objected that it could only be serviceable to the city and therefore the citizens alone should be at the expense of it; and they doubted whether the citizens themselves generally approved of it. My allegation on the contrary, that it met with such approbation as to leave no doubt of our being able to raise two thousand pounds by voluntary donations, they considered as a most extravagant supposition, and utterly impossible.

On this I formed my plan and, asking leave to bring in a bill for incorporating the contributors according to the prayer of their petition, and granting them a blank sum of money, which leave was obtained chiefly on the consideration that the House could throw the bill out if they did not like it, I drew it so as to make the important clause a conditional one, *viz.*: "And be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that when the said contributors shall have met and chosen their managers and treasurer, *and shall have raised by their contributions a capital stock of* ——— *value* (the yearly interest of which

is to be applied to the accommodating of the sick poor in the said hospital, free of charge for diet, attendance, advice, and medicines), *and shall make the same appear to the satisfaction of the speaker of the Assembly for the time being, that then it shall and may be lawful for the said speaker, and he is hereby required, to sign an order on the provincial treasurer for the payment of two thousand pounds, in two yearly payments, to the treasurer of the said hospital, to be applied to the founding, building, and finishing of the same.*"

This condition carried the bill through; for the members, who had opposed the grant and now conceived they might have the credit of being charitable without the expense, agreed to its passage; and then, in soliciting subscriptions among the people, we urged the conditional promise of the law as an additional motive to give, since every man's donation would be doubled; thus the clause worked both ways. The subscriptions accordingly soon exceeded the requisite sum, and we claimed and received the public gift, which enabled us to carry the design into execution. A convenient and handsome building was soon erected; the institution has by constant experience been found useful, and flourishes to this day; and I do not remember any of my political maneuvers, the success of which gave me at the time more pleasure, or wherein, after thinking of it I more easily excused myself for having made some use of cunning.

It was about this time that another projector, the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, came to me with a request that I would assist him in procuring a subscription for erecting a new meeting-house. It was to be for the use of a congregation he had gathered among the Presbyterians, who were originally disciples of Mr. Whitefield. Unwilling to make myself disagreeable to my fellow-citizens by too frequently soliciting their contributions, I absolutely refused. He then desired I would furnish him with a list of the names of persons I knew by experience to be generous and public-spirited. I thought it would be unbecoming in me, after their kind compliance with my solicitations, to mark them out to be worried by other beggars, and therefore refused also to give such a list. He then desired I would at least give him

my advice. "That I will readily do," said I; "and, in the first place, I advise you to apply to all those whom you know will give something; next to those whom you are uncertain whether they will give any thing or not, and show them the list of those who have given; and, lastly, do not neglect those who you are sure will give nothing, for in some of them you may be mistaken." He laughed and thanked me, and said he would take my advice. He did so, for he asked of *everybody*, and he obtained a much larger sum than he expected, with which he erected the capacious and very elegant meeting-house that stands in Arch-street.

Our city, though laid out with a beautiful regularity, the streets large, straight, and crossing each other at right angles, had the disgrace of suffering those streets to remain long unpaved, and in wet weather the wheels of heavy carriages ploughed them into a quagmire so that it was difficult to cross them; and in dry weather the dust was offensive. I had lived near what was called the Jersey Market and saw with pain the inhabitants wading in mud while purchasing their provisions. A strip of ground down the middle of that market was at length paved with brick, so that, being once in the market, they had firm footing, but were often over shoes in dirt to get there. By talking and writing on the subject, I was at length instrumental in getting the street paved with stone between the market and the bricked foot-pavement, that was on each side next the houses. This, for some time gave an easy access to the market dry-shod, but, the rest of the street not being paved, whenever a carriage came out of the mud upon this pavement it shook off and left its dirt upon it and it was soon covered with mire, which was not removed, the city as yet having no scavengers.

After some inquiry, I found a poor, industrious man who was willing to undertake keeping the pavement clean by sweeping it twice a week, carrying off the dirt from before all the neighbors' doors, for the sum of sixpence per month to be paid by each house. I then wrote and printed a paper setting forth the advantages to the neighborhood that might be obtained by this small expense; the greater ease in keeping our houses clean, so much dirt not being brought

in by people's feet; the benefit to the shops by more custom, *etc.*, *etc.*, as buyers could more easily get at them; and by not having, in windy weather, the dust blown in upon their goods, *etc.*, *etc.* I sent one of these papers to each house and in a day or two went round to see who would subscribe an agreement to pay these sixpences. It was unanimously signed, and for a time well executed. All the inhabitants of the city were delighted with the cleanliness of the pavement that surrounded the market, it being a convenience to all, and this raised a general desire to have all the streets paved, and made the people more willing to submit to a tax for that purpose.

After some time I drew a bill for paving the city, and brought it into the Assembly. It was just before I went to England, in 1757, and did not pass till I was gone, and then with an alteration in the mode of assessment, which I thought not for the better, but with an additional provision for lighting as well as paving the streets, which was a great improvement. It was by a private person, the late Mr. John Clifton, his giving a sample of the utility of lamps, by placing one at his door, that the people were first impressed with the idea of enlighting all the city. The honor of this public benefit has also been ascribed to me, but it belongs truly to that gentleman. I did but follow his example, and have only some merit to claim respecting the form of our lamps, as differing from the globe lamps we were at first supplied with from London. Those we found inconvenient in these respects: they admitted no air below; the smoke, therefore, did not readily go out above, but circulated in the globe, lodged on its inside, and soon obstructed the light they were intended to afford; giving, besides, the daily trouble of wiping them clean; and an accidental stroke on one of them would demolish it, and render it totally useless. I therefore suggested the composing them of four flat panes, with a long funnel above to draw up the smoke, and crevices admitting air below, to facilitate the ascent of the smoke; by this means they were kept clean, and did not grow dark in a few hours, as the London lamps do, but continued bright till morning, and an accidental stroke would generally break but a single pane, easily repaired.

* * * * *

In 1746, being at Boston I met there with a Dr. Spence who was lately arrived from Scotland, and showed me some electric experiments. They were imperfectly performed as he was not very expert but, being on a subject quite new to me, they equally surprised and pleased me. Soon after my return to Philadelphia, our library company received from Mr. P. Collinson, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, a present of a glass tube with some account of the use of it in making such experiments. I eagerly seized the opportunity of repeating what I had seen at Boston; and, by much practice, acquired great readiness in performing those, also, which we had an account of from England, adding a number of new ones. I say much practice, for my house was continually full, for some time, with people who came to see these new wonders.

To divide a little this incumbrance among my friends, I caused a number of similar tubes to be blown at our glass-house, with which they furnished themselves, so that we had at length several performers. Among these, the principal was Mr. Kinnersley, an ingenious neighbor, who, being out of business, I encouraged to undertake showing the experiments for money, and drew up for him two lectures, in which the experiments were ranged in such order, and accompanied with such explanations in such method, as that the foregoing should assist in comprehending the following. He procured an elegant apparatus for the purpose, in which all the little machines that I had roughly made for myself were nicely formed by instrument-makers. His lectures were well attended and gave great satisfaction, and after some time he went through the colonies exhibiting them in every capital town and picked up some money. In the West India Islands, indeed, it was with difficulty the experiments could be made, from the general moisture of the air.

Obliged as we were to Mr. Collinson for his present of the tube, *etc.*, I thought it right he should be informed of our success in using it, and wrote him several letters containing accounts of our experiments. He got them read in the Royal Society where they were not at first thought worth so much notice as to be printed in their Transactions. One paper, which I wrote for

Mr. Kinnersley, on the sameness of lightning with electricity, I sent to Dr. Mitchel, an acquaintance of mine and one of the members also of that society, who wrote me word that it had been read, but was laughed at by the connoisseurs. The papers, however, being shown to Dr. Fothergill, he thought they were of too much value to be stifled, and advised the printing of them. Mr. Collinson then gave them to Cave for publication in his *Gentleman's Magazine*; but he chose to print them separately in a pamphlet and Dr. Fothergill wrote the preface. Cave, it seems, judged rightly for his profit, for by the additions that arrived afterward, they swelled to a quarto volume which has had five editions, and cost him nothing for copy-money.¹

It was, however, some time before those papers were much taken notice of in England. A copy of them happening to fall into the hands of the Count de Buffon, a philosopher deservedly of great reputation in France, and, indeed, all over Europe, he prevailed with M. Dalibard to translate them into French, and they were printed at Paris. The publication offended the Abbé Nollet, preceptor in Natural Philosophy to the royal family, and an able experimenter, who had formed and published a theory of electricity, which then had the general vogue. He could not at first believe that such a work came from America, and said it must have been fabricated by his enemies at Paris, to decry his system. Afterwards, having been assured that there really existed such a person as Franklin at Philadelphia, which he had doubted, he wrote and published a volume of *Letters*, chiefly addressed to me, defending his theory, and denying the verity of my experiments and of the positions deduced from them.

I once purposed answering the abbé, and actually began the answer, but, on consideration that my writings contained a description of experiments which any one might repeat and verify, and if not to be verified, could not be defended; or of observations offered as conjectures and not delivered dogmatically, therefore not laying me under any obligation to defend them; and reflecting that a dispute between two persons, writing

in different languages, might be lengthened greatly by mistranslations and thence misconceptions of one another's meaning, much of one of the abbé's letters being founded on an error in the translation, I concluded to let my papers shift for themselves, believing it was better to spend what time I could spare from public business in making new experiments, than in disputing about those already made. I therefore never answered M. Nollet, and the event gave me no cause to repent my silence; for my friend M. le Roy, of the Royal Academy of Sciences, took up my cause and refuted him; my book was translated into the Italian, German, and Latin languages, and the doctrine it contained was by degrees universally adopted by the philosophers of Europe in preference to that of the abbé; so that he lived to see himself the last of his sect, except Monsieur B——, of Paris, his élève² and immediate disciple.

What gave my book the more sudden and general celebrity, was the success of one of its proposed experiments, made by Messrs. Dalibard and de Lor at Marly, for drawing lightning from the clouds. This engaged the public attention everywhere. M. de Lor, who had an apparatus for experimental philosophy, and lectured in that branch of science, undertook to repeat what he called the *Philadelphia Experiments*; and, after they were performed before the king and court, all the curious of Paris flocked to see them. I will not swell this narrative with an account of that capital experiment, nor of the infinite pleasure I received in the success of a similar one I made soon after with a kite at Philadelphia, as both are to be found in the histories of electricity.

Dr. Wright, an English physician, when at Paris, wrote to a friend, who was of the Royal Society, an account of the high esteem my experiments were in among the learned abroad, and of their wonder that my writings had been so little noticed in England. The Society, on this, resumed the consideration of the letters that had been read to them, and the celebrated Dr. Watson drew up a summary account of them and of all I had afterwards sent to England on the subject, which he accompanied with some

¹ *I.e.*, money paid to the writer.

² Pupil.

praise of the writer. This summary was then printed in their Transactions; and some members of the Society in London, particularly the very ingenious Mr. Canton, having verified the experiment of procuring lightning from the clouds by a pointed rod, and acquainting them with the success, they soon made me more than amends for the slight with which they had before treated me. Without my having made any application for that honor, they chose me a member, and voted that I should be excused the customary payments, which would have amounted to twenty-five guineas; and ever since have given me their Transactions gratis. They also presented me with the gold medal of Sir Godfrey Copley for the year 1753, the delivery of which was accompanied by a very handsome speech of the president, Lord Macclesfield, wherein I was highly honored.

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THE WAY TO WEALTH¹

Courteous Reader,

I have heard that nothing gives an Author so great Pleasure as to find his Works respectfully quoted by other learned Authors. This Pleasure I have seldom enjoyed; for though I have been, if I may say it without Vanity, an *eminent Author* of Almanacs annually now a full Quarter of a Century, my Brother Authors in the same Way, for

¹ Franklin says in the *Autobiography*: "In 1732 I first published my *Almanac*, under the name of Richard Saunders; it was continued by me about 25 years, commonly called *Poor Richard's Almanac*. I endeavored to make it both entertaining and useful; and it accordingly came to be in such demand that I reaped considerable profit from it, vending annually near ten thousand. And observing that it was generally read, scarce any neighborhood in the province being without it, I considered it as a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common people, who bought scarcely any other books; I therefore filled all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days in the calendar with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality as the means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want to act always honestly, as, to use here one of those proverbs, *it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright*.

"These proverbs, which contained the wisdom of many ages and nations, I assembled and formed into a connected discourse prefixed to the *Almanac* of 1757, as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction."

what Reason I know not, have ever been very sparing in their Applauses, and no other Author has taken the least Notice of me, so that did not my Writings produce me some solid *Pudding*, the great Deficiency of *Praise* would have quite discouraged me.

I concluded at length, that the People were the best Judges of my merit; for they buy my Works; and besides, in my Rambles, where I am not personally known, I have frequently heard one or other of my Adages repeated, with, *as Poor Richard says*, at the End on 't; this gave me some Satisfaction, as it showed not only that my Instructions were regarded, but discovered likewise some Respect for my Authority; and I own, that to encourage the Practice of remembering and repeating those wise Sentences, I have sometimes *quoted myself* with great Gravity.

Judge, then how much I must have been gratified by an Incident I am going to relate to you. I stopped my Horse lately where a great Number of People were collected at a Vendue of Merchant Goods. The Hour of Sale not being come, they were conversing on the Badness of the Times and one of the Company called to a plain clean old Man, with white Locks, "Pray, Father Abraham, what think you of the Times? Won't these heavy Taxes quite ruin the Country? How shall we be ever able to pay them? What would you advise us to?" Father *Abraham* stood up, and replied, "If you'd have my Advice, I'll give it you in short, for *A Word to the Wise is enough, and many Words won't fill a Bushel*, as *Poor Richard* says." They joined in desiring him to speak his Mind, and gathering round him he proceeded as follows:

"Friends," says he, "and Neighbors, the Taxes are indeed very heavy, and if those laid on by the Government were the only Ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our *Idleness*, three times as much by our *Pride*, and four times as much by our *Folly*; and from these Taxes the Commissioners cannot ease or deliver us by allowing an Abatement. However, let us harken to good Advice, and something may be done for us; *God helps them that help themselves*, as *Poor Richard* says, in his Almanac of 1733.

It would be thought a hard Government that should tax its People one-tenth Part of their *Time*, to be employed in its Service. But *Idleness* taxes many of us much more, if we reckon all that is spent in absolute *Sloth*, or doing of nothing, with that which is spent in idle Employments or Amusements, that amount to nothing. *Sloth*, by bringing on Diseases, absolutely shortens Life. *Sloth*, like *Rust*, consumes faster than *Labor* wears; while the used *Key* is always bright, as *Poor Richard* says. But dost thou love *Life*, then do not squander *Time*; for that's the stuff *Life* is made of, as *Poor Richard* says. How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep, forgetting that *The Sleeping Fox catches no Poultry*, and that *There will be sleeping enough in the Grave*, as *Poor Richard* says.

If *Time* be of all Things the most precious, wasting *Time* must be, as *Poor Richard* says, the greatest *Prodigality*; since, as he elsewhere tells us, *Lost Time is never found again*; and what we call *Time* enough, always proves little enough: Let us then up and be doing, and doing to the Purpose; so by *Diligence* shall we do more with less *Perplexity*. *Sloth* makes all Things difficult, but *Industry* all easy, as *Poor Richard* says; and *He* that riseth late must trot all Day, and shall scarce overtake his *Business* at Night; while *Laziness* travels so slowly, that *Poverty* soon overtakes him, as we read in *Poor Richard*, who adds, *Drive thy Business, let not that drive thee*; and *Early to Bed, and early to rise, makes a Man healthy, wealthy, and wise*.

So what signifies wishing and hoping for better Times? We may make these Times better, if we bestir ourselves. *Industry* need not wish, as *Poor Richard* says, and he that lives upon *Hope* will die fasting. There are no Gains without Pains; then *Help Hands*, for I have no Lands, or if I have, they are smartly taxed. And, as *Poor Richard* likewise observes, *He that hath a Trade hath an Estate*; and he that hath a Calling, hath an *Office of Profit and Honor*; but then the *Trade* must be worked at, and the *Calling* well followed, or neither the *Estate* nor the *Office* will enable us to pay our Taxes. If we are industrious, we shall never starve; for, as *Poor Richard* says, *At the working Man's House Hunger looks in, but dares not enter*. Nor will the *Bailiff* or the *Constable* enter, for *Industry* pays Debts, while *Despair*

increaseth them, says *Poor Richard*. What though you have found no *Treasure*, nor has any rich Relation left you a *Legacy*, *Diligence* is the Mother of *Goodluck* as *Poor Richard* says and *God* gives all Things to *Industry*. Then plough deep, while *Sluggards* sleep, and you shall have *Corn* to sell and to keep, says *Poor Dick*. Work while it is called *To-day*, for you know not how much you may be hindered *To-morrow*, which makes *Poor Richard* say, *One to-day is worth two To-morrows*, and farther, *Have you somewhat to do To-morrow, do it To-day*. If you were a *Servant*, would you not be ashamed that a good Master should catch you idle? Are you then your own Master, be ashamed to catch yourself idle, as *Poor Dick* says. When there is so much to be done for yourself, your Family, your Country, and your gracious King, be up by Peep of Day; Let not the *Sun* look down and say, *Inglorious here he lies*. Handle your tools without *Mittens*; remember that *The Cat in Gloves catches no Mice*, as *Poor Richard* says. 'Tis true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak-handed, but stick to it steadily; and you will see great Effects, for *Constant Dropping wears away Stones*, and by *Diligence* and *Patience* the *Mouse* ate in two the *Cable*; and *Little Strokes fell great Oaks*, as *Poor Richard* says in his Almanac, the Year I cannot just now remember.

Methinks I hear some of you say, *Must a Man afford himself no Leisure*? I will tell thee, my friend, what *Poor Richard* says, *Employ thy Time well, if thou meanest to gain Leisure*; and, since thou art not sure of a Minute, throw not away an Hour. *Leisure* is Time for doing something useful; this *Leisure* the diligent Man will obtain, but the lazy Man never; so that, as *Poor Richard* says, *A Life of Leisure and a Life of Laziness are two Things*. Do you imagine that *Sloth* will afford you more Comfort than *Labor*? No, for as *Poor Richard* says, *Trouble springs from Idleness, and grievous Toil from needless Ease*. Many without *Labor* would live by their Wits only, but they break for want of *Stock*. Whereas *Industry* gives Comfort, and Plenty, and Respect: *Fly Pleasures, and they'll follow you*. The diligent *Spinner* has a large Shift; and now I have a *Sheep* and a *Cow*, everybody bids me good *Morrow*; all which is well said by *Poor Richard*.

But with our Industry, we must likewise be *steady, settled, and careful*, and oversee our own Affairs *with our own Eyes*, and not trust too much to others; for, as *Poor Richard* says:

I never saw an oft-removed Tree,
Nor yet an oft-removed Family,
That throve so well as those that settled be.

And again, *Three Removes is as bad as a Fire*; and again, *Keep thy Shop, and thy Shop will keep thee*; and again, *If you would have your Business done, go; if not, send*. And again,

He that by the Plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.

And again, *The Eye of a Master will do more Work than both his Hands*; and again, *Want of Care does us more Damage than Want of Knowledge*; and again, *Not to oversee Workmen, is to leave them your Purse open*. Trusting too much to others' Care is the Ruin of many; for, as the Almanac says, *In the Affairs of this World, Men are saved, not by Faith, but by the Want of it*; but a Man's own Care is profitable; for, saith *Poor Dick*, *Learning is to the Studious, and Riches to the Careful, as well as Power to the Bold, and Heaven to the Virtuous*. And farther, *If you would have a faithful Servant, and one that you like, serve yourself*. And again, he adviseth to Circumspection and Care, even in the smallest Matters, because sometimes *A little Neglect may breed great Mischief*; adding, *for want of a Nail the Shoe was lost; for want of a Shoe the Horse was lost; and for want of a Horse the Rider was lost, being overtaken and slain by the Enemy; all for want of Care about a Horse-shoe Nail*.

So much for Industry, my Friends, and Attention to one's own Business; but to these we must add *Frugality*, if we would make our *Industry* more certainly successful. A Man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, *keep his Nose all his Life to the Grindstone*, and die not worth a Groat at last. *A fat Kitchen makes a lean Will*, as *Poor Richard* says; and

Many Estates are spent in the Getting,
Since Women for Tea forsook Spinning and Knitting,
And Men for Punch forsook Hewing and Splitting.

If you would be wealthy, says he, in another Almanac, *think of Saving as well as of Getting: The Indies have not made Spain rich, because her Outgoes are greater than her Incomes*.

Away then with your expensive Follies, and you will not then have so much Cause to complain of hard Times, heavy Taxes, and chargeable Families; for, as *Poor Dick* says,

Women and Wine, Game and Deceit,
Make the Wealth small and the Wants great.

And farther, *What maintains one Vice, would bring up two Children*. You may think perhaps, that a little Tea, or a little Punch now and then, Diet a little more costly, Clothes a little finer, and a little Entertainment now and then, can be no great Matter; but remember what *Poor Richard* says: *Many a Little makes a Mickle*; and farther, *Beware of little Expenses; A small Leak will sink a great Ship*; and again, *Who Dainties love, shall Beggars prove*; and moreover, *Fools make Feasts, and wise Men eat them*.

Here you are all got together at this Vendue of *Fineries* and *Knicknacks*. You call them *Goods*; but if you do not take Care, they will prove *Evils* to some of you. You expect they will be sold *cheap*, and perhaps they may for less than they cost; but if you have no Occasion for them, they must be dear to you. Remember what *Poor Richard* says: *Buy what thou hast no Need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy Necessaries*. And again, *At a great Pennyworth pause a while*. He means, that perhaps the Cheapness is *apparent only*, and not *Real*; or the bargain, by straitening thee in thy Business, may do thee more Harm than Good. For in another Place he says, *Many have been ruined by buying good Pennyworths*. Again, *Poor Richard* says, *'Tis foolish to lay out Money in a Purchase of Repentance*; and yet this Folly is practiced every Day at Vendues, for want of minding the Almanac. *Wise Men*, as *Poor Dick* says, *learn by others' Harms, Fools scarcely by their own*; but *felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum*.¹ Many a one, for the Sake of Finery on the Back, have gone with a hungry Belly, and half-starved their Families. *Silks and satins, Scarlet and Vel-*

¹ Happy the man whom the perils of others make cautious.

vets, as Poor Richard says, put out the Kitchen Fire.

These are not the *Necessaries* of Life; they can scarcely be called the *Conveniences*; and yet only because they look pretty, how many *want to have them!* The *artificial Wants* of Mankind thus become more numerous than the *Natural*; and, as *Poor Dick* says, *for one poor Person, there are an hundred indigent.* By these, and other extravagancies, the *Gentle* are reduced to poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who through Industry and Frugality have maintained their Standing; in which Case it appears plainly, that *A Ploughman on his Legs is higher than a Gentleman on his Knees*, as *Poor Richard* says. Perhaps they have had a small Estate left them, which they knew not the Getting of; they think, *'tis Day, and will never be Night*; that a little to be spent out of *so much*, is not worth minding; *a Child and a Fool*, as *Poor Richard* says, *imagine Twenty shillings and Twenty Years can never be spent but, always taking out of the Meal-tub, and never putting in, soon comes to the Bottom*; as *Poor Dick* says, *When the Well's dry, they know the Worth of Water.* But this they might have known before if they had taken his Advice; *If you would know the Value of Money, go and try to borrow some; for, he that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing*; and indeed so does he that lends to such People, when he goes to get it in again. *Poor Dick* farther advises, and says,

Fond Pride of Dress is sure a very Curse;
E'er Fancy you consult, consult your Purse.

And again, *Pride is as loud a Beggar as Want, and a great deal more saucy.* When you have bought one fine Thing, you must buy ten more, that your Appearance may be all of a Piece; but *Poor Dick* says, *'Tis easier to suppress the first Desire, than to satisfy all that follow it.* And 'tis as truly Folly for the Poor to ape the Rich, as for the Frog to swell, in order to equal the Ox.

Great Estates may venture more,
But little Boats should keep near Shore.

'Tis, however, a Folly soon punished; for *Pride that dines on Vanity, sups on Contempt*, as *Poor Richard* says. And in another place, *Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Pov-*

erty, and supped with Infamy. And after all, of what Use is this *Pride of Appearance*, for which so much is risked, so much is suffered? It cannot promote Health, or ease Pain; it makes no Increase of Merit in the Person, it creates Envy, it hastens Misfortune.

What is a Butterfly? At best
He's but a Caterpillar dressed.
The gaudy Fop's his Picture just,

as *Poor Richard* says.

But what Madness must it be to *run in Debt* for these Superfluities! We are offered by the Terms of this Vendue, *Six Months' Credit*; and that perhaps has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready Money, and hope now to be fine without it. But, ah, think what you do when you run in Debt; *you give to another Power over your Liberty.* If you cannot pay at the Time you will be ashamed to see your Creditor; you will be in Fear when you speak to him; you will make poor pitiful sneaking Excuses, and by Degrees come to lose your Veracity, and sink into base downright lying; for, as *Poor Richard* says, *The second Vice is Lying, the first is running in Debt.* And again, to the same Purpose, *Lying rides upon Debt's Back.* Whereas a free-born Englishman ought not to be ashamed or afraid to see or speak to any Man living. But Poverty often deprives a Man of all Spirit and Virtue: *'Tis hard for an empty Bag to stand upright*, as *Poor Richard* truly says.

What would you think of that Prince, or that Government, who should issue an Edict forbidding you to dress like a Gentleman or a Gentlewoman, on Pain of Imprisonment or Servitude? Would you not say, that you were free, have a Right to dress as you please, and that such an Edict would be a Breach of your Privileges, and such a Government tyrannical? And yet you are about to put yourself under that tyranny, when you run in Debt for such Dress! Your Creditor has authority, at his Pleasure to deprive you of your Liberty, by confining you in Jail for Life, or to sell you for a Servant, if you should not be able to pay him! When you have got your Bargain, you may, perhaps, think little of Payment; but *Creditors, Poor Richard* tells us, *have better Memories than Debtors*; and in another Place says, *Creditors are a superstitious Sect, great Observers of set*

Days and Times. The Day comes round before you are aware, and the Demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it. Or if you bear your Debt in Mind, the Term which at first seemed so long, will, as it lessens, appear extremely short. *Time* will seem to have added Wings to his Heels as well as Shoulders. *Those have a short Lent*, saith *Poor Richard*, who owe Money to be paid at *Easter*. Then since, as he says, *The Borrower is a Slave to the Lender, and the Debtor to the Creditor*, disdain the Chain, preserve your Freedom; and maintain your Independency: Be *Industrious* and free; be *frugal* and free. At present, perhaps, you may think yourself in thriving Circumstances, and that you can bear a little Extravagance without Injury; but,

For Age and Want, save while you may;
No Morning Sun lasts a whole Day,

as *Poor Richard* says. Gain may be temporary and uncertain, but ever while you live, Expense is constant and certain; and 'tis easier to build two Chimneys, than to keep one in Fuel, as *Poor Richard* says. So, *Rather go to bed supperless than rise in Debt.*

Get what you can, and what you get hold;
'Tis the Stone that will turn all your lead into Gold,

as *Poor Richard* says. And when you have got the Philosopher's Stone, sure you will no longer complain of bad Times, or the Difficulty of paying Taxes.

This Doctrine, my Friends, is *Reason* and *Wisdom*; but after all, do not depend too much upon your own *Industry*, and *Frugality*, and *Prudence*, though excellent Things, for they may all be blasted without the Blessing

of Heaven; and therefore, ask that Blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember, *Job* suffered, and was afterwards prosperous.

And now to conclude, *Experience keeps a dear School, but Fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that*; for it is true, *we may give Advice, but we cannot give Conduct*, as *Poor Richard* says. However, remember this, *They that won't be counseled, can't be helped*, as *Poor Richard* says: and farther, that *if you will not hear Reason, she'll surely rap your Knuckles.*"

Thus the old Gentleman ended his Harangue. The People heard it, and approved the Doctrine, and immediately practiced the contrary, just as if it had been a common Sermon; for the Vendue opened, and they began to buy extravagantly, notwithstanding his Cautions and their own Fear of Taxes. I found the good Man had thoroughly studied my Almanacs, and digested all I had dropped on these topics during the course of five and twenty years. The frequent Mention he made of me must have tired any one else, but my Vanity was wonderfully delighted with it, though I was conscious that not a tenth Part of the Wisdom was my own, which he ascribed to me, but rather the *Gleanings* I had made of the Sense of all Ages and Nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the Echo of it; and though I had at first determined to buy Stuff for a new Coat, I went away resolved to wear my old One a little longer. *Reader*, if thou wilt do the same thy Profit will be as great as mine. *I am, as ever, thine to serve thee,*

RICHARD SAUNDERS.

JOHN DICKINSON (1732-1808)

Dickinson was born in Talbot County, Maryland, on 13 November, 1732. When he was eight years old his father removed to Delaware. At eighteen he began study of the law in Philadelphia. Several years later (1753) he was entered at the Middle Temple, London, where he completed his legal training. He began the practice of the law at Philadelphia in 1757. He was elected a member of the Delaware Assembly in 1760, and of the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1762, remaining a member until 1765. He was again a member of the latter Assembly in the years 1770-1776, and a member of the Continental Congress from 1774 to 1776. He also attained the rank of brigadier-general in the Delaware militia. In 1776 he opposed the Declaration of Independence and refused to sign that document, as a consequence of which his political influence declined in later years. Nevertheless, he served as Governor of Delaware in 1781 and 1782, and as President (*i.e.*, Governor) of Pennsylvania from 1782 to 1785. He died in Wilmington, Delaware, on 14 February, 1808.

Dickinson was the author of a number of able state-papers and political essays (his *Writings* were edited by P. L. Ford, Philadelphia, 1895). Only one of his works is still generally known, but this—his series of twelve *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*—deserves its modest place in American literature. The letters were written in 1767 and 1768 and were published from time to time in a newspaper of Philadelphia. They at once made a deep impression and were widely republished in other colonial newspapers. Dickinson was concerned primarily with the question of taxation, but he wrote as a sober and enlightened statesman, and gave his letters a value beyond their immediate occasion. This they have by virtue not merely of their admirable style, but also of their temperate common sense and their writer's large grasp of the general principles and problems of sovereignty. And though the "Farmer" did not himself aim at the independence of the colonies, his letters were a powerful popular influence making in that direction, inspired as they were by a jealous love of constitutional liberty. M. C. Tyler has acclaimed them as "the most brilliant event in the literary history of the Revolution," and has gone on to explain: "Here was no reckless declaimer, no frantic political adventurer, precipitating public confusion because he had nothing to lose by public confusion, and eager to run American society upon the breakers in the hope of gathering spoils from the common wreck. On the contrary, here was a man of powerful and cultivated intellect, with all his interest and all his tastes on the side of order, conservatism, and peace, if only with these could be had political safety and honor." (*Literary History of the American Revolution, 1768-1783.*)

LETTERS FROM A FARMER IN PENNSYLVANIA, TO THE IN- HABITANTS OF THE BRITISH COLONIES¹

LETTER I

My dear Countrymen:

I am a *Farmer*, settled, after a variety of fortunes, near the banks of the river *Delaware*, in the province of *Pennsylvania*. I received a liberal education, and have been engaged in the busy scenes of life; but am now convinced that a man may be as happy without bustle as with it. My farm is small;

my servants few, and good; I have a little money at interest; I wish for no more; my employment in my own affairs is easy; and with a contented, grateful mind, undisturbed by worldly hopes or fears, relating to myself, I am completing the number of days allotted to me by divine goodness.

Being generally master of my time, I spend a good deal of it in a library, which I think the most valuable part of my small estate; and being acquainted with two or three gentlemen of abilities and learning, who honor me with their friendship, I have acquired, I believe, a greater knowledge in history, and the laws and constitution of my country, than is generally attained by men of my class, many of them not being so fortunate as I have been in the opportunities of getting information.

¹ The *Letters* are reprinted from a copy of the first collective edition, published in Philadelphia, 1768. The footnotes are Dickinson's, save for the matter in square brackets.

From my infancy I was taught to love *humanity* and *liberty*. Inquiry and experience have since confirmed my reverence for the lessons then given me, by convincing me more fully of their truth and excellence. Benevolence toward mankind excites wishes for their welfare, and such wishes endear the means of fulfilling them. *These* can be found in liberty only, and therefore her sacred cause ought to be espoused by every man, on every occasion, to the utmost of his power. As a charitable but poor person does not withhold his *mite*, because he cannot relieve *all* the distresses of the miserable, so should not any honest man suppress his sentiments concerning freedom, however small their influence is likely to be. Perhaps he "may touch some wheel"¹ that will have an effect greater than he could reasonably expect.

These being my sentiments, I am encouraged to offer to you, my countrymen, my thoughts on some late transactions that appear to me to be of the utmost importance to you. Conscious of my own defects, I have waited some time, in expectation of seeing the subject treated by persons much better qualified for the task; but being therein disappointed, and apprehensive that longer delays will be injurious, I venture at length to request the attention of the public, praying that these lines may be read with the same zeal for the happiness of *British America* with which they were wrote.

With a good deal of surprise I have observed that little notice has been taken of an act of parliament, as injurious in its principle to the liberties of these colonies as the *Stamp Act* was: I mean the act for suspending the legislation of *New York*.

The assembly of that government complied with a former act of parliament, requiring certain provisions to be made for the troops in *America*, in every particular, I think, except the articles of salt, pepper, and vinegar. In my opinion they acted imprudently, considering all circumstances, in not complying so far as would have given satisfaction, as several colonies did: But my dislike of their conduct in that instance has not blinded me so much that I cannot plainly perceive that they have been punished in a manner pernicious to *American* freedom, and justly alarming to all the colonies.

If the *British* parliament has a legal authority to issue an order that we shall furnish a single article for the troops here, and to compel obedience to *that* order, they have the same right to issue an order for us to supply those troops with arms, clothes, and every necessary; and to compel obedience to *that* order also; in short, to lay *any burthens* they please upon us. What is this but *taxing* us at a *certain sum*, and leaving to us only the *manner* of raising it? How is this mode more tolerable than the *Stamp Act*? Would that act have appeared more pleasing to *Americans* if, being ordered thereby to raise the sum total of the taxes, the mighty privilege had been left to them of saying how much should be paid for an instrument of writing on paper, and how much for another on parchment?

An act of parliament, commanding us to do a certain thing, if it has any validity, is a *tax* upon us for the expense that accrues in complying with it; and for this reason, I believe, every colony on the continent that chose to give a mark of their respect for *Great Britain*, in complying with the act relating to the troops, cautiously avoided the mention of that act, lest their conduct should be attributed to its supposed obligation.

The matter being thus stated, the assembly of *New York* either had, or had not, a right to refuse submission to that act. If they had, and I imagine no *American* will say they had not, then the parliament had *no right* to compel them to execute it. If they had not *this right*, they had *no right* to punish them for not executing it; and therefore *no right* to suspend their legislation, which is a punishment. In fact, if the people of *New York* cannot be legally taxed but by their own representatives, they cannot be legally deprived of the privilege of legislation, only for insisting on that exclusive privilege of taxation. If they may be legally deprived in such a case of the privilege of legislation, why may they not, with equal reason, be deprived of every other privilege? Or why may not every colony be treated in the same manner, when any of them shall dare to deny their assent to any impositions that shall be directed? Or what signifies the repeal of the *Stamp Act*, if these colonies are to lose their *other* privileges, by not tamely surrendering that of taxation?

¹ Pope. [*Essay on Man*, I, 59.]

There is one consideration arising from this suspension which is not generally attended to, but shows its importance very clearly. It was not *necessary* that this suspension should be caused by an act of parliament. The crown might have restrained the governor of *New York* even from calling the assembly together, by its prerogative in the royal governments. This step, I suppose, would have been taken if the conduct of the assembly of *New York* had been regarded as an act of disobedience *to the crown alone*; but it is regarded as an act of "disobedience to the authority of the BRITISH LEGISLATURE."¹ This gives the suspension a consequence vastly more affecting. It is a parliamentary assertion of the *supreme authority* of the *British* legislature over these colonies, in the *point of taxation*, and is intended to COMPEL *New York* into a submission to that authority. It seems therefore to me as much a violation of the liberties of the people of that province, and consequently of all these colonies, as if the parliament had sent a number of regiments to be quartered upon them till they should comply. For it is evident that the suspension is meant as a *compulsion*; and the *method* of compelling is totally indifferent. It is indeed probable that the sight of red coats, and the hearing of drums, would have been most alarming; because people are generally more influenced by their eyes and ears than by their reason. But whoever seriously considers the matter must perceive that a dreadful stroke is aimed at the liberty of these colonies. I say, of these colonies; for the cause of *one* is the cause of *all*. If the parliament may lawfully deprive *New York* of any of *her* rights, it may deprive any, or all the other colonies of *their* rights; and nothing can possibly so much encourage such attempts as a mutual inattention to the interests of each other. *To divide, and thus to destroy*, is the first political maxim in attacking those who are powerful by their union. He certainly is not a wise man who folds his arms, and reposes himself at home, viewing with unconcern the flames that have invaded his neighbor's house, without using any endeavors to extinguish them. When Mr. *Hampden's* ship-money cause, for *Three Shillings* and

Four-pence, was tried, all the people of *England*, with anxious expectation, interested themselves in the important decision; and when the slightest point, touching the freedom of *one* colony, is agitated, I earnestly wish that *all the rest* may, with equal ardor, support their sister. Very much may be said on this subject; but, I hope, more at present is unnecessary.

With concern I have observed that *two* assemblies of this province have sat and adjourned, without taking any notice of this act. It may perhaps be asked, what would have been proper for them to do? I am by no means fond of inflammatory measures; I detest them. I should be sorry that any thing should be done which might justly displease our sovereign, or our mother country: But a firm, modest exertion of a free spirit should never be wanting on public occasions. It appears to me that it would have been sufficient for the assembly to have ordered our agents to represent to the King's ministers their sense of the suspending act, and to pray for its repeal. Thus we should have borne our testimony against it; and might therefore reasonably expect that, on a like occasion, we might receive the same assistance from the other colonies.

Concordia res parvæ crescunt.

Small things grow great by concord.

November 5.²

A FARMER.

LETTER XI

My dear Countrymen:

I have several times, in the course of these letters, mentioned the late act of parliament, as being the *foundation* of future measures injurious to these colonies; and the belief of this truth I wish to prevail, because I think it necessary to our safety.

A perpetual *jealousy*, respecting liberty, is absolutely requisite in all free states. The very texture of their constitution, in *mixed* governments, demands it. For the *cautions* with which power is *distributed* among the several orders *imply* that *each* has that share which is proper for the general welfare, and therefore that any further acquisition must be pernicious. *Machiavel* employs a whole

¹ See the act of suspension.

² The day of King William the Third's landing.

chapter in his discourses¹ to prove that a state, to be long lived, must be frequently corrected, and reduced to its first principles. But, of all states that have existed, there never was any in which this jealousy could be more proper than in these colonies. For the government here is not only *mixed*, but *dependent*, which circumstance occasions a *peculiarity in its form* of a very delicate nature.

Two reasons induce me to desire that this spirit of apprehension may be always kept up among us, in its utmost vigilance. The first is this—that as the happiness of these provinces indubitably consists in their connection with *Great Britain*, any separation between them is less likely to be occasioned by civil discords if every disgusting measure is opposed *singly*, and *while it is new*: For in this manner of proceeding every such measure is most likely to be rectified. On the other hand, oppressions and dissatisfactions being permitted to accumulate—if ever the governed throw off the load, *they will do more*. A people does not reform with moderation. The rights of the subject, therefore, cannot be *too often* considered, explained, or asserted: and whoever attempts to do this shows himself, whatever may be the rash and peevish reflections of pretended wisdom, and pretended duty, a friend to those who injudiciously exercise their power, as well as to them over whom it is so exercised.

Had all the points of prerogative claimed by *Charles* the First been separately contested and settled in preceding reigns, his fate would in all probability have been very different; and the people would have been content with that liberty which is compatible with regal authority. But he thought it would be as dangerous for him to give up the powers which at any time had been by usurpation exercised by the crown, as those that were legally vested in it.² This produced an

equal excess on the part of the people. For when their passions were excited by *multiplied* grievances, they thought it would be as dangerous for them to allow the powers that were legally vested in the crown as those which at any time had been by usurpation exercised by it. Acts that might *by themselves* have been upon many considerations excused or extenuated, derived a contagious malignancy and odium from other acts with which they were connected. They were not regarded according to the simple force of each, but as parts of a system of oppression. Every one, therefore, however small in itself, became alarming, as an additional evidence of tyrannical designs. It was in vain for prudent and moderate men to insist that there was no necessity to abolish royalty. Nothing less than the utter destruction of monarchy could satisfy those who *had* suffered, and thought they had reason to believe they always *should* suffer under it.

The consequences of these mutual distrusts are well known: But there is no other people mentioned in history, that I recollect, who have been so constantly watchful of their liberty, and so successful in their struggles for it, as the *English*. This consideration leads me to the second reason why I “desire that the spirit of apprehension may be always kept up among us in its utmost vigilance.”

The first principles of government are to be looked for in human nature. Some of the best writers have asserted, and it seems with good reason, that “government is founded on *opinion*.”³

Custom undoubtedly has a mighty force in producing *opinion*, and reigns in nothing more arbitrarily than in public affairs. It gradually reconciles us to objects even of

³ “OPINION is of two kinds, *viz.*, *opinion* of INTEREST, and *opinion* of RIGHT. By *opinion* of interest I chiefly understand the *sense* of the public advantage which is reaped from government, together with the persuasion that the particular government which is established is equally advantageous with any other that could be easily settled.”

“Right is of two kinds, *right* to power, and *right* to property. What prevalence *opinion* of the first kind has over mankind may easily be understood, by observing the attachment which all nations have to their ancient government, and even to those names which have had the sanction of antiquity. *Antiquity* always begets the *opinion* of right.”—“It is sufficiently understood that the *opinion* of right to property is of the greatest moment in all matters of government.”

—Hume's *Essays*.

¹ Machiavel's *Discourses*, Bk. 3, Chap. 1.

² The author is sensible that this is putting the gentlest construction on *Charles's* conduct, and that is one reason why he chooses it. Allowances ought to be made for the errors of those men who are acknowledged to have been possessed of many virtues. The education of this unhappy prince, and his confidence in men not so good or wise as himself, had probably filled him with mistaken notions of his own authority, and of the consequences that would attend concessions of any kind to a people who were represented to him as aiming at too much power.

dread and detestation; and I cannot but think these lines of Mr. *Pope* as applicable to vice in *politics* as to vice in *ethics*:

Vice is a monster of so horrid mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet *seen too oft*, familiar with her face,
We first *endure*, then *pity*, then *embrace*.¹

When an act injurious to freedom has been *once* done, and the people *bear* it, the *repetition* of it is most likely to meet with *sub-mission*. For as the *mischief* of the one was found to be tolerable, they will hope that of the second will prove so too; and they will not regard the *infamy* of the last, because they are stained with that of the first.

Indeed nations, in general, are not apt to *think* until they *feel*; and therefore nations in general have lost their liberty: For as violations of the rights of the *governed* are commonly not only *specious*² but *small* at the beginning, they spread over the multitude in such a manner as to touch individuals but slightly. Thus they are disregarded.³ The power or profit that arises from these violations, *centering in few persons*, is to them considerable. For this reason the *governors* having in view their particular purposes, successively preserve an uniformity of conduct for attaining them. They regularly increase the first injuries, till at length the inattentive people are compelled to perceive the heaviness of their burthens. They begin to complain and inquire—but too late. They find their oppressors so strengthened by success, and themselves so entangled in examples of express authority on the part of

¹ [Essay on Man, II, 217–220.]

² *Omnia mala exempla ex bonis initiis orta sunt*. [All bad precedents have arisen from good beginnings.] Sallust, *Bell. Cat. S.* 50.

³ “The republic is always attacked with greater vigor than it is defended: For the *audacious* and *profligate*, prompted by their natural enmity to it, are *easily impelled* to act by the *least nod* of their leaders: Whereas the *HONEST*, I know not why, are generally *slow* and *unwilling* to stir; and *neglecting* always the *BEGINNINGS of things*, are *never roused* to exert themselves, but by the *last necessity*: So that through *IRRESOLUTION* and *DELAY*, when they would be glad to compound at last for their *QUIET*, at the expense even of their *HONOR*, they *commonly lose them BOTH*.”

—Cicero’s *Orat. for Sextius*.

Such were the sentiments of this great and excellent man, whose vast abilities, and the calamities of his country during his time, enabled him, by mournful experience, to form a just judgment on the conduct of the friends and enemies of liberty.

their rulers, and of tacit recognition on their own part, that they are quite confounded: For millions entertain no other idea of the *legality* of power than that it is founded on the *exercise* of power. They voluntarily fasten their chains, by adopting a pusillanimous *opinion*, “that there will be too much *danger* in attempting a remedy,”—or another *opinion* no less fatal,—“that the government has a *right* to treat them as it does.” They then seek a wretched relief for their minds, by persuading themselves that to yield their *obedience* is to discharge their *duty*. The deplorable *poverty of spirit* that prostrates all the dignity bestowed by divine providence on our nature—*of course succeeds*.

From these reflections I conclude that every free state should incessantly watch, and instantly take alarm on any addition being made to the power exercised over them. Innumerable instances might be produced to show from what slight beginnings the most extensive consequences have flowed: But I shall select two only from the history of *England*.

Henry the Seventh was the *first* monarch of that kingdom who established a *STANDING BODY OF ARMED MEN*. This was a band of *fifty* archers, called yeomen of the guard: And this institution, notwithstanding the smallness of the number, was, to prevent discontent, “disguised under pretense of majesty and grandeur.”⁴ In 1684 the standing forces were so much augmented that *Rapin* says: “The king, in order to make his people *fully sensible of their new slavery*, affected to muster his troops, which amounted to 4,000 well armed and disciplined men.” I think our army, at this time, consists of more than *seventy* regiments.

The method of taxing by *EXCISE* was first introduced amidst the convulsions of the civil wars. Extreme necessity was pretended for it, and its short continuance promised. After the restoration, an excise upon *beer, ale*, and *other liquors* was granted to the king,⁵ one half in fee, the other for life, as an equivalent for the *court of wards*. Upon *James the Second*’s accession, the parliament⁶ gave him the first *excise*, with an additional duty on

⁴ *Rapin’s History of England*.

⁵ 12 *Char. II.*, Chaps. 23 and 24. [*Statutes of the Realm*.]

⁶ 1 *James II.*, Chaps. 1 and 4. [*Statutes of the Realm*.]

wine, tobacco, and some other things. Since the revolution it has been extended to salt, candles, leather, hides, hops, soap, paper, paste-boards, mill-boards, scale-boards, vellum, parchment, starch, silks, calicoes, linens, stuffs, printed, stained, *etc.*, wire, wrought plate, coffee, tea, chocolate, *etc.*

Thus a *standing army* and *excise* have, from their first slender origins, though always *hated*, always *feared*, always *opposed*, at length swelled up to their vast present bulk.

These facts are sufficient to support what I have said. 'Tis true that all the mischiefs apprehended by our ancestors from a *standing army* and *excise* have not yet happened: But it does not follow from thence that they *will not happen*. The inside of a house may catch fire, and the most valuable apartments be ruined, before the flames burst out. The question in these cases is not what evil has *actually attended* particular measures—but what evil, in the nature of things, is *likely to attend* them. Certain circumstances may for some time delay effects, that *were reasonably expected*, and that *must ensue*. There was a long period after the Romans had prorogued his command to Q. Publilius Philo,¹ before that example destroyed their liberty. All our kings, from the revolution to the present reign, have been *foreigners*. Their *ministers* generally continued but a short time in authority;² and they themselves were *mild* and *virtuous* princes.

A bold, ambitious prince, possessed of *great abilities*, firmly fixed in his throne by *descent*,

served by *ministers like himself*, and rendered either *venerable* or *terrible* by the glory of his *successes*, may execute what his predecessors did not dare to attempt. Henry the Fourth tottered in his seat during his whole reign. Henry the Fifth drew the strength of that kingdom into *France*, to carry on his wars there, and left the *commons* at home, protesting "that the people were not bound to serve out of the realm."

It is true that a strong spirit of liberty subsists at present in *Great Britain*, but what reliance is to be placed in the *temper* of a people when the prince is possessed of an unconstitutional power, our own history can sufficiently inform us. When Charles the Second had strengthened himself by the return of the garrison of Tangier, "*England*," says Rapin "saw on a sudden an amazing revolution; saw herself stripped of all her rights and privileges, excepting such as the king should vouchsafe to grant her: And what is more astonishing, the *English* themselves delivered up these very rights and privileges to Charles the Second, which they had so passionately and, if I may say it, furiously defended against the designs of Charles the First." This happened only thirty-six years after this last prince had been beheaded.

Some persons are of opinion that liberty is not violated, but by such *open* acts of force; but they seem to be greatly mistaken. I could mention a period within these forty years, when almost as great a change of disposition was produced by the SECRET measures of a long administration, as by Charles's violence. Liberty, perhaps, is never exposed to so much danger as when the people believe there is the least; for it may be subverted, and yet they not think so.

Public disgusting acts are seldom practiced by the ambitious, at the beginning of their designs. Such conduct *silences* and *discourages* the weak, and the wicked, who would otherwise have been their *advocates* or *accomplices*. It is of great consequence to allow those who, upon any account, are inclined to favor them, something specious to say in their defense. Their power may be fully established, though it would not be safe for them to do *whatever they please*. For there are things, which, at some times, even *slaves* will not bear. Julius Cæsar, and

¹ In the year of the city 428, "*Duo singularia hæc ei viro primum contigere; prorogatio imperii non ante in ullo facta, et acto honore triumphus.*" [These two remarkable things for the first time fell to the lot of that man: the extension of his office, hitherto never made in the case of any man, and, on the completion of his term of office, a triumph.]—Livy, Bk. 8, Chaps. 23, 26.

"Had the rest of the *Roman* citizens imitated the example of L. Quintius, who refused to have his consulship continued to him, they had never admitted that custom of proroguing of magistrates, and then the prolongation of their commands in the army had never been introduced, *which very thing was at length the ruin of that commonwealth.*"—Machiavel's *Discourses*, Bk. 3, Chap. 24.

² I don't know but it may be said, with a good deal of reason, that a quick rotation of ministers is very desirable in *Great Britain*. A minister there has a vast store of materials to work with. *Long administrations* are rather favorable to the reputation of a people abroad than to their liberty.

Oliver Cromwell, did not dare to assume the title of *king*. The *Grand Seigneur* dares not lay a *new tax*. The king of *France* dares not be a *protestant*. Certain popular points may be left untouched, and yet freedom be extinguished. The commonalty of *Venice* imagine themselves free, because they are permitted to do what they ought not. But I quit a subject that would lead me too far from my purpose.

By the late act of parliament taxes are to be levied upon us, for “defraying the charge of the *administration of justice*—the support of *civil government*—and the expenses of *defending* his Majesty’s dominions in *America*.”

If any man doubts what ought to be the conduct of these colonies on this occasion, I would ask him these questions:

Has not the parliament *expressly* AVOWED their INTENTION of raising money from us FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES? Is not this scheme popular in *Great Britain*? Will the taxes, imposed by the late act, *answer those purposes*? If it will, must it not take an *immense sum* from us? If it will not, *is it to be expected* that the parliament will not *fully execute* their INTENTION when it is *pleasing at home*, and *not opposed here*? Must not this be done by imposing *NEW taxes*? Will not every addition, thus made to our taxes, be an addition to the power of the *British legislature*, *by increasing the number of officers* employed in the collection? Will not every additional tax therefore render it *more difficult* to abrogate any of them? When a branch of revenue is once established, does it not appear to many people *invidious* and *undutiful* to attempt to abolish it? If taxes, sufficient to *accomplish the INTENTION* of the parliament, are imposed by the parliament, *what taxes will remain* to be imposed by our assemblies? If *no material taxes remain* to be imposed by them, what must become of *them*, and the *people* they represent?

“If any person considers these things, and yet thinks our liberties are in no danger, I wonder at that person’s security.”¹

One other argument is to be added which, by itself, I hope, will be sufficient to convince the most incredulous man on this continent that the late act of parliament is *only* designed to be a PRECEDENT, whereon the

future vassalage of these colonies may be established.

Every duty thereby laid on articles of *British* manufacture, is laid on some commodity, upon the exportation of which from *Great Britain* a *drawback* is payable. Those *drawbacks*, in most of the articles, are *exactly double* to the *duties* given by the late act. The parliament therefore might, in *half a dozen lines*, have raised MUCH MORE MONEY, only by *stopping the drawbacks* in the hands of the officers at home, on exportation to these colonies, than by this solemn imposition of taxes upon us, to be collected here. Probably the artful contrivers of this act formed it in this manner in order to reserve to themselves, in case of any objections being made to it, this specious pretense—“That the drawbacks are gifts to the colonies, and that the late act only lessens those gifts.” But the truth is that the drawbacks are intended for the encouragement and promotion of *British* manufactures and commerce, and are allowed on exportation to *any foreign parts*, as well as on exportation to these provinces. Besides, care has been taken to slide into the act some articles on which there are no drawbacks. However, the *whole duties* laid by the late act on *all* the articles therein specified are *so small*, that they will not amount to *as much* as the *drawbacks* which are allowed on *part* of them only. If, therefore, *the sum to be obtained by the late act* had been the *sole object* in forming it, there would not have been any occasion for “the COMMONS of *Great Britain* to GIVE and GRANT to his Majesty RATES and DUTIES for raising a revenue in his Majesty’s dominions in *America*, for making a more certain and adequate provision for defraying the charges of the administration of justice, the support of civil government, and the expense of defending the said dominions”;—nor would there have been any occasion for an expensive board of commissioners,² and all the other new charges to which we are made liable.

² The expense of this board, I am informed, is between Four and Five Thousand Pounds Sterling a year. The establishment of officers, for collecting the revenue in *America*, amounted before to Seven Thousand Six Hundred Pounds *per annum*; and yet, says the author of *The Regulation of the Colonies*, “the whole remittance from *all* the taxes in the colonies, at an average of *thirty years*, has not amounted to One Thousand Nine

¹ Demosthenes’s *Second Philippic*.

Upon the whole, for my part, I regard the late act as an *experiment made of our disposition*. It is a bird sent out over the

Hundred Pounds a year, and in that sum Seven or Eight Hundred Pounds *per annum* only have been remitted from *North America*."

The smallness of the revenue arising from the duties in *America* demonstrates that they were intended only as REGULATIONS OF TRADE: And can any person be so blind to truth, so dull of apprehension in a matter of unspeakable importance to his country, as to imagine that the board of commissioners lately established at such a charge, is instituted to assist in collecting One Thousand Nine Hundred Pounds a year, or the trifling duties imposed by the late act? Surely every

waters, to discover whether the waves that lately agitated this part of the world with such violence are yet *subsided*. If *this adventurer* gets footing here, we shall quickly find it to be of the kind described by the poet:

Infelix vates.¹

A direful foreteller of future calamities.

—A FARMER.

man on this continent must perceive that they are established for the care of a NEW SYSTEM OF REVENUE, which is but now begun.

¹ Virgil, *Æneid*, Bk. III [209 ff. The quoted phrase, referring to Celæno, occurs in l. 246].

ST. JOHN DE CRÈVECŒUR (1735-1813)

Michel-Guillaume Jean de Crèvecoeur was born at Caen, France, on 31 January, 1735. His family belonged to the gentry of the district. He was sent to a Jesuit school, but his formal education apparently was, save perhaps in mathematics, slight, and it ended early. Probably in 1753 he went to Salisbury, England, where he seems to have lived for a time with distant relatives. His latest biographer (Miss J. P. Mitchell) conjectures that it was the death of a young Englishwoman to whom Crèvecoeur had become engaged which caused his departure for America in 1754. He landed in Canada and became a lieutenant in the French army of Montcalm. His duties were those of an engineer and map-maker, and the latter activity involved much traveling. After the fall of Quebec (1759), Crèvecoeur came to New York. During the next several years he led a wandering life, apparently earning his livelihood by surveying. Either upon his landing in New York or shortly thereafter he assumed the name "John Hector St. John," a name which he kept during the period of his American residence. In 1765 or 1766 he was naturalized a citizen of the colony of New York. Several years later (1769) he was married to Miss Mehetable Tippet of Yonkers, and, a couple of months after this event, he purchased a farm in Orange County, which he named Pine Hill. Here Crèvecoeur lived happily, until the outbreak and progress of the Revolution brought trouble upon him. Perplexed and distressed by the war—he apparently thought it a lawless uprising of the vulgar mob—he sympathized with the Tories, or Loyalists; and finally in 1779 he went with a son, leaving his wife and two other children behind, to seek refuge with the British in the city of New York. There his situation was miserable, and was presently made even worse when the British imprisoned him because they had received an anonymous letter charging that he was acting as a spy. After his release he sailed, in the early fall of 1780, for England, where he sold his *Letters* to a London publisher. In the following year he returned to France. There he turned some of his *Letters* into French, and they were published as *Lettres d'un Cultivateur Américain* in 1784. They proved popular and were later republished with additions. Meanwhile Crèvecoeur had been appointed French consul to New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, and he held this post from 1783 to 1790. In the spring of the latter year he returned to France on a leave of absence. He never saw America again. He took many precautions, which were successful, to avoid personal danger through the years of the French Revolution, and lived chiefly in France until his death in 1813. His only literary work of any consequence during this period was his *Voyage dans la haute Pensylvanie et dans l'État de New-York*, published in three volumes in Paris in 1801.

The *Letters from an American Farmer; describing certain Provincial Situations, Manners, and Customs, not Generally Known; and conveying some Idea of the Late and Present Interior Circumstances of the British Colonies in North America*, "written for the information of a friend in England, by J. Hector St. John, a farmer in Pennsylvania," were published in London by Thomas Davies and Lockyer Davis in 1782. Crèvecoeur pretended to write the Dedication from "Carlisle in Pennsylvania." While it is not, perhaps, certain that Crèvecoeur was never engaged in farming in that state, still, it is probable that the general form of his book, as well as its title, was suggested by John Dickinson's widely known *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*. The volume (like Dickinson's) contains twelve letters. One describes "the situation, feelings, and pleasures of an American farmer"; two others are "on snakes and on the humming-bird" and on the "distresses of a frontiersman"; others still are concerned with Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard and with Charleston, South Carolina. The French editions of the *Letters* not only exhibit a number of very curious changes which Crèvecoeur made to adapt them to the taste of their new public, but also include some additional letters. The autograph manuscripts containing these and, besides, others never published, were recently found by Mr. H. L. Bourdin in the country house of M. le Comte Louis de Crèvecoeur, near Saumur, and were in 1925 given to the public under the title, *Sketches of Eighteenth Century America*. This volume is a welcome addition to Crèvecoeur's English writings, though it contains little or nothing that would be unexpected to the reader of the *Letters* of 1782.

Crèvecoeur complained: "Few of the writers about America have resided here, and those who have, have not pervaded every part of the country, nor carefully examined the nature and principles of our association." He himself had, for his day, an unusually sound knowledge of the land, "for at one

time or another he became familiar with Canada, with Nova Scotia and St. John's, with the country about the Kennebec and the region later known as Vermont, with Massachusetts and Connecticut, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, with New York and Pennsylvania and some, at least, of the southern states, with parts of Ohio and Kentucky, and probably with Jamaica and Bermuda." (Miss J. P. Mitchell.) Hence it is probable that, despite multitudinous small inaccuracies and much fabrication, Crèvecoeur's narratives and descriptions have some real basis in fact. And they have not only this value, but also a freshness and a charm which remain, even after one has learned something of the author's lack of integrity and so has begun to wonder if the *Letters* were deliberately composed to meet a contemporary demand for the outpourings of naïve "men of feeling." When Crèvecoeur turned the *Letters* into French he greatly altered them so as to increase their sentimental appeal, but this scarcely proves that he was not what he calls himself, a "farmer of feelings." As such we do best to take him, without asking too many questions.

LETTERS FROM AN AMERICAN FARMER

LETTER III, WHAT IS AN AMERICAN?

I WISH I could be acquainted with the feelings and thoughts which must agitate the heart and present themselves to the mind of an enlightened Englishman, when he first lands on this continent. He must greatly rejoice that he lived at a time to see this fair country discovered and settled; he must necessarily feel a share of national pride, when he views the chain of settlements which embellishes these extended shores. When he says to himself, this is the work of my countrymen, who, when convulsed by factions, afflicted by a variety of miseries and wants, restless and impatient, took refuge here. They brought along with them their national genius, to which they principally owe what liberty they enjoy, and what substance they possess. Here he sees the industry of his native country displayed in a new manner, and traces in their works the embryos of all the arts, sciences, and ingenuity which flourish in Europe. Here he beholds fair cities, substantial villages, extensive fields, an immense country filled with decent houses, good roads, orchards, meadows, and bridges, where an hundred years ago all was wild, woody, and uncultivated! What a train of pleasing ideas this fair spectacle must suggest; it is a prospect which must inspire a good citizen with the most

heartfelt pleasure. The difficulty consists in the manner of viewing so extensive a scene. He is arrived on a new continent; a modern society offers itself to his contemplation, different from what he had hitherto seen. It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess everything, and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida. We are a people of cultivators, scattered over an immense territory, communicating with each other by means of good roads and navigable rivers, united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws, without dreading their power, because they are equitable. We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each person works for himself. If he travels through our rural districts he views not the hostile castle, and the haughty mansion, contrasted with the clay-built hut and miserable cabin, where cattle and men help to keep each other warm, and dwell in meanness, smoke, and indigence. A pleasing uniformity of decent competence appears throughout our habitations. The meanest of our log-houses is a dry and comfortable habitation. Lawyer or merchant are the fairest titles our towns afford; that of a farmer is the only appellation of the rural inhabitants of our country. It must take some time ere he can reconcile himself to our dictionary, which is but short in words of dignity, and names of honor. There, on a

¹ Reprinted from a copy of the first edition. The Letter is divided into two parts, of which the second (containing the "History of Andrew, the Hebridean") is here omitted. Crèvecoeur's manuscript, as we now know, was extensively corrected for the press by some one in the employ of his publishers. He wrote very imperfectly in English. ("Note on the Text," *Sketches of Eighteenth Century America*.)

Sunday, he sees a congregation of respectable farmers and their wives, all clad in neat homespun, well mounted, or riding in their own humble wagons. There is not among them an esquire, saving the unlettered magistrate. There he sees a parson as simple as his flock, a farmer who does not riot on the labor of others. We have no princes, for whom we toil, starve, and bleed: we are the most perfect society now existing in the world. Here man is free as he ought to be; nor is this pleasing equality so transitory as many others are. Many ages will not see the shores of our great lakes replenished with inland nations, nor the unknown bounds of North America entirely peopled. Who can tell how far it extends? Who can tell the millions of men whom it will feed and contain? for no European foot has as yet traveled half the extent of this mighty continent!

The next wish of this traveler will be to know whence came all these people? they are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen. The eastern provinces must indeed be excepted, as being the unmixed descendants of Englishmen. I have heard many wish that they had been more intermixed also: for my part, I am no wisher, and think it much better as it has happened. They exhibit a most conspicuous figure in this great and variegated picture; they too enter for a great share in the pleasing perspective displayed in these thirteen provinces. I know it is fashionable to reflect on them, but I respect them for what they have done; for the accuracy and wisdom with which they have settled their territory; for the decency of their manners; for their early love of letters; their ancient college, the first in this hemisphere; for their industry; which to me who am but a farmer, is the criterion of everything. There never was a people, situated as they are, who with so ungrateful a soil have done more in so short a time. Do you think that the monarchical ingredients which are more prevalent in other governments, have purged them from all foul stains? Their histories assert the contrary.

In this great American asylum, the poor of Europe have by some means met together, and in consequence of various causes; to what purpose should they ask one another

what countrymen they are? Alas, two thirds of them had no country. Can a wretch who wanders about, who works and starves, whose life is a continual scene of sore affliction or pinching penury; can that man call England or any other kingdom his country? A country that had no bread for him, whose fields procured him no harvest, who met with nothing but the frowns of the rich, the severity of the laws, with jails and punishments; who owned not a single foot of the extensive surface of this planet? No! urged by a variety of motives, here they came. Every thing has tended to regenerate them; new laws, a new mode of living, a new social system; here they are become men: in Europe they were as so many useless plants, wanting vegetative mold, and refreshing showers; they withered, and were mowed down by want, hunger, and war; but now by the power of transplantation, like all other plants they have taken root and flourished! Formerly they were not numbered in any civil lists of their country, except in those of the poor; here they rank as citizens. By what invisible power has this surprising metamorphosis been performed? By that of the laws and that of their industry. The laws, the indulgent laws, protect them as they arrive, stamping on them the symbol of adoption; they receive ample rewards for their labors; these accumulated rewards procure them lands; those lands confer on them the title of freemen, and to that title every benefit is affixed which men can possibly require. This is the great operation daily performed by our laws. From whence proceed these laws? From our government. Whence the government? It is derived from the original genius and strong desire of the people ratified and confirmed by the crown. This is the great chain which links us all, this is the picture which every province exhibits, Nova Scotia excepted. There the crown has done all; either there were no people who had genius, or it was not much attended to: the consequence is, that the province is very thinly inhabited indeed; the power of the crown in conjunction with the mosquitos has prevented men from settling there. Yet some parts of it flourished once, and it contained a mild harmless set of people. But for the fault of a few leaders, the whole were banished. The greatest political error the

crown ever committed in America, was to cut off men from a country which wanted nothing but men!

What attachment can a poor European emigrant have for a country where he had nothing? The knowledge of the language, the love of a few kindred as poor as himself, were the only cords that tied him: his country is now that which gives him land, bread, protection, and consequence. *Ubi panis ibi patria*, is the motto of all emigrants. What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. *He* is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater*. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigor, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle. The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit. The American ought therefore to love this country much better than that wherein either he or his forefathers were born. Here the rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labor; his labor is founded on the basis of nature, *self-interest*; can it want a stronger allurement? Wives and children, who before in vain demanded of him a morsel of bread, now, fat and frolicsome, gladly help their father to clear those fields whence exuberant crops are to arise to feed and to clothe them all; without any part being claimed, either by a despotic prince, a rich abbot, or a mighty lord. Here

religion demands but little of him; a small voluntary salary to the minister, and gratitude to God; can he refuse these? The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labor, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence.—This is an American.

British America is divided into many provinces, forming a large association, scattered along a coast 1500 miles extent and about 200 wide. This society I would fain examine, at least such as it appears in the middle provinces; if it does not afford that variety of tinges and gradations which may be observed in Europe, we have colors peculiar to ourselves. For instance, it is natural to conceive that those who live near the sea, must be very different from those who live in the woods; the intermediate space will afford a separate and distinct class.

Men are like plants; the goodness and flavor of the fruit proceeds from the peculiar soil and exposition in which they grow. We are nothing but what we derive from the air we breathe, the climate we inhabit, the government we obey, the system of religion we profess, and the nature of our employment. Here you will find but few crimes; these have acquired as yet no root among us. I wish I was able to trace all my ideas; if my ignorance prevents me from describing them properly, I hope I shall be able to delineate a few of the outlines, which are all I propose.

Those who live near the sea, feed more on fish than on flesh, and often encounter that boisterous element. This renders them more bold and enterprising; this leads them to neglect the confined occupations of the land. They see and converse with a variety of people; their intercourse with mankind becomes extensive. The sea inspires them with a love of traffic, a desire of transporting produce from one place to another; and leads them to a variety of resources which supply the place of labor. Those who inhabit the middle settlements, by far the most numerous, must be very different; the simple cultivation of the earth purifies them, but the indulgences of the government, the soft remonstrances of religion, the rank of inde-

pendent freeholders, must necessarily inspire them with sentiments, very little known in Europe among people of the same class. What do I say? Europe has no such class of men; the early knowledge they acquire, the early bargains they make, give them a great degree of sagacity. As freemen they will be litigious; pride and obstinacy are often the cause of law suits; the nature of our laws and governments may be another. As citizens it is easy to imagine, that they will carefully read the newspapers, enter into every political disquisition, freely blame or censure governors and others. As farmers they will be careful and anxious to get as much as they can, because what they get is their own. As northern men they will love the cheerful cup. As Christians, religion curbs them not in their opinions; the general indulgence leaves every one to think for themselves in spiritual matters; the laws inspect our actions, our thoughts are left to God. Industry, good living, selfishness, litigiousness, country politics, the pride of freemen, religious indifference, are their characteristics. If you recede still farther from the sea, you will come into more modern settlements; they exhibit the same strong lineaments, in a ruder appearance. Religion seems to have still less influence, and their manners are less improved.

Now we arrive near the great woods, near the last inhabited districts; there men seem to be placed still farther beyond the reach of government, which in some measure leaves them to themselves. How can it pervade every corner; as they were driven there by misfortunes, necessity of beginnings, desire of acquiring large tracts of land, idleness, frequent want of economy, ancient debts; the re-union of such people does not afford a very pleasing spectacle. When discord, want of unity and friendship; when either drunkenness or idleness prevail in such remote districts; contention, inactivity, and wretchedness must ensue. There are not the same remedies to these evils as in a long established community. The few magistrates they have, are in general little better than the rest; they are often in a perfect state of war; that of man against man, sometimes decided by blows, sometimes by means of the law; that of man against every wild inhabitant of these venerable woods, of which they are come to dispossess them. There men appear to be no

better than carnivorous animals of a superior rank, living on the flesh of wild animals when they can catch them, and when they are not able, they subsist on grain. He who would wish to see America in its proper light, and have a true idea of its feeble beginnings and barbarous rudiments, must visit our extended line of frontiers where the last settlers dwell, and where he may see the first labors of settlement, the mode of clearing the earth, in all their different appearances; where men are wholly left dependent on their native tempers, and on the spur of uncertain industry, which often fails when not sanctified by the efficacy of a few moral rules. There, remote from the power of example and check of shame, many families exhibit the most hideous parts of our society. They are a kind of forlorn hope, preceding by ten or twelve years the most respectable army of veterans which come after them. In that space, prosperity will polish some, vice and the law will drive off the rest, who uniting again with others like themselves will recede still farther; making room for more industrious people, who will finish their improvements, convert the log-house into a convenient habitation, and rejoicing that the first heavy labors are finished, will change in a few years that hitherto barbarous country into a fine, fertile, well regulated district. Such is our progress, such is the march of the Europeans toward the interior parts of this continent. In all societies there are off-casts; this impure part serves as our precursors or pioneers; my father himself was one of that class, but he came upon honest principles, and was therefore one of the few who held fast; by good conduct and temperance, he transmitted to me his fair inheritance, when not above one in fourteen of his contemporaries had the same good fortune.

Forty years ago this smiling country was thus inhabited; it is now purged, a general decency of manners prevails throughout, and such has been the fate of our best countries.

Exclusive of those general characteristics, each province has its own, founded on the government, climate, mode of husbandry, customs, and peculiarity of circumstances. Europeans submit insensibly to these great powers, and become, in the course of a few generations, not only Americans in general, but either Pennsylvanians, Virginians, or

provincials under some other name. Whoever traverses the continent must easily observe those strong differences, which will grow more evident in time. The inhabitants of Canada, Massachusetts, the middle provinces, the southern ones will be as different as their climates; their only points of unity will be those of religion and language.

As I have endeavored to show you how Europeans become Americans, it may not be disagreeable to show you likewise how the various Christian sects introduced, wear out, and how religious indifference becomes prevalent. When any considerable number of a particular sect happen to dwell contiguous to each other, they immediately erect a temple, and there worship the Divinity agreeably to their own peculiar ideas. Nobody disturbs them. If any new sect springs up in Europe it may happen that many of its professors will come and settle in America. As they bring their zeal with them, they are at liberty to make proselytes if they can, and to build a meeting and to follow the dictates of their consciences; for neither the government nor any other power interferes. If they are peaceable subjects, and are industrious, what is it to their neighbors how and in what manner they think fit to address their prayers to the Supreme Being? But if the sectaries are not settled close together, if they are mixed with other denominations, their zeal will cool for want of fuel, and will be extinguished in a little time. Then the Americans become as to religion, what they are as to country, allied to all. In them the name of Englishman, Frenchman, and European is lost, and in like manner, the strict modes of Christianity as practiced in Europe are lost also. This effect will extend itself still farther hereafter, and though this may appear to you as a strange idea, yet it is a very true one. I shall be able perhaps hereafter to explain myself better; in the meanwhile, let the following example serve as my first justification.

Let us suppose you and I to be traveling; we observe that in this house, to the right, lives a Catholic, who prays to God as he has been taught, and believes in transubstantiation; he works and raises wheat, he has a large family of children, all hale and robust; his belief, his prayers offend nobody. About

one mile farther on the same road, his next neighbor may be a good honest plodding German Lutheran, who addresses himself to the same God, the God of all, agreeably to the modes he has been educated in, and believes in consubstantiation; by so doing he scandalizes nobody; he also works in his fields, embellishes the earth, clears swamps, *etc.* What has the world to do with his Lutheran principles? He persecutes nobody, and nobody persecutes him, he visits his neighbors, and his neighbors visit him. Next to him lives a seceder, the most enthusiastic of all sectaries; his zeal is hot and fiery, but separated as he is from others of the same complexion, he has no congregation of his own to resort to, where he might cabal and mingle religious pride with worldly obstinacy. He likewise raises good crops, his house is handsomely painted, his orchard is one of the fairest in the neighborhood. How does it concern the welfare of the country, or of the province at large, what this man's religious sentiments are, or really whether he has any at all? He is a good farmer, he is a sober, peaceable, good citizen: William Penn himself would not wish for more. This is the visible character, the invisible one is only guessed at, and is nobody's business. Next again lives a Low Dutchman, who implicitly believes the rules laid down by the synod of Dort. He conceives no other idea of a clergyman than that of an hired man; if he does his work well he will pay him the stipulated sum; if not he will dismiss him, and do without his sermons, and let his church be shut up for years. But notwithstanding this coarse idea, you will find his house and farm to be the neatest in all the country; and you will judge by his wagon and fat horses, that he thinks more of the affairs of this world than of those of the next. He is sober and laborious, therefore he is all he ought to be as to the affairs of this life; as for those of the next, he must trust to the great Creator. Each of these people instruct their children as well as they can, but these instructions are feeble compared to those which are given to the youth of the poorest class in Europe. Their children will therefore grow up less zealous and more indifferent in matters of religion than their parents. The foolish vanity, or rather the fury of making Proselytes, is unknown here; they have no time, the

seasons call for all their attention, and thus in a few years, this mixed neighborhood will exhibit a strange religious medley, that will be neither pure Catholicism nor pure Calvinism. A very perceptible indifference even in the first generation, will become apparent; and it may happen that the daughter of the Catholic will marry the son of the seceder, and settle by themselves at a distance from their parents. What religious education will they give their children? A very imperfect one. If there happens to be in the neighborhood any place of worship, we will suppose a Quaker's meeting; rather than not show their fine clothes, they will go to it, and some of them may perhaps attach themselves to that society. Others will remain in a perfect state of indifference; the children of these zealous parents will not be able to tell what their religious principles are, and their grandchildren still less. The neighborhood of a place of worship generally leads them to it, and the action of going thither, is the strongest evidence they can give of their attachment to any sect. The Quakers are the only people who retain a fondness for their own mode of worship; for be they ever so far separated from each other, they hold a sort of communion with the society, and seldom depart from its rules, at least in this country. Thus all sects are mixed as well as all nations; thus religious indifference is imperceptibly disseminated from one end of the continent to the other; which is at present one of the strongest characteristics of the Americans. Where this will reach no one can tell, perhaps it may leave a vacuum fit to receive other systems. Persecution, religious pride, the love of contradiction, are the food of what the world commonly calls religion. These motives have ceased here; zeal in Europe is confined; here it evaporates in the great distance it has to travel; there it is a grain of powder inclosed, here it burns away in the open air, and consumes without effect.

But to return to our back settlers. I must tell you that there is something in the proximity of the woods, which is very singular. It is with men as it is with the plants and animals that grow and live in the forests; they are entirely different from those that live in the plains. I will candidly tell you all my thoughts but you are not to expect that I

shall advance any reasons. By living in or near the woods, their actions are regulated by the wildness of the neighborhood. The deer often come to eat their grain, the wolves to destroy their sheep, the bears to kill their hogs, the foxes to catch their poultry. This surrounding hostility immediately puts the gun into their hands; they watch these animals, they kill some; and thus by defending their property, they soon become professed hunters; this is the progress; once hunters, farewell to the plough. The chase renders them ferocious, gloomy, and unsociable; a hunter wants no neighbor, he rather hates them, because he dreads the competition. In a little time their success in the woods makes them neglect their tillage. They trust to the natural fecundity of the earth, and therefore do little; carelessness in fencing often exposes what little they sow to destruction; they are not at home to watch; in order therefore to make up the deficiency they go oftener to the woods. That new mode of life brings along with it a new set of manners, which I cannot easily describe. These new manners being grafted on the old stock, produce a strange sort of lawless profligacy, the impressions of which are indelible. The manners of the Indian natives are respectable, compared with this European medley. Their wives and children live in sloth and inactivity; and having no proper pursuits, you may judge what education the latter receive. Their tender minds have nothing else to contemplate but the example of their parents; like them they grow up a mongrel breed, half civilized, half savage, except nature stamps on them some constitutional propensities. That rich, that voluptuous sentiment is gone that struck them so forcibly; the possession of their freeholds no longer conveys to their minds the same pleasure and pride. To all these reasons you must add, their lonely situation, and you cannot imagine what an effect on manners the great distances they live from each other has! Consider one of the last settlements in its first view: of what is it composed? Europeans who have not that sufficient share of knowledge they ought to have, in order to prosper; people who have suddenly passed from oppression, dread of government, and fear of laws, into the unlimited freedom of the woods. This sudden change must have a

very great effect on most men, and on that class particularly. Eating of wild meat, whatever you may think, tends to alter their temper: though all the proof I can adduce, is, that I have seen it: and having no place of worship to resort to, what little society this might afford is denied them. The Sunday meetings, exclusive of religious benefits, were the only social bonds that might have inspired them with some degree of emulation in neatness. Is it then surprising to see men thus situated, immersed in great and heavy labors, degenerate a little? It is rather a wonder the effect is not more diffusive. The Moravians and the Quakers are the only instances in exception to what I have advanced. The first never settle singly, it is a colony of the society which emigrates; they carry with them their forms, worship, rules, and decency: the others never begin so hard, they are always able to buy improvements, in which there is a great advantage, for by that time the country is recovered from its first barbarity. Thus our bad people are those who are half cultivators and half hunters; and the worst of them are those who have degenerated altogether into the hunting state. As old ploughmen and new men of the woods, as Europeans and new-made Indians, they contract the vices of both; they adopt the moroseness and ferocity of a native without his mildness, or even his industry at home. If manners are not refined, at least they are rendered simple and inoffensive by tilling the earth; all our wants are supplied by it, our time is divided between labor and rest, and leaves none for the commission of great misdeeds. As hunters it is divided between the toil of the chase, the idleness of repose, or the indulgence of inebriation. Hunting is but a licentious idle life, and if it does not always pervert good dispositions; yet, when it is united with bad luck, it leads to want: want stimulates that propensity to rapacity and injustice, too natural to needy men, which is the fatal gradation. After this explanation of the effects which follow by living in the woods, shall we yet vainly flatter ourselves with the hope of converting the Indians? We should rather begin with converting our back-settlers; and now if I dare mention the name of religion, its sweet accents would be lost in the immensity of these woods. Men

thus placed are not fit either to receive or remember its mild instructions; they want temples and ministers, but as soon as men cease to remain at home, and begin to lead an erratic life, let them be either tawny or white, they cease to be its disciples.

Thus have I faintly and imperfectly endeavored to trace our society from the sea to our woods! yet you must not imagine that every person who moves back, acts upon the same principles, or falls into the same degeneracy. Many families carry with them all their decency of conduct, purity of morals, and respect of religion; but these are scarce, the power of example is sometimes irresistible. Even among these back-settlers, their depravity is greater or less, according to what nation or province they belong. Were I to adduce proofs of this, I might be accused of partiality. If there happens to be some rich intervals, some fertile bottoms, in those remote districts, the people will there prefer tilling the land to hunting, and will attach themselves to it; but even on these fertile spots you may plainly perceive the inhabitants to acquire a great degree of rusticity and selfishness.

It is in consequence of this straggling situation, and the astonishing power it has on manners, that the back-settlers of both the Carolinas, Virginia, and many other parts, have been long a set of lawless people; it has been even dangerous to travel among them. Government can do nothing in so extensive a country, better it should wink at these irregularities, than that it should use means inconsistent with its usual mildness. Time will efface those stains: in proportion as the great body of population approaches them they will reform, and become polished and subordinate. Whatever has been said of the four New England provinces, no such degeneracy of manners has ever tarnished their annals; their back-settlers have been kept within the bounds of decency, and government, by means of wise laws, and by the influence of religion. What a detestable idea such people must have given to the natives of the Europeans! They trade with them, the worst of people are permitted to do that which none but persons of the best characters should be employed in. They get drunk with them, and often defraud the Indians. Their avarice, removed from the eyes of their

superiors, knows no bounds; and aided by the little superiority of knowledge, these traders deceive them, and even sometimes shed blood. Hence those shocking violations, those sudden devastations which have so often stained our frontiers, when hundreds of innocent people have been sacrificed for the crimes of a few. It was in consequence of such behavior, that the Indians took the hatchet against the Virginians in 1774. Thus are our first steps trod, thus are our first trees felled, in general, by the most vicious of our people; and thus the path is opened for the arrival of a second and better class, the true American freeholders; the most respectable set of people in this part of the world: respectable for their industry, their happy independence, the great share of freedom they possess, the good regulation of their families, and for extending the trade and the dominion of our mother country.

Europe contains hardly any other distinctions but lords and tenants; this fair country alone is settled by freeholders, the possessors of the soil they cultivate, members of the government they obey, and the framers of their own laws, by means of their representatives. This is a thought which you have taught me to cherish; our difference from Europe, far from diminishing, rather adds to our usefulness and consequence as men and subjects. Had our forefathers remained there, they would only have crowded it, and perhaps prolonged those convulsions which had shook it so long. Every industrious European who transports himself here, may be compared to a sprout growing at the foot of a great tree; it enjoys and draws but a little portion of sap; wrench it from the parent roots, transplant it, and it will become a tree bearing fruit also. Colonists are therefore entitled to the consideration due to the most useful subjects; a hundred families barely existing in some parts of Scotland, will here in six years, cause an annual exportation of 10,000 bushels of wheat: 100 bushels being but a common quantity for an industrious family to sell, if they cultivate good land. It is here then that the idle may be employed, the useless become useful, and the poor become rich; but by riches I do not mean gold and silver, we have but little of those metals; I mean a better sort of wealth, cleared lands, cattle, good houses, good

clothes, and an increase of people to enjoy them.

There is no wonder that this country has so many charms, and presents to Europeans so many temptations to remain in it. A traveler in Europe becomes a stranger as soon as he quits his own kingdom; but it is otherwise here. We know, properly speaking, no strangers; this is every person's country; the variety of our soils, situations, climates, governments, and produce, hath something which must please everybody. No sooner does an European arrive, no matter of what condition, than his eyes are opened upon the fair prospect; he hears his language spoke, he retraces many of his own country manners, he perpetually hears the names of families and towns with which he is acquainted; he sees happiness and prosperity in all places disseminated; he meets with hospitality, kindness, and plenty everywhere; he beholds hardly any poor, he seldom hears of punishments and executions; and he wonders at the elegance of our towns, those miracles of industry and freedom. He cannot admire enough our rural districts, our convenient roads, good taverns, and our many accommodations; he involuntarily loves a country where everything is so lovely. When in England, he was a mere Englishman; here he stands on a larger portion of the globe, not less than its fourth part, and may see the productions of the north, in iron and naval stores; the provisions of Ireland, the grain of Egypt, the indigo, the rice of China. He does not find, as in Europe, a crowded society, where every place is over-stocked; he does not feel that perpetual collision of parties, that difficulty of beginning, that contention which oversets so many. There is room for everybody in America; has he any particular talent, or industry? he exerts it in order to procure a livelihood, and it succeeds. Is he a merchant? the avenues of trade are infinite; is he eminent in any respect? he will be employed and respected. Does he love a country life? pleasant farms present themselves; he may purchase what he wants, and thereby become an American farmer. Is he a laborer, sober and industrious? he need not go many miles, nor receive many informations before he will be hired, well fed at the table of his employer, and paid four or five times more than he can get in Europe.

Does he want uncultivated lands? thousands of acres present themselves, which he may purchase cheap. Whatever be his talents or inclinations, if they are moderate, he may satisfy them. I do not mean that every one who comes will grow rich in a little time; no, but he may procure an easy, decent maintenance, by his industry. Instead of starving he will be fed, instead of being idle he will have employment; and these are riches enough for such men as come over here. The rich stay in Europe, it is only the middling and the poor that emigrate. Would you wish to travel in independent idleness, from north to south, you will find easy access, and the most cheerful reception at every house; society without ostentation, good cheer without pride, and every decent diversion which the country affords, with little expense. It is no wonder that the European who has lived here a few years, is desirous to remain; Europe with all its pomp, is not to be compared to this continent, for men of middle stations, or laborers.

An European, when he first arrives, seems limited in his intentions, as well as in his views; but he very suddenly alters his scale; two hundred miles formerly appeared a very great distance, it is now but a trifle; he no sooner breathes our air than he forms schemes, and embarks in designs he never would have thought of in his own country. There the plenitude of society confines many useful ideas, and often extinguishes the most laudable schemes which here ripen into maturity. Thus Europeans become Americans.

But how is this accomplished in that crowd of low, indigent people, who flock here every year from all parts of Europe? I will tell you; they no sooner arrive than they immediately feel the good effects of that plenty of provisions we possess: they fare on our best food, and they are kindly entertained; their talents, character, and peculiar industry are immediately inquired into; they find countrymen everywhere disseminated, let them come from whatever part of Europe. Let me select one as an epitome of the rest; he is hired, he goes to work, and works moderately; instead of being employed by a haughty person, he finds himself with his equal, placed at the substantial table of the farmer, or else at an inferior one as good; his

wages are high, his bed is not like that bed of sorrow on which he used to lie: if he behaves with propriety, and is faithful, he is caressed, and becomes as it were a member of the family. He begins to feel the effects of a sort of resurrection; hitherto he had not lived, but simply vegetated; he now feels himself a man, because he is treated as such; the laws of his own country had overlooked him in his insignificance; the laws of this cover him with their mantle. Judge what an alteration there must arise in the mind and thoughts of this man; he begins to forget his former servitude and dependence, his heart involuntarily swells and glows; this first swell inspires him with those new thoughts which constitute an American. What love can he entertain for a country where his existence was a burthen to him; if he is a generous good man, the love of this new adoptive parent will sink deep into his heart. He looks around, and sees many a prosperous person, who but a few years before was as poor as himself. This encourages him much, he begins to form some little scheme, the first, alas, he ever formed in his life. If he is wise he thus spends two or three years, in which time he acquires knowledge, the use of tools, the modes of working the lands, felling trees, *etc.* This prepares the foundation of a good name, the most useful acquisition he can make. He is encouraged, he has gained friends; he is advised and directed, he feels bold, he purchases some land; he gives all the money he has brought over, as well as what he has earned, and trusts to the God of harvests for the discharge of the rest. His good name procures him credit. He is now possessed of the deed, conveying to him and his posterity the fee simple and absolute property of two hundred acres of land, situated on such a river. What an epoch in this man's life! He is become a freeholder, from perhaps a German boot—he is now an American, a Pennsylvanian, an English subject. He is naturalized, his name is enrolled with those of the other citizens of the province. Instead of being a vagrant, he has a place of residence; he is called the inhabitant of such a county, or of such a district, and for the first time in his life counts for something; for hitherto he has been a cypher. I only repeat what I have heard many say, and no wonder their hearts should glow, and be agitated with a multi-

tude of feelings, not easy to describe. From nothing to start into being; from a servant to the rank of a master; from being the slave of some despotic prince, to become a free man, invested with lands, to which every municipal blessing is annexed! What a change indeed! It is in consequence of that change that he becomes an American. This great metamorphosis has a double effect, it extinguishes all his European prejudices, he forgets that mechanism of subordination, that servility of disposition which poverty had taught him; and sometimes he is apt to forget too much, often passing from one extreme to the other. If he is a good man, he forms schemes of future prosperity, he proposes to educate his children better than he has been educated himself; he thinks of future modes of conduct, feels an ardor to labor he never felt before. Pride steps in and leads him to everything that the laws do not forbid: he respects them; with a heartfelt gratitude he looks toward the east, toward that insular government from whose wisdom all his new felicity is derived, and under whose wings and protection he now lives. These reflections constitute him the good man and the good subject. Ye poor Europeans, ye, who sweat, and work for the great—ye, who are obliged to give so many sheaves to the church, so many to your lords, so many to your government, and have hardly any left for yourselves—ye, who are held in less estimation than favorite hunters or useless lap-dogs—ye, who only breathe the air of nature, because it cannot be withheld from you; it is here that ye can conceive the possibility of those feelings I have been describing; it is here the laws of naturalization invite every one to partake of our great labors and felicity, to till unrented, untaxed lands! Many, corrupted beyond the power of amendment, have brought with them all their vices, and disregarding the advantages held to them, have gone on in their former career of iniquity, until they have been overtaken and punished by our laws. It is not every emigrant who succeeds; no, it is only the sober, the honest, and industrious: happy those to whom this transition has served as a powerful spur to labor, to prosperity, and to the good establishment of children, born in the days of their poverty; and who had no other portion to expect but the rags of their

parents, had it not been for their happy emigration. Others again, have been led astray by this enchanting scene; their new pride, instead of leading them to the fields, has kept them in idleness; the idea of possessing lands is all that satisfies them—though surrounded with fertility, they have moldered away their time in inactivity, misinformed husbandry, and ineffectual endeavors. How much wiser, in general, the honest Germans than almost all other Europeans; they hire themselves to some of their wealthy landmen, and in that apprenticeship learn everything that is necessary. They attentively consider the prosperous industry of others, which imprints in their minds a strong desire of possessing the same advantages. This forcible idea never quits them, they launch forth, and by dint of sobriety, rigid parsimony, and the most persevering industry, they commonly succeed. Their astonishment at their first arrival from Germany is very great—it is to them a dream; the contrast must be powerful indeed; they observe their countrymen flourishing in every place; they travel through whole counties where not a word of English is spoken; and in the names and the language of the people, they retrace Germany. They have been an useful acquisition to this continent, and to Pennsylvania in particular; to them it owes some share of its prosperity: to their mechanical knowledge and patience it owes the finest mills in all America, the best teams of horses, and many other advantages. The recollection of their former poverty and slavery never quits them as long as they live.

The Scotch and the Irish might have lived in their own country perhaps as poor, but enjoying more civil advantages, the effects of their new situation do not strike them so forcibly, nor has it so lasting an effect. From whence the difference arises I know not, but out of twelve families of emigrants of each country, generally seven Scotch will succeed, nine German, and four Irish. The Scotch are frugal and laborious, but their wives cannot work so hard as German women, who on the contrary vie with their husbands, and often share with them the most severe toils of the field, which they understand better. They have therefore nothing to struggle against, but the common

casualties of nature. The Irish do not prosper so well; they love to drink and to quarrel; they are litigious, and soon take to the gun, which is the ruin of everything; they seem beside to labor under a greater degree of ignorance in husbandry than the others; perhaps it is that their industry had less scope, and was less exercised at home. I have heard many relate, how the land was parceled out in that kingdom; their ancient conquest has been a great detriment to them, by over-setting their landed property. The lands possessed by a few, are leased down *ad infinitum*, and the occupiers often pay five guineas an acre. The poor are worse lodged there than anywhere else in Europe; their potatoes, which are easily raised, are perhaps an inducement to laziness: their wages are too low, and their whisky too cheap.

There is no tracing observations of this kind, without making at the same time very great allowances, as there are everywhere to be found a great many exceptions. The Irish themselves, from different parts of that kingdom, are very different. It is difficult to account for this surprising locality, one would think on so small an island an Irishman must be an Irishman: yet it is not so, they are different in their aptitude to, and in their love of labor.

The Scotch on the contrary are all industrious and saving; they want nothing more than a field to exert themselves in, and they are commonly sure of succeeding. The only difficulty they labor under is, that technical American knowledge which requires some time to obtain; it is not easy for those who seldom saw a tree, to conceive how it is to be felled, cut up, and split into rails and posts.

As I am fond of seeing and talking of prosperous families, I intend to finish this letter by relating to you the history of an honest Scotch Hebridean,¹ who came here in 1774, which will show you in epitome what the Scotch can do, wherever they have room for the exertion of their industry. Whenever I hear of any new settlement, I pay it a visit once or twice a year, on purpose to observe the different steps each settler takes, the gradual improvements, the different tempers of each family, on which their prosperity in a

great nature depends; their different modifications of industry, their ingenuity, and contrivance; for being all poor, their life requires sagacity and prudence. In the evening I love to hear them tell their stories, they furnish me with new ideas; I sit still and listen to their ancient misfortunes, observing in many of them a strong degree of gratitude to God, and the government. Many a well meant sermon have I preached to some of them. When I found laziness and inattention to prevail, who could refrain from wishing well to these new countrymen, after having undergone so many fatigues. Who could withhold good advice? What a happy change it must be, to descend from the high, sterile, bleak lands of Scotland, where everything is barren and cold, to rest on some fertile farms in these middle provinces! Such a transition must have afforded the most pleasing satisfaction.

The following dialogue passed at an out-settlement, where I lately paid a visit:

Well, friend, how do you do now; I am come fifty odd miles on purpose to see you; how do you go on with your new cutting and slashing? Very well, good Sir, we learn the use of the ax bravely, we shall make it out; we have a belly full of victuals every day, our cows run about, and come home full of milk, our hogs get fat of themselves in the woods: Oh, this is a good country! God bless the king, and William Penn; we shall do very well by and by, if we keep our healths. Your log-house looks neat and light, where did you get these shingles? One of our neighbors is a New England man, and he showed us how to split them out of chestnut-trees. Now for a barn, but all in good time, here are fine trees to build with. Who is to frame it, sure you don't understand that work yet? A countryman of ours who has been in America these ten years, offers to wait for his money until the second crop is lodged in it. What did you give for your land? Thirty-five shillings per acre, payable in seven years. How many acres have you got? An hundred and fifty. That is enough to begin with; is not your land pretty hard to clear? Yes, Sir, hard enough, but it would be harder still if it were ready cleared, for then we should have no timber, and I love the woods much; the land is nothing without them. Have not you found out any bees yet? No, Sir; and if we

¹ This narrative is not here reprinted.

had we should not know what to do with them. I will tell you by and by. You are very kind. Farewell, honest man, God prosper you; whenever you travel toward —, inquire for J. S. He will entertain you kindly, provided you bring him good tidings from your family and farm.—In this manner I often visit them, and carefully examine their houses, their modes of ingenuity, their different ways; and make them all relate all they know, and describe all they feel. These are scenes which I believe you would willingly share with me. I well remember your philanthropic turn of mind. Is it not better to contemplate under these humble roofs, the rudiments of future wealth and population, than to behold the accumulated bundles of litigious papers in the office of a lawyer? To examine how the world is gradually settled, how the howling swamp is converted into a pleasing meadow, the rough ridge into a fine field; and to hear the cheerful whistling, the rural song, where there was no sound heard before, save the yell of the savage, the screech of the owl, or the hissing of the snake? Here an European, fatigued with luxury, riches, and pleasures, may find a sweet relaxation in a series of interesting scenes, as affecting as they are new. England, which now contains so many domes, so many castles, was once like this; a place woody and marshy; its inhabitants, now the favorite nation for arts and commerce, were once painted like our neighbors. The country will flourish in its turn, and the same observations will be made which I have just delineated. Posterity will look back with avidity and pleasure, to trace, if possible, the era of this or that particular settlement.

Pray, what is the reason that the Scots are in general more religious, more faithful, more honest, and industrious than the Irish? I do not mean to insinuate national reflections, God forbid! It ill becomes any man, and much less an American; but as I know men are nothing of themselves, and that they owe all their different modifications either to government or other local circumstances, there must be some powerful causes which constitute this great national difference.

Agreeable to the account which several Scórchmen have given me of the north of Britain, of the Orkneys, and the Hebride Islands, they seem, on many accounts, to be

unfit for the habitation of men; they appear to be calculated only for great sheep pastures. Who then can blame the inhabitants of these countries for transporting themselves hither? This great continent must in time absorb the poorest part of Europe; and this will happen in proportion as it becomes better known; and as war, taxation, oppression, and misery increase there. The Hebrides appear to be fit only for the residence of malefactors, and it would be much better to send felons there than either to Virginia or Maryland. What a strange compliment has our mother country paid to two of the finest provinces in America! England has entertained in that respect very mistaken ideas; what was intended as a punishment, is become the good fortune of several; many of those who have been transported as felons, are now rich, and strangers to the stings of those wants that urged them to violations of the law: they are become industrious, exemplary, and useful citizens. The English government should purchase the most northern and barren of those islands; it should send over to us the honest, primitive Hebrideans, settle them here on good lands, as a reward for their virtue and ancient poverty; and replace them with a colony of her wicked sons. The severity of the climate, the inclemency of the seasons, the sterility of the soil, the tempestuousness of the sea, would afflict and punish enough. Could there be found a spot better adapted to retaliate the injury it had received by their crimes? Some of those islands might be considered as the hell of Great Britain, where all evil spirits should be sent. Two essential ends would be answered by this simple operation. The good people, by emigration, would be rendered happier; the bad ones would be placed where they ought to be. In a few years the dread of being sent to that wintry region would have a much stronger effect than that of transportation.—This is no place of punishment; were I a poor, hopeless, breadless Englishman, and not restrained by the power of shame, I should be very thankful for the passage. It is of very little importance how, and in what manner an indigent man arrives; for if he is but sober, honest, and industrious, he has nothing more to ask of heaven. Let him go to work, he will have opportunities enough to earn a comfortable support, and even the means of

procuring some land; which ought to be the utmost wish of every person who has health and hands to work. I knew a man who came to this country, in the literal sense of the expression, stark naked; I think he was a Frenchman, and a sailor on board an English man-of-war. Being discontented, he had stripped himself and swam ashore; where, finding clothes and friends, he settled afterwards at Maranek, in the county of Chester, in the province of New York: he married and left a good farm to each of his sons. I knew another person who was but twelve years old when he was taken on the frontiers of Canada, by the Indians; at his arrival at Albany he was purchased by a gentleman, who generously bound him apprentice to a tailor. He lived to the age of ninety, and left behind him a fine estate and a numerous family, all well settled; many of them I am acquainted with.—Where is then the industrious European who ought to despair?

After a foreigner from any part of Europe is arrived, and become a citizen; let him devoutly listen to the voice of our great parent,

which says to him: "Welcome to my shores, distressed European; bless the hour in which thou didst see my verdant fields, my fair navigable rivers, and my green mountains!—If thou wilt work, I have bread for thee; if thou wilt be honest, sober, and industrious, I have greater rewards to confer on thee—ease and independence. I will give thee fields to feed and clothe thee; a comfortable fireside to sit by, and tell thy children by what means thou hast prospered; and a decent bed to repose on. I shall endow thee beside with the immunities of a freeman. If thou wilt carefully educate thy children, teach them gratitude to God, and reverence to that government, that philanthropic government, which has collected here so many men and made them happy. I will also provide for thy progeny; and to every good man this ought to be the most holy, the most powerful, the most earnest wish he can possibly form, as well as the most consolatory prospect when he dies. Go thou and work and till; thou shalt prosper, provided thou be just, grateful, and industrious."

THOMAS PAINE (1737-1809)

Paine's father was a Quaker who earned a scanty living from a small farm and from a shop in which he followed the trade of stay-making. Thomas was born in Thetford, England, on 29 January, 1737. His formal education was negligible, and when he was thirteen years old he began to learn his father's trade—one which he disliked, and from which he soon tried to escape by going to sea. But a sailor's life apparently proved worse than a stay-maker's, and by 1756 he was in London following that trade, and, at the same time, attending scientific lectures and learning something of mechanics. In this direction he was remarkably apt and, given different circumstances, he might have launched himself on a career of mechanical invention which would almost certainly have brought him fame, and perhaps wealth. Famous he was to become, but from other activities, and meanwhile he continued a stay-maker until, not long after his marriage in 1759, he failed in the shop which he had set up at Sandwich. In the following year his wife died. In 1761 he was appointed an exciseman; four years later he was discharged; then, after an interval of school-teaching, he was reappointed, only to be discharged once more in 1774. In the mean time he had gone into the tobacco-trade, and had married again (1771). But the business failed, and in 1774, for unknown reasons, he and his wife formally separated. Thus far his life had been a series of failures, and he was duly prepared to emigrate. Franklin, whom he had come to know, thought with his usual sagacity that Paine might be useful in America; and for America he sailed, with letters from Franklin, in October, 1774. In Philadelphia he began his career as a man of letters, and discovered in himself those powers of incisive thought and down-right utterance with which presently he was to astonish the colonies. In January, 1776, he published *Common Sense*. It has been said that George III and *Common Sense* were the real authors of the Revolution. Almost over night, and almost alone, Paine changed the aims of the colonists from resistance to independence. Justly *Common Sense* has been described as "one of the most powerful and influential pamphlets ever published in the English language." Paine's biographer (M. D. Conway) estimated that scarcely less than 500,000 copies were sold—an extraordinary number—which can only mean that the pamphlet's fiery message was read everywhere. And from these sales Paine, though still a poor man, derived no profit, because he gave the profits to the cause he preached. And for that cause he continued to labor whole-heartedly to the end, serving in the army, aiding the Congress, helping to secure money and supplies from France, and, above all, continuing to write. The course of the Revolution was punctuated by successive numbers of *The American Crisis*—essays in which he wonderfully portrayed the American cause as a consecrated battle of the angels against the forces of evil, essays which again and again put fresh strength and determination into Washington's army and held the revolutionists constant to their purpose. The first *Crisis* was read to the army just before the Battle of Trenton, and it has been well said that Paine deserves no small share of the credit for the victories which followed. The opening words of the essay which those soldiers heard may best show the reason: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it *now*, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as *Freedom* should not be highly rated."

With the conclusion of the war, Paine's work for America was practically completed. His nature was intensely partisan; once his simple convictions had been reached, he could fight for them with perfect vigor and tenacity; but he understood too little of average human nature to be useful in government. He could not meet others on their own ground, he could not temporize and patiently undertake half-measures, he was incapable of compromise. Hence there was no place for him in the task of framing the Constitution and welding the colonies into a nation. This he may have recognized. He regarded himself as a citizen, not of any country, but of the world, and perhaps began, with some reason, to think of himself as the liberator of mankind. He had for some time been anxious to revisit England;—might he not hope to undermine tyranny there? He sailed for France in 1787, and did not return to America until 1802. Those were eventful years both for Europe and for Paine. He pub-

lished *The Rights of Man*—his answer to Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*—in 1791 and 1792. For this he was prosecuted, and convicted of libel. But already he was in France—owing, at least in part, to the sound advice of William Blake—and had been elected a deputy to the French Convention. He remained true, of course, to his republican principles, and, in alliance with the Girondists, attempted to carry those principles out mercifully. He attacked the king, not the man, and labored bravely to save the life of Louis XVI. "I'm of the Scotch parson's opinion," he had said, "when he prayed against Louis XIV, 'Lord, shake him over the mouth of hell, but don't let him drop.'" For his efforts he was thrown into prison, where he suffered from a dangerous illness, and he escaped the guillotine only by a lucky accident. It was in these blood-stained years of fanaticism and cruelty, and as a manifesto against French atheism, that he wrote and published *The Age of Reason* (1793, 1795), a powerful and perhaps still influential attack upon revealed religion and a confident exposition of deism.

After his return to America to spend his last years here (he died in New York on 8 January, 1809), Paine's life was embittered by fears of poverty and by defamation and persecution at the hands of those whose independence he had done so much to gain. By *The Rights of Man* and his vaguely understood share in the French Revolution he had aroused the enmity of all those who had grown suspicious of or hostile to genuine democracy, and, much worse, by *The Age of Reason* he had aroused the hatred of orthodox Christians everywhere. Atheist, he was called, in days when that was still a terrible accusation, and his pious opponents did not scruple to hound him with other malicious lies concerning his beliefs, his character, and his manner of life, until they built around him a hideous legend which has persisted almost until our own time. Many unlovely things may truthfully be said about Paine. He had no delicacy, no tact, no personal pride; his mind was not profound; he suffered the limitations of his age—its misplaced confidence in reason, its innocence of historical sense; he was hasty of judgment and self-conceited; and the indictment could be further extended; but, none the less, he was also a brave, unselfish man, who devoted freely his life, his extraordinary talents, and his purse to the cause of human freedom. And to his memory Americans should pay sincere homage, as to his books they must go for a true understanding of the ideas and the temper which brought the United States into the world an independent nation.

COMMON SENSE

I. ON THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL, WITH CONCISE REMARKS ON THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION

SOME writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively* by uniting our affections, the latter *negatively* by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one: for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries *by a government*, which we might expect in a country *without government*, our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built upon the ruins of the bowers of paradise.

For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him, out of two evils to choose the least. Wherefore, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever form thereof appears most likely to insure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest; they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto; the strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same.

Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness, but one man might labor out the common period of life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him to quit his work, and every different want would call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune, would be death; for though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supersede, and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other; but as nothing but Heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other: and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a State House, under the branches of which the whole Colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters. It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of Regulations and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first parliament every man by natural right will have a seat.

But as the Colony increases, the public concerns will increase likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated will render it too inconvenient for all of them to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns few and trifling. This will point out the convenience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake which those have who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would act were they present.

If the colony continue increasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of representatives, and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number: and that the *elected* might never form to themselves an interest separate from the *electors*, prudence will point out the propriety of having elections often: because as the *elected* might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the *electors* in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflection of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent interchange will establish a common interest with every part of the community, they will mutually and naturally support each other, and on this (not on the unmeaning name of king) depends the *strength of government, and the happiness of the governed*.

Here then is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government, *viz.*, Freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with show, or our ears deceived by sound; however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding, the simple voice of nature and reason will say, 'tis right.

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature which no art can overturn, *viz.*, that the more simple any thing is, the less liable it is to be disordered and the easier repaired when disordered; and with this maxim in view I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected, is granted. When the world was overrun with tyranny the least remove therefrom was a glorious rescue. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated.

Absolute governments (though the disgrace of human nature) have this advantage with them, they are simple; if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs; know likewise the remedy; and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the constitution of England

is so exceedingly complex, that the nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the fault lies; some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new Republican materials.

First.—The remains of Monarchical tyranny in the person of the King.

Secondly.—The remains of Aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the Peers.

Thirdly.—The new Republican materials, in the persons of the Commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.

The two first, by being hereditary, are independent of the People; wherefore in a *constitutional sense* they contribute nothing towards the freedom of the State.

To say that the constitution of England is an *union* of three powers, reciprocally *checking* each other, is farcical; either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.

To say that the Commons is a check upon the King, presupposes two things.

First.—That the King is not to be trusted without being looked after; or in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of monarchy.

Secondly.—That the Commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the Crown.

But as the same constitution which gives the Commons a power to check the King by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the King a power to check the Commons, by empowering him to reject their other bills; it again supposes that the King is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of Monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a king shuts him from the

World, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, by unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English constitution thus: the King, say they, is one, the people another; the Peers are a house in behalf of the King, the Commons in behalf of the people; but this hath all the distinctions of a house divided against itself; and though the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined they appear idle and ambiguous; and it will always happen that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when applied to the description of something which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind: for this explanation includes a previous question, *viz.*, *how came the king by a power which the people are afraid to trust, and always obliged to check?* Such a power could not be the gift of a wise people, neither can any power, *which needs checking*, be from God; yet the provision which the constitution makes supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a *Felo de se*:¹ for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the constitution has the most weight, for that will govern: and though the others, or a part of them, may clog, or, as the phrase is, check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavors will be ineffectual: The first moving power will at last have its way, and what it wants in speed is supplied by time.

That the crown is this overbearing part in the English constitution needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of places and pensions is self-evident; wherefore, though we have been wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute Monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish

¹ *I.e.*, is self-destroying.

enough to put the Crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen, in favor of their own government, by King, Lords and Commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are undoubtedly safer in England than in some other countries: but the will of the king is as much the law of the land in Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his mouth, it is handed to the people under the formidable shape of an act of parliament. For the fate of Charles the First hath only made kings more subtle—not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favor of modes and forms, the plain truth is that *it is wholly owing to the constitution of the people, and not to the constitution of the government* that the crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the *constitutional errors* in the English form of government is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by any obstinate prejudice. And as a man who is attached to a prostitute is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favor of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.

II. OF MONARCHY AND HEREDITARY SUCCESSION

Mankind being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstance: the distinctions of rich and poor may in a great measure be accounted for, and that without having recourse to the harsh ill-sounding names of oppression and avarice. Oppression is often the *consequence*, but seldom or never the *means* of riches; and though avarice will preserve a man from being necessitously poor, it generally makes him too timorous to be wealthy.

But there is another and greater distinction for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is the distinction of men into **KINGS** and **SUBJECTS**. Male and female are the distinctions of nature,

good and bad the distinctions of Heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth inquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind.

In the early ages of the world, according to the scripture chronology there were ^{no} kings; the consequence of which was, there were no wars; it is the pride of kings which throws mankind into confusion. Holland, without a king hath enjoyed more peace for this last century than any of the monarchical governments in Europe. Antiquity favors the same remark; for the quiet and rural lives of the first Patriarchs have a happy something in them, which vanishes when we come to the history of Jewish royalty.

Government by kings was first introduced into the world by the Heathens, from whom the children of Israel copied the custom. It was the most prosperous invention the Devil ever set on foot for the promotion of idolatry. The Heathens paid divine honors to their deceased kings, and the Christian World hath improved on the plan by doing the same to their living ones. How impious is the title of sacred Majesty applied to a worm, who in the midst of his splendor is crumbling into dust!

As the exalting one man so greatly above the rest cannot be justified on the equal rights of nature, so neither can it be defended on the authority of Scripture; for the will of the Almighty as declared by Gideon, and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of government by Kings. All anti-monarchical parts of Scripture have been very smoothly glossed over in monarchical governments, but they undoubtedly merit the attention of countries which have their governments yet to form. *Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's*, is the Scripture doctrine of courts, yet it is no support of monarchical government, for the Jews at that time were without a king, and in a state of vassalage to the Romans.

Near three thousand years passed away, from the Mosaic account of the creation, till the Jews under a national delusion requested a king. Till then their form of government (except in extraordinary cases where the Almighty interposed) was a kind of Republic, administered by a judge and

the elders of the tribes. Kings they had none, and it was held sinful to acknowledge any being under that title but the Lord of Hosts. And when a man seriously reflects on the idolatrous homage which is paid to the persons of kings, he need not wonder that the Almighty, ever jealous of his honor, should disapprove a form of government which so impiously invades the prerogative of Heaven.

Monarchy is ranked in Scripture as one of the sins of the Jews, for which a curse in reserve is denounced against them. The history of that transaction is worth attending to.

The children of Israel being oppressed by the Midianites, Gideon marched against them with a small army, and victory through the divine interposition decided in his favor. The Jews, elate with success, and attributing it to the generalship of Gideon, proposed making him a king, saying, *Rule thou over us, thou and thy son, and thy son's son.* Here was temptation in its fullest extent; not a kingdom only, but an hereditary one; but Gideon in the piety of his soul replied, *I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you.* THE LORD SHALL RULE OVER YOU. Words need not be more explicit; Gideon doth not decline the honor, but denieth their right to give it; neither doth he compliment them with invented declarations of his thanks, but in the positive style of a prophet charges them with disaffection to their proper Sovereign, the King of Heaven.

About one hundred and thirty years after this, they fell again into the same error. The hankering which the Jews had for the idolatrous customs of the Heathens is something exceedingly unaccountable; but so it was, that laying hold of the misconduct of Samuel's two sons, who were entrusted with some secular concerns, they came in an abrupt and clamorous manner to Samuel, saying, *Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways, now make us a king to judge us like all the other nations.* And here we cannot but observe that their motives were bad, *viz.*, that they might be like unto other nations, *i. e.*, the Heathens, whereas their true glory lay in being as much unlike them as possible. *But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, give us a King to judge us; and Samuel prayed unto the Lord,*

and the Lord said unto Samuel, harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, THAT I SHOULD NOT REIGN OVER THEM. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other Gods: so do they also unto thee. Now therefore harken unto their voice, howbeit, protest solemnly unto them and show them the manner of the King that shall reign over them, i. e., not of any particular King, but the general manner of the Kings of the earth whom Israel was so eagerly copying after. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference of manners, the character is still in fashion. And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people, that asked of him a King. And he said, This shall be the manner of the King that shall reign over you. He will take your sons and appoint them for himself for his chariots and to be his horsemen, and some shall run before his chariots (this description agrees with the present mode of impressing men) and he will appoint him captains over thousands and captains over fifties, will set them to ear his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers (this describes the expense and luxury as well as the oppression of Kings) and he will take your fields and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give them to his officers and to his servants (by which we see that bribery, corruption, and favoritism, are the standing vices of Kings) and he will take the tenth of your men servants, and your maid servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work: and he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants, and ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen, AND THE LORD WILL NOT HEAR YOU IN THAT DAY. This accounts for the continuation of Monarchy; neither do the characters of the few good kings which have lived since, either sanctify the title, or blot out the sinfulness of the origin; the high encomium given of

David takes no notice of him *officially as a King*, but only as a *Man* after God's own heart. *Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel, and they said, Nay but we will have a king over us, that we may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles.* Samuel continued to reason with them but to no purpose; he set before them their ingratitude, but all would not avail; and seeing them fully bent on their folly, he cried out, *I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain* (which was then a punishment, being in the time of wheat harvest) *that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord,* IN ASKING, YOU A KING. So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, *Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not, for WE HAVE ADDED UNTO OUR SINS THIS EVIL, TO ASK A KING.* These portions of Scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against monarchical government is true, or the Scripture is false. And a man hath good reason to believe that there is as much of kingcraft as priestcraft in withholding the Scripture from the public in popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the popery of government.

To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no one by birth could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others for ever, and though himself might deserve some decent degree of honors of his contemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in Kings, is that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule, by giving mankind an *Ass for a Lion*.

Secondly, as no man at first could possess any other public honors than were bestowed upon him, so the givers of those honors

could have no power to give away the right of posterity, and though they might say, "We choose you for our head," they could not without manifest injustice to their children say "that your children and your children's children shall reign over ours for ever." Because such an unwise, unjust, unnatural compact might (perhaps) in the next succession put them under the government of a rogue or a fool. Most wise men in their private sentiments have ever treated hereditary right with contempt; yet it is one of those evils which when once established is not easily removed: many submit from fear, others from superstition, and the more powerful part shares with the king the plunder of the rest.

This is supposing the present race of kings in the world to have had an honorable origin: whereas it is more than probable, that, could we take off the dark covering of antiquity and trace them to their first rise, we should find the first of them nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang, whose savage manners or pre-eminence in subtlety obtained him the title of chief among plunderers: and who by increasing in power and extending his depredations, overawed the quiet and defenseless to purchase their safety by frequent contributions. Yet his electors could have no idea of giving hereditary right to his descendants, because such a perpetual exclusion of themselves was incompatible with the free and unrestrained principles they professed to live by. Wherefore, hereditary succession in the early ages of monarchy could not take place as a matter of claim, but as something casual or complementary; but as few or no records were extant in those days, and traditionary history stuffed with fables, it was very easy, after the lapse of a few generations, to trump up some superstitious tale conveniently timed, Mahomet-like, to cram hereditary right down the throats of the vulgar. Perhaps the disorders which threatened, or seemed to threaten, on the decease of a leader and the choice of a new one (for elections among ruffians could not be very orderly) induced many at first to favor hereditary pretensions; by which means it happened, as it hath happened since, that what at first was submitted to as a convenience was afterwards claimed as a right.

England since the conquest hath known some few good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones: yet no man in his senses can say that their claim under William the Conqueror is a very honorable one. A French bastard landing with an armed Banditti and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives, is in plain terms a very paltry rascally original. It certainly hath no divinity in it. However, it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of hereditary right; if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the Ass and the Lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion.

Yet I should be glad to ask how they suppose kings came at first? The question admits but of three answers, *viz.*, either by lot, by election, or by usurpation. If the first king was taken by lot, it establishes a precedent for the next, which excludes hereditary succession. Saul was by lot, yet the succession was not hereditary, neither does it appear from that transaction that there was any intention it ever should. If the first king of any country was by election, that likewise establishes a precedent for the next; for to say, that the right of all future generations is taken away, by the act of the first electors, in their choice not only of a king but of a family of kings for ever, hath no parallel in or out of Scripture but the doctrine of original sin, which supposes the free will of all men lost in Adam; and from such comparison, and it will admit of no other, hereditary succession can derive no glory. For as in Adam all sinned, and as in the first electors all men obeyed; as in the one all mankind were subjected to Satan, and in the other to sovereignty; as our innocence was lost in the first, and our authority in the last; and as both disable us from re-assuming some former state and privilege, it unanswerably follows that original sin and hereditary succession are parallels. Dishonorable rank! inglorious connection! yet the most subtle sophist cannot produce a juster simile.

As to usurpation, no man will be so hardy as to defend it; and that William the Conqueror was an usurper is a fact not to be contradicted. The plain truth is, that the

antiquity of English monarchy will not bear looking into.

But it is not so much the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it insure a race of good and wise men it would have the seal of divine authority, but as it opens a door to the *foolish*, the *wicked*, and the *improper*, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent. Selected from the rest of mankind, their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions.

Another evil which attends hereditary succession is that the throne is subject to be possessed by a minor at any age; all which time the regency acting under the cover of a king have every opportunity and inducement to betray their trust. The same national misfortune happens when a king worn out with age and infirmity enters the last stage of human weakness. In both these cases the public becomes a prey to every miscreant who can tamper successfully with the follies either of age or infancy.

The most plausible plea which hath ever been offered in favor of hereditary succession is that it preserves a nation from civil wars; and were this true, it would be weighty; whereas it is the most bare-faced falsity ever imposed upon mankind. The whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there has been (including the revolution¹) no less than eight civil wars and nineteen Rebellions. Wherefore instead of making for peace, it makes against it, and destroys the very foundation it seems to stand upon.

The contest for monarchy and succession between the houses of York and Lancaster laid England in a scene of blood for many years. Twelve pitched battles besides skirmishes and sieges were fought between Henry and Edward. Twice was Henry

¹ Of 1688.

prisoner to Edward, who in his turn was prisoner to Henry. And so uncertain is the fate of war and the temper of a nation, when nothing but personal matters are the ground of a quarrel, that Henry was taken in triumph from a prison to a palace, and Edward obliged to fly from a palace to a foreign land; yet, as sudden transitions of temper are seldom lasting, Henry in his turn was driven from the throne, and Edward recalled to succeed him. The parliament always following the strongest side.

This contest began in the reign of Henry the Sixth, and was not entirely extinguished till Henry the Seventh, in whom the families were united. Including a period of 67 years, *viz.*, from 1422 to 1489.

In short, monarchy and succession have laid (not this or that kingdom only) but the world in blood and ashes. 'Tis a form of government which the word of God bears testimony against, and blood will attend it.

If we inquire into the business of a King, we shall find that in some countries they may have none; and after sauntering away their lives without pleasure to themselves or advantage to the nation, withdraw from the scene, and leave their successors to tread the same idle round. In absolute monarchies the whole weight of business civil and military lies on the King; the children of Israel in their request for a king urged this plea, "that he may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles." But in countries where he is neither a Judge nor a General, as in England, a man would be puzzled to know what *is* his business.

The nearer any government approaches to a Republic, the less business there is for a King. It is somewhat difficult to find a proper name for the government of England. Sir William Meredith calls it a Republic; but in its present state it is unworthy of the name, because the corrupt influence of the Crown, by having all the places in its disposal, hath so effectually swallowed up the power, and eaten out the virtue of the House of Commons (the Republican part in the constitution), that the government of England is nearly as monarchical as that of France or Spain. Men fall out with names without understanding them. For 'tis the Republican and not the Monarchical part of the constitution of England which English-

men glory in, *viz.*, the liberty of choosing an House of Commons from out of their own body—and it is easy to see that when Republican virtues fail, slavery ensues. Why is the constitution of England sickly, but because monarchy hath poisoned the Republic; the Crown hath engrossed the Commons.

In England a King hath little more to do than to make war and give away places; which, in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business indeed for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshiped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived.

III. THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS

In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense: and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves: that he will put on, or rather that he will not put off, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs; but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms as the last resource decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the King, and the Continent has accepted the challenge.

It hath been reported of the late Mr. Pelham (who though an able minister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the House of Commons on the score that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied, "*they will last my time.*" Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the Colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The Sun never shined on a cause of greater

worth. 'Tis not the affair of a City, a County, a Province, or a Kingdom; but of a Continent—of at least one eighth part of the habitable Globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed-time of Continental union, faith, and honor. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound would enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new era for politics is struck—a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, *etc.*, prior to the nineteenth of April, *i. e.*, to the commencement of hostilities,¹ are like the almanacs of the last year; which though proper then, are superseded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, *viz.*, a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it hath so far happened that the first hath failed, and the second hath withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and inquire into some of the many material injuries which these Colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with and dependent on Great Britain. To examine that connection and dependence, on the principles of nature and common sense, to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependent.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America has flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert that because a child has thrived upon

milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true; for I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power taken any notice of her. The commerce by which she hath enriched herself are the necessities of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is true, and defended the Continent at our expense as well as her own, is admitted; and she would have defended Turkey from the same motive, *viz.*, for the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas! we have been long led away by ancient prejudices and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering that her motive was *interest* not *attachment*; and that she did not protect us from *our enemies* on *our account*; but from *her enemies* on *her own account*, from those who had no quarrel with us on any *other account*, and who will always be our enemies on the *same account*. Let Britain waive her pretensions to the Continent, or the Continent throw off the dependence, and we should be at peace with France and Spain, were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover last war ought to warn us against connections.

It hath lately been asserted in parliament that the Colonies have no relation to each other but through the Parent Country, *i. e.*, that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister Colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very roundabout way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enmity—or enemyship, if I may so call it. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be, our enemies as *Americans*, but as our being the *subjects of Great Britain*.

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore, the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase

¹ In 1775, at Lexington.

parent or *mother country* hath been jesuitically adopted by the King and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new World hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from *every part* of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount the force of local prejudices, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the World. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of *neighbor*; if he meet him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of *townsman*; if he travel out of the county and meet him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and town, and calls him *countryman*, *i. e.*, *countyman*: but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France, or any other part of *Europe*, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of *Englishmen*. And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are *countrymen*; for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller ones; distinctions too limited for Continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province [Pennsylvania], are of English descent. Wherefore, I reprobate the phrase of Parent or Mother Country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow, and ungenerous.

But, admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title: and to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the Colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world: But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean any thing; for this continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a free port. Her trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.¹

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages which we sustain by that connection are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance: because, any submission to, or dependence on, Great Britain, tends directly to involve this Continent in European wars and quarrels, and set us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is

¹ Paine and Jefferson were not only friends, but very similar to each other in much of their political thought. Here, in a paragraph, is the key to the foreign policy which Jefferson later sought to pursue. And everything in this and the immediately following paragraphs Jefferson not only might have said, but did later say.

our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do while, by her dependence on Britain, she is made the makeweight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with Kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, *because of her connection with Britain*. The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because neutrality in that case would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Everything that is right or reasonable pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America is a strong and natural proof that the authority of the one over the other was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the Continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled increases the force of it. The Reformation was preceded by the discovery of America: As if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this continent is a form of government which, sooner or later, must have an end: And a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction that what he calls "the present constitution" is merely temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that this government is not sufficiently lasting to insure any thing which we may bequeath to posterity: And by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hand, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving un-

necessary offense, yet I am inclined to believe that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation may be included within the following descriptions:

Interested men, who are not to be trusted, weak men who *cannot* see, prejudiced men who will not see, and a certain set of moderate men who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this Continent than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of present sorrow; the evil is not sufficiently brought to their doors to make them feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let our imaginations transport us a few moments to Boston; that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us for ever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust. The inhabitants of that unfortunate city who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city, and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it, in their present situation they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief they would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offenses of Great Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, *Come, come, we shall be friends again for all this*. But examine the passions and feelings of mankind: bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me whether you can hereafter love, honor, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity. Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honor, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, hath your house been burned? Hath your prop-

erty been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a syco-phant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. 'Tis not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she doth not conquer herself by delay and timidity. The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected the whole Continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man doth not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

'Tis repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose that this Continent can long remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain doth not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan, short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is *now* a fallacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connection, and art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, "never can true reconcilment grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and hath tended to convince us that nothing flatters vanity or confirms obstinacy in Kings more than repeated petitioning—and nothing hath

contributed more than that very measure to make the Kings of Europe absolute. Witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say they will never attempt it again is idle and visionary; we thought so at the repeal of the stamp act, yet a year or two undeceived us; as well may we suppose that nations which have been once defeated will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, 'tis not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: the business of it will soon be too weighty and intricate to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which, when obtained, requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness. There was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands not capable of protecting themselves are the proper objects for government¹ to take under their care; but there is something absurd in supposing a Continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet; and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverse the common order of nature, it is evident that they belong to different systems. England to Europe: America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this Continent to be so; that everything short of *that* is mere patchwork, that it can afford no lasting felicity—that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time when a little more, a little further, would have rendered this Continent the glory of the earth.

¹ In some later editions "kingdoms." (Conway.)

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the Continent, or any ways equal to the expense of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object contended for ought always to bear some just proportion to the expense. The removal of North, or the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade was an inconvenience, which would have sufficiently balanced the repeal of all the acts complained of, had such repeals been obtained; but if the whole Continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, 'tis scarcely worth our while to fight against a contemptible ministry only. Dearly, dearly do we pay for the repeal of the acts, if that is all we fight for; for, in a just estimation, 'tis as great a folly to pay a Bunker-hill price for law as for land. As I have always considered the independency of this continent as an event which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the Continent to maturity, the event cannot be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth the while to have disputed a matter which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest: otherwise it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for a reconciliation than myself, before the fatal nineteenth of April, 1775, but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened, sullen-tempered Pharaoh of England for ever; and disdain the wretch, that with the pretended title of FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the Continent. And that for several reasons.

First. The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the King, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this Continent. And as he hath shown himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power, is he, or is he not, a proper person to

say to these colonies, *You shall make no laws but what I please!*? And is there any inhabitant of America so ignorant as not to know that, according to what is called the *present constitution*, this Continent can make no laws but what the king gives leave to; and is there any man so unwise as not to see that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here but such as suits *his* purpose? We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up (as it is called) can there be any doubt, but the whole power of the crown will be exerted to keep this continent as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarreling, or ridiculously petitioning. We are already greater than the King wishes us to be, and will he not hereafter endeavor to make us less? To bring the matter to one point, Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says *No*, to this question, is an Independent, for independency means no more than this, whether we shall make our own laws, or, whether the King, the greatest enemy this continent hath, or can have, shall tell us *there shall be no laws but such as I like*.

But the King, you will say, has a negative in England; the people there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, it is something very ridiculous that a youth of twenty-one (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people older and wiser than himself, "I forbid this or that act of yours to be law." But in this place I decline this sort of reply, though I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it, and only answer that England being the King's residence, and America not so, makes quite another case. The King's negative here is ten times more dangerous and fatal than it can be in England; for there he will scarcely refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defense as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics. England consults the good of this country no further than it answers her own purpose. Wherefore, her own interest leads her to suppress the growth

of ours in every case which doth not promote her advantage, or in the least interferes with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name: And in order to show that reconciliation now is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, *that it would be policy in the King at this time to repeal the acts, for the sake of reinstating himself in the government of the provinces;* In order that HE MAY ACCOMPLISH BY CRAFT AND SUBTLETY, IN THE LONG RUN, WHAT HE CANNOT DO BY FORCE AND VIOLENCE IN THE SHORT ONE. Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

Secondly. That as even the best terms which we can expect to obtain can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the Colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things in the interim will be unsettled and unpromising. Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval to dispose of their effects, and quit the Continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments is, that nothing but independence, *i. e.*, a Continental form of government, can keep the peace of the Continent and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable that it will be followed by a revolt some where or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity; thousands more will probably suffer the same fate. Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they now possess is liberty; what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and, having nothing more to lose, they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the Colonies towards a British government will be like that of a youth who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about her: And a government which cannot preserve the peace is no government

at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an independence, fearing that it would produce civil wars: It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here; for there is ten times more to dread from a patched up connection than from independence. I make the sufferer's case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as a man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The Colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to Continental government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretense for his fears, on any other grounds, than such as are truly childish and ridiculous, *viz.*, that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority; perfect equality affords no temptation. The Republics of Europe are all (and we may say always) in peace. Holland and Switzerland are without wars, foreign or domestic: Monarchical governments, it is true, are never long at rest: the crown itself is a temptation to enterprising ruffians at home; and that degree of pride and insolence ever attendant on regal authority, swells into a rupture with foreign powers in instances where a republican government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negotiate the mistake.

If there is any true cause of fear respecting independence, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Men do not see their way out. Wherefore, as an opening into that business, I offer the following hints; at the same time modestly affirming that I have no other opinion of them myself, than that they may be the means of giving rise to something better. Could the straggling thoughts of individuals be collected, they would frequently form materials for wise and able men to improve into useful matter.

Let the assemblies be annual, with a president only. The representation more equal, their business wholly domestic, and subject to the authority of a Continental Congress.

Let each Colony be divided into six, eight, or ten, convenient districts, each district to send a proper number of Delegates to Congress, so that each Colony send at least thirty. The whole number in Congress will be at least 390. Each congress to sit and to choose a President by the following method. When the Delegates are met, let a Colony be taken from the whole thirteen Colonies by lot, after which let the Congress choose (by ballot) a president from out of the Delegates of that Province. In the next Congress, let a Colony be taken by lot from twelve only, omitting that Colony from which the president was taken in the former Congress, and so proceeding on till the whole thirteen shall have had their proper rotation. And in order that nothing may pass into a law but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three-fifths of the Congress to be called a majority. He that will promote discord, under a government so equally formed as this, would have joined Lucifer in his revolt.

But as there is a peculiar delicacy from whom, or in what manner, this business must first arise, and as it seems most agreeable and consistent that it should come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is, between the Congress and the People, let a Continental Conference be held in the following manner, and for the following purpose:

A Committee of twenty-six members of congress, *viz.*, Two for each Colony. Two Members from each House of Assembly, or Provincial Convention; and five Representatives of the people at large, to be chosen in the capital city or town of each Province, for, and in behalf of the whole Province, by as many qualified voters as shall think proper to attend from all parts of the Province for that purpose; or, if more convenient, the Representatives may be chosen in two or three of the most populous parts thereof. In this conference, thus assembled, will be united the two grand principles of business, *knowledge* and *power*. The Members of Congress, Assemblies, or Conventions, by having had experience in national concerns,

will be able and useful counselors, and the whole, being empowered by the people, will have a truly legal authority.

The conferring members being met, let their business be to frame a Continental Charter, or Charter of the United Colonies (answering to what is called the Magna Charta of England), fixing the number and manner of choosing Members of Congress, Members of Assembly, with their date of sitting; and drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between them: Always remembering, that our strength is Continental, not Provincial. Securing freedom and property to all men, and above all things, the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; with such other matter as it is necessary for a charter to contain. Immediately after which, the said conference to dissolve, and the bodies which shall be chosen conformable to the said charter, to be the Legislators and Governors of this Continent for the time being: Whose peace and happiness, may GOD preserve. AMEN.

Should any body of men be hereafter delegated for this or some similar purpose. I offer them the following extracts from that wise observer on Governments, Dragonetti. "The science," says he, "of the Politician consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expense." (Dragonetti on *Virtues and Reward*.)

But where, say some, is the King of America? I'll tell you, friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind like the Royal Brute of Great Britain.¹ Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honors, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the Charter; let it be brought forth placed on the Divine Law, the Word of God; let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know, that so far

¹ *Common Sense* was published anonymously because, as Paine said in a prefatory note to the third edition, "the Object for Attention is the *Doctrine itself*, not the *Man*." At first it was commonly thought that Franklin was the author, and a lady reproached him for this reference to the British sovereign, to which Franklin replied that had he been indeed the author he would not so have insulted the brute creation.

as we approve of monarchy, that in America the law is king. For as in absolute governments the King is law, so in free countries the law ought to be king; and there ought to be no other. But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the Crown at the conclusion of the ceremony be demolished, and scattered among the people whose right it is.

A government of our own is our natural right: and when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced that it is infinitely wiser and safer to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some Massanello¹ may hereafter arise, who, laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and the discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, finally sweep away the liberties of the Continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news, the fatal business might be done; and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the Conqueror. Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do: ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government. There are thousands and tens of thousands, who would think it glorious to expel from the Continent that barbarous and hellish power, which hath stirred up the Indians and the Negroes to destroy us; the cruelty hath a double guilt, it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them.

¹ Thomas Anello, otherwise Massanello, a fisherman of Naples, who after spiriting up his countrymen in the public market place against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolt, and in the space of a day became King. (Paine's note.)

To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections wounded through a thousand pores instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them; and can there be any reason to hope, that as the relationship expires, the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever?

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is past? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence? neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord now is broken, the people of England are presenting addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the Continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes. They are the Guardians of his Image in our hearts. They distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve, and justice be extirpated from the earth, or have only a casual existence, were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber and the murderer would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our tempers sustain provoke us into justice.

O! ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the Globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.²

² There is a fourth section, entitled *Of the Present Ability of America, with some Miscellaneous Reflections*, which is here omitted. Paine also added an Appendix to later editions.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743-1826)

Jefferson was born on 13 April, 1743, at his father's farm-house on the north bank of the Rivanna a few miles from Charlottesville, Virginia. His father died when he was fourteen years old, and left him, with a fair fortune, virtually free to determine his own course in life. He proceeded with the sound education which his father had designed him to have, and, after a few more years of work with a good classical scholar, entered William and Mary College (1760). Williamsburg was then the capital city, or rather village, of Virginia, and offered many opportunities for distraction and dissipation, but Jefferson was fortunately thrown with a few cultured and talented men, who did much to make him a close and capable student, devoted to the reading and collecting of books. In later life he owned what was probably the largest and most valuable private library then in America;—about 2,000 volumes of which (rather less than one-fifth) may now be seen in the Library of Congress. After two years at the College, Jefferson proceeded to study the law under George Wythe, and was admitted to the bar in 1767. He found himself almost at once with a good practice, which kept him busy until, as he says, "the Revolution shut up the Courts of Justice." From the beginning of active trouble with England he assumed a position of prominence in Virginia as an advocate of the rights of the colonists, and he was made a delegate to the Second Continental Congress, where his ability was at once recognized and his influence strongly felt. He was again sent to the following session, in the course of which it fell to him to draft the Declaration of Independence. In the fall of 1776 he withdrew from the Congress to become a member of the Virginia House of Representatives, where he succeeded in reforming the legal procedure and laws of the state, and in abolishing primogeniture. He was unsuccessful in his attempt to provide a system of public education and a public library, and in his effort to emancipate the slaves, but he succeeded in modifying the state-support of the Episcopal Church, and so paved the way for disestablishment in 1779, and for the adoption of his bill for complete religious freedom in 1786. This bill—the first of its kind ever enacted by a popular legislature—would of itself suffice to give Jefferson immortality in the annals of human liberty.

From June, 1779, until June, 1781, Jefferson was the war-time Governor of Virginia. During the remainder of that year and in the following year he wrote his only book, *Notes on Virginia* (first printed in Paris, 1784). In September, 1782, he was saddened by the death of his wife (he had married Martha Skelton in 1772). During the months of her illness he had been unwilling to leave her, and had refused several urgent demands upon him for public service. But now he was, perhaps, anxious to be busy, and he soon became a member of the Congress. In 1784 he was appointed a Minister Plenipotentiary to help Franklin and John Adams effect commercial agreements with European nations. The mission was on the whole unsuccessful, but Jefferson remained in Paris (in 1785 succeeding Franklin as Minister) until the fall of 1789, and so witnessed the beginnings of the French Revolution. Immediately upon his arrival in America, Washington appointed him Secretary of State—a post which he held with an increasing sense of difficulty as party conflicts began to develop, and which he resigned at the end of four years. From 1797 until 1801 he was Vice President of the United States, and from 1801 until 1809 President. Then from his retirement at Monticello he observed the administrations of two close friends and fellow-Republicans who followed him in the presidency, Madison (1809-1817) and Monroe (1817-1825). During these years his vast correspondence, the entertainment of an unceasing stream of visitors, and the management of his estates occupied the greater part of his time, but he also found it possible to revive his long-cherished plan of founding a university for Virginia, and succeeded in establishing the institution while there was yet time for him to impress his ideas and standards upon it during its earliest years. This cost him much effort, much diplomatic negotiation, and some money, the last of which he could ill afford, as he was embarrassed by heavy debts in the last years of his life. He died on 4 July, 1826.

John Adams, who, by a strange coincidence, died a few hours later on the same day, had once remarked upon "the curious felicity of expression" which distinguished Jefferson's writings. His praise was just, though its justice has not always been recognized. For this there are reasons both good and bad—too many to be summarized here. But this may be said: The literary excellence of such pieces as the Declaration and the *Character of Washington* cannot be disputed. They need no bolstering praise, and they make one feel that there must be fit companion-pieces concealed in the

voluminous mass of their author's writings. But if a search be undertaken it is likely to bring disappointment. It will meet with its reward, but one purchased not without difficulty. In this Jefferson's writings are curiously like the man himself, as is aptly shown by the impression of him which Senator Maclay recorded after his appearance in 1790 before a committee of the Senate: "Jefferson is a slender man; has rather the air of stiffness in his manner. His clothes seem too small for him. He sits in a lounging manner, on one hip commonly, and with one of his shoulders elevated much above the other. His face has a sunny aspect. His whole figure has a loose, shackling air. He had a rambling, vacant look, and nothing of that firm collected deportment which I expected would dignify the presence of a secretary or minister. I looked for gravity, but a laxity of manner seemed shed about him. He spoke almost without ceasing; but even his discourse partook of his personal demeanor. It was loose and rambling; and yet he scattered information wherever he went, and some even brilliant sentiments sparkled from him."

The truth is that Jefferson rose to greatness as a man of letters in only a very few of his compositions, and yet that hints of his powers are scattered widely in them. Moreover, the man himself and his ideas are of the utmost significance in our intellectual and literary history, and the labor spent in coming to know both is well spent. In his political opinions Jefferson was a follower of English thinkers of the seventeenth century. Probably he learned something from James Harrington's *Oceana*; certainly he learned much from Algernon Sydney and John Locke. He deeply hated tyranny and all the outward symbols of power; he was confident of the fundamental integrity of average human nature, and felt that at least the great majority of men would always think and act reasonably if only they were sufficiently trusted. Like Franklin and other contemporaries, he was a believer in the progress of the race, and confessed that he "liked the dreams of the future better than the history of the past." Yet he was no doctrinaire, but showed himself a practical statesman in his readiness to compromise with abstract principle whenever the concrete situations before him made that demand.

THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA¹

WHEN, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident:

¹ On 11 June, 1776, the Continental Congress appointed Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston a committee to draft a declaration of the colonies' independence. The other members asked Jefferson to undertake the task, and he consented. The resulting Declaration is here printed in the form in which the committee submitted it to the Congress—i.e., substantially as Jefferson wrote it, but embodying two small verbal changes made by Adams and five made by Franklin. In addition, it embodies nineteen changes (including three new paragraphs) made by Jefferson in revising his first rough draft. It is probable, though not certain, that Adams and Franklin suggested some of these changes. The portions of Jefferson's Declaration which the Congress struck out are printed in *italic letters*, and substituted words inserted by the Congress are given in footnotes. Thus the Declaration as finally adopted can be read by omitting all italicized words and including those in the footnotes.

that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with *inherent and inalienable*² rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, *begun at a distinguished period and pursuing invariably the same object*, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies,

² certain unalienable.

and such is now the necessity which constrains them to *expunge*¹ their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of *unremitting*² injuries and usurpations, *among which appears no solitary fact to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, but all have*³ in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world, *for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood.*

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has *neglected utterly*⁴ to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature; a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly *and continually* for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has *suffered*⁵ the administration of justice *totally to cease in some of these states*,⁶ refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made *our* judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices *by a self-assumed power*, and sent hither swarms of new officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us in times of peace standing armies *and ships of war*, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us; for protecting them by a mock-trial from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states; for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world; for imposing taxes on us without our consent; for depriving us⁷ of the benefits of trial by jury; for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses; for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these *states*⁸; for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments; for suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, *withdrawing his governors, and declaring us out of his allegiance and protection*.⁹

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

¹ alter.

² repeated.

³ having.

⁴ utterly neglected.

⁵ obstructed.

⁶ by.

⁷ in many cases.

⁸ colonies.

⁹ by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy¹ unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained *others*² taken captives on the high seas to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has³ endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions of existence.

He has incited treasonable insurrections of our fellow-citizens, with the allurements of forfeiture and confiscation of property.

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people upon whom he also obtruded them; thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by

every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a⁴ people *who mean to be free. Future ages will scarcely believe that the hardiness of one man adventured, within the short compass of twelve years only, to build a foundation so broad and undisguised for tyranny over a people fostered and fixed in principles of freedom.*

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend a⁵ jurisdiction over *these our states*.⁶ We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here, *no one of which could warrant so strange a pretension; that these were effected at the expense of our own blood and treasure, unassisted by the wealth or the strength of Great Britain; that in constituting indeed our several forms of government, we had adopted one common king, thereby laying a foundation for perpetual league and amity with them; but that submission to their parliament was no part of our constitution, nor ever in idea, if history may be credited; and we*⁷ appealed to their native justice and magnanimity *as well as to*⁸ the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which *were likely to*⁹ interrupt our connection¹⁰ and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity, and when occasions have been given them, by the regular course of their laws, of removing from their councils the disturbers of our harmony, they have, by their free election, re-established them in power. At this very time, too, they are permitting their chief magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common blood, but Scotch and foreign mercenaries to invade and destroy us. These facts have given the last stab to agonizing affection, and manly spirit bids us to renounce for ever these unfeeling brethren. We must endeavor to forget our former love for them and to hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends. We might have been a free and a great people together; but a communication of grandeur and of

¹ scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally.

² our fellow-citizens. (*This paragraph is printed in the position to which the Congress shifted it. In Jefferson's draft it stands below the second following paragraph, beginning, He has incited treasonable insurrections, etc.*)

³ excited domestic insurrections amongst us and has.

⁴ free.

⁵ an unwarrantable.

⁶ us.

⁷ have.

⁸ and we have conjured them by.

⁹ would inevitably.

¹⁰ connections.

freedom, it seems, is below their dignity. Be it so, since they will have it. The road to happiness and to glory is open to us too. We will climb it apart from them, and¹ acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our eternal separation.²

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled,³ do, in the name, and by authority of the good people of these states, *reject and renounce all allegiance and subjection to the Kings of Great Britain and all others who may hereafter claim by, through, or under them; we utterly dissolve all political connection which may heretofore have subsisted between us and the people or Parliament of Great Britain; and, finally, we do assert and declare these colonies to be free and independent States,⁴ and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration,⁵ we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.*

FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS⁶

Friends and Fellow-Citizens:

Called upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow-citizens which is here assembled to express my grateful thanks for the favor

¹ We must, therefore,

² and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

³ appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions.

⁴ colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are and of right ought to be free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown; and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved;

⁵ with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence.

⁶ Delivered 4 March, 1801. An extraordinarily bitter conflict of opinion preceded Jefferson's presidency, and his election was looked upon by himself and his followers as a veritable, though fortunately peaceful, revolution—a triumph of simple republicanism over monarchical ambition. It has been remarked that the fundamental nature of the change which had taken place would scarcely be guessed by the uninstructed reader of this *Address*. Jefferson did not re-

veal his full mind, nor deliver an exultant manifesto, because it was now his purpose, as the unquestioned victor, not only to treat his opponents tolerantly, but also to try to win the whole country to united support of the Republic.

with which they have been pleased to look towards me, to declare a sincere consciousness that the task is above my talents, and that I approach it with those anxious and awful presentiments which the greatness of the charge, and the weakness of my powers, so justly inspire. A rising nation, spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye; when I contemplate these transcendent objects, and see the honor, the happiness, and the hopes of this beloved country committed to the issue and the auspices of this day, I shrink from the contemplation, and humble myself before the magnitude of the undertaking. Utterly, indeed, should I despair, did not the presence of many whom I here see, remind me that, in the other high authorities provided by our Constitution, I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue, and of zeal, on which to rely under all difficulties. To you, then, gentlemen, who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation, and to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance and support which may enable us to steer with safety the vessel in which we are all embarked, amidst the conflicting elements of a troubled world.

During the contest of opinion through which we have passed, the animation of discussions and of exertions has sometimes worn an aspect which might impose on strangers unused to think freely, and to speak and to write what they think; but this being now decided by the voice of the nation, announced according to the rules of the Constitution, all will of course arrange themselves under the will of the law, and unite in common efforts for the common good. All too will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect, and to violate

veal his full mind, nor deliver an exultant manifesto, because it was now his purpose, as the unquestioned victor, not only to treat his opponents tolerantly, but also to try to win the whole country to united support of the Republic.

which would be oppression. Let us, then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind, let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty, and even life itself, are but dreary things. And let us reflect that, having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little, if we countenance a political intolerance, as despotic as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions. During the throes and convulsions of the ancient world,¹ during the agonized spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant and peaceful shore; that this should be felt and feared by some, and less by others, and should divide opinions as to measures of safety; but every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who wish to dissolve this Union, or to change its Republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it. I know, indeed, that some honest men fear that a Republican government cannot be strong; that this government is not strong enough. But would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm, on the theoretic and visionary fear that this government, the world's best hope, may, by possibility, want energy to preserve itself? I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth. I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet the invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then be trusted with the government of others? Or, have we found angels in the form of kings, to govern him? Let history answer this question.

Let us, then, with courage and confidence, pursue our own Federal and Republican principles; our attachment to union and representative government. Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one-quarter of the globe; too high-minded to endure the degradations of the others; possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the thousandth and thousandth generation; entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisitions of our own industry, to honor and confidence from our fellow-citizens, resulting not from birth, but from our actions and our sense of them; enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed and practiced in various forms, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man; acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which, by all its dispensations, proves that it delights in the happiness of man here, and his greater happiness hereafter; with all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and prosperous nation? Still one thing more, fellow-citizens, a wise and frugal government which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them free to regulate their own pursuit of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government; and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.

About to enter, fellow-citizens, on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principles of this government, and consequently those which ought to shape its administration. I will compress them within the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle, but not all its limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti-Republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in

¹ *I.e.*, during the French Revolution.

its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet-anchor of our peace at home, and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people, a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the sword of revolution where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of republics, from which [there] is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace, and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid; the diffusion of information, and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of the public reason; freedom of religion; freedom of the press; and freedom of person, under the protection of the *habeas corpus*; and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages, and blood of our heroes, have been devoted to their attainment; they should be the creed of our political faith, the text of civic instruction, the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them, in moments of error or of alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.

I repair, then, fellow-citizens, to the post you have assigned me. With experience enough in subordinate stations to know the difficulties of this, the greatest of all, I have learned to expect that it will rarely fall to the lot of imperfect man to retire from this station with the reputation and the favor which bring him into it. Without pretensions to that high confidence you reposed in our first and greatest revolutionary character, whose pre-eminent services had entitled him to the first place in his country's love, and had destined for him the fairest page in the volume of faithful history, I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness and effect to the legal administration of your

affairs. I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment. When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional; and your support against the errors of others, who may condemn what they would not, if seen in all its parts. The approbation implied by your suffrage is a great consolation to me for the past; and my future solicitude will be to retain the good opinion of those who have bestowed it in advance, to conciliate that of others, by doing them all the good in my power, and to be instrumental to the happiness and freedom of all.

Relying, then, on the patronage of your good-will, I advance with obedience to the work, ready to retire from it whenever you become sensible how much better choice it is in your power to make. And may that Infinite Power which rules the destinies of the universe lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace and prosperity.

CHARACTER OF WASHINGTON¹

You say that in taking General Washington on your shoulders, to bear him harmless through the federal coalition, you encounter a perilous topic. I do not think so. You have given the genuine history of the course of his mind through the trying scenes in which it was engaged, and of the seductions by which it was deceived, but not depraved. I think I knew General Washington intimately and thoroughly; and were I called on to delineate his character, it should be in terms like these.

His mind was great and powerful, without being of the very first order; his penetration

¹ From a letter written to Walter Jones, 2 January, 1814. Jones had written a paper deploring the low condition of newspapers and attributing it to violent and malignant party spirit. He apparently included in his paper some mention of Washington as an instance of a man deceived by unscrupulous federalist machinations, but fundamentally true to republican principles and loyal to the Constitution. And he regarded this as "perilous" because he wondered if Washington's last years did not prove that he had become a convinced anti-republican—no longer a national leader, but the head of a party opposed to the Constitution.

strong, though not so acute as that of a Newton, Bacon, or Locke; and as far as he saw, no judgment was ever sounder. It was slow in operation, being little aided by invention or imagination, but sure in conclusion. Hence the common remark of his officers, of the advantage he derived from councils of war, where, hearing all suggestions, he selected whatever was best; and certainly no General ever planned his battles more judiciously. But if deranged during the course of the action, if any member of his plan was dislocated by sudden circumstances, he was slow in re-adjustment. The consequence was that he often failed in the field, and rarely against an enemy in station, as at Boston and York. He was incapable of fear, meeting personal dangers with the calmest unconcern. Perhaps the strongest feature in his character was prudence, never acting until every circumstance, every consideration, was maturely weighed; refraining if he saw a doubt, but, when once decided, going through with his purpose, whatever obstacles opposed. His integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known, no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed, in every sense of the words, a wise, a good, and a great man. His temper was naturally high toned; but reflection and resolution had obtained a firm and habitual ascendancy over it. If ever, however, it broke its bonds, he was most tremendous in his wrath. In his expenses he was honorable, but exact; liberal in contributions to whatever promised utility; but frowning and unyielding on all visionary projects and all unworthy calls on his charity. His heart was not warm in its affections; but he exactly calculated every man's value, and gave him a solid esteem proportioned to it. His person, you know, was fine, his stature exactly what one would wish, his deportment easy, erect, and noble; the best horseman of his age, and the most graceful figure that could be seen on horseback. Although in the circle of his friends, where he might be unreserved with safety, he took a free share in conversation, his colloquial talents were not above mediocrity, possessing neither copiousness of ideas, nor fluency of words. In public, when called on for a sudden

opinion, he was unready, short, and embarrassed. Yet he wrote readily, rather diffusely, in an easy and correct style. This he had acquired by conversation with the world, for his education was merely reading, writing, and common arithmetic, to which he added surveying at a later day. His time was employed in action chiefly, reading little, and that only in agriculture and English history. His correspondence became necessarily extensive, and, with journalizing his agricultural proceedings, occupied most of his leisure hours within doors. On the whole, his character was, in its mass, perfect, in nothing bad, in few points indifferent; and it may truly be said that never did nature and fortune combine more perfectly to make a man great, and to place him in the same constellation with whatever worthies have merited from man an everlasting remembrance. For his was the singular destiny and merit of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war, for the establishment of its independence; of conducting its councils through the birth of a government, new in its forms and principles, until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly train; and of scrupulously obeying the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military, of which the history of the world furnishes no other example.

How, then, can it be perilous for you to take such a man on your shoulders? I am satisfied the great body of republicans think of him as I do. We were, indeed, dissatisfied with him on his ratification of the British treaty. But this was short-lived. We knew his honesty, the wiles with which he was encompassed, and that age had already begun to relax the firmness of his purposes; and I am convinced he is more deeply seated in the love and gratitude of the republicans than in the Pharisaical homage of the federal monarchists. For he was no monarchist from preference of his judgment. The soundness of that gave him correct views of the rights of man, and his severe justice devoted him to them. He has often declared to me that he considered our new constitution as an experiment on the practicability of republican government, and with what dose of liberty man could be trusted for his own good; that he was determined

the experiment should have a fair trial, and would lose the last drop of his blood in support of it. And these declarations he repeated to me the oftener and more pointedly, because he knew my suspicions of Colonel Hamilton's views, and probably had heard from him the same declarations which I had, to wit, "that the British constitution, with its unequal representation, corruption and other existing abuses, was the most perfect government which had ever been established on earth, and that a reformation of those abuses would make it an impracticable government." I do believe that General Washington had not a firm confidence in the durability of our government. He was naturally distrustful of men, and inclined to gloomy apprehensions; and I was ever persuaded that a belief that we must at length end in something like a British constitution, had some weight in his adoption of the ceremonies of levees, birthdays, pompous meetings with Congress, and other forms of the same character, calculated to prepare us gradually for a change which he believed possible, and to let it come on with as little shock as might be to the public mind.

These are my opinions of General Washington, which I would vouch at the judgment-seat of God, having been formed on an acquaintance of thirty years. I served with him in the Virginia legislature from 1769 to the Revolutionary war, and again, a short time in Congress, until he left us to take command of the army. During the war and after it we corresponded occasionally, and in the four years of my continuance in the office of Secretary of State our intercourse was daily, confidential, and cordial. After I retired from that office, great and malignant pains were taken by our federal monarchists, and not entirely without effect, to make him view me as a theorist, holding French principles of government, which would lead infallibly to licentiousness and anarchy. And to this he listened the more easily, from my known disapprobation of the British treaty. I never saw him afterwards, or these malignant insinuations should have been dissipated before his just judgment, as mists before the sun. I felt on his death, with my countrymen, that "verily a great man hath fallen this day in Israel."

ALEXANDER HAMILTON (1757-1804)

Hamilton was born on 11 January, 1757, on the island of Nevis, British West Indies. His father was a Scotch merchant, his mother probably a Frenchwoman. Their union is thought to have been informal, and the father soon disappeared, not to be heard from until many years later, when he wrote to his son from South America, and received money from him. The mother is said to have died while her child was still very young, and he was brought up by maternal relatives living on the island of Santa Cruz. Those relatives put him, at the age of twelve, in the employ of a merchant to earn his living. During the next four years he gave such evident signs of ability that friends raised a fund to enable him to go to America for a liberal education. In the fall of 1772 he arrived in Boston, and made his way to New Jersey to prepare himself for college. In the following year he sought to enter the college at Princeton, but—his plans being considered impracticable by President Witherspoon—he turned instead to King's (now Columbia) College in New York. The youth was precocious, self-confident, and ambitious. He wrote to a friend that he would willingly risk his life, though not his character, to exalt his station, and he added: "I wish there was a war!" The war was now approaching, and Hamilton, after some hesitation, made up his mind that the "sacred rights" of the colonists "are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of the Divinity itself, and can never be erased by mortal power." He threw aside his studies, spoke and wrote eloquently against British rule, and was soon welcomed by New Yorkers as an able and helpful patriot. In 1776 he joined the war as commander of a New York artillery company, and in the following year he was made a member of Washington's staff. It was a swift rise in the world, and he made the most of it by cultivating influential friends. In 1780 he consolidated it by marrying Elizabeth, daughter of the wealthy and socially secure General Philip Schuyler. Beyond doubt he cherished a true affection for his wife, though not one sufficiently constant to prevent infidelity, and not one which he had permitted himself to encourage without thought for his career.

Hamilton quitted the army immediately after the siege of Yorktown, and proceeded to study the law in New York. He was admitted to practice in 1782. His private work was soon interrupted, however, by appointment to office. He was made a receiver of taxes, then a delegate to the Continental Congress, then a member of the New York legislature, and, in 1787, a delegate to the Convention which framed the federal Constitution. Before this there had been signs that, following his establishment of his social position, he considered it safe to exhibit his imperious nature and his distrust of "the people." He was an admirer of the British form of government, and he now laid before the Convention a plan which would have insured a strong, centralized, aristocratic government for America. He proposed what was, in everything but name, a constitutional monarchy, under which the states would have tended practically to disappear; and in his advocacy of his plan he avowed his belief in hereditary kingship. The plan had no chance of success—even though by this time many delegates shared Hamilton's lack of faith in "the people"—and he had the good sense to accept the feeble approximation to his proposals upon which the Convention finally agreed. He signed the Constitution as the only practicable alternative to "anarchy and convulsion," though, it must be added, he also hoped it was not a permanent instrument, and hoped to be able to steer the new government towards his own ideal.

Meanwhile, however, he did more than sign the Constitution. He threw himself into the fight for its ratification, and, with James Madison (who, more nearly than anyone else, was the Constitution's author), wrote a series of brief essays which were a combined defense and explanation of the instrument. These essays, 85 in number, are known as *The Federalist*. They were published in New York newspapers in the winter of 1787-1788 (republished in two volumes, 1788—save for the last eight essays, which appeared in Vol. II before their newspaper publication). In New York the opposition to the new plan of government was specially bitter and well-organized, but it extended throughout the thirteen states, and *The Federalist* was read and was influential everywhere. It was so effective for its immediate purpose that it probably did more than all else attempted to bring about ratification; and, in addition, it has become recognized as the world's most important treatise on federal government. Moreover, it is soundly, at times even brilliantly, written, and it deserves the secure place it has been universally accorded in American literature. And for this high achievement credit is due chiefly to Hamilton who, for the time casting aside his own ideals, put all his energy and all his great

ability and clear-sighted discernment at the service of the common cause of order and security. Of the 85 essays Hamilton certainly wrote 51 (from which the four here reproduced are selected), Madison fourteen, and John Jay five. Hamilton and Madison jointly wrote three. The authorship of the remaining twelve cannot be conclusively determined, but rests between Hamilton and Madison, with the probabilities inclining towards Hamilton for the greater number of them.

Nor did Hamilton's services in the founding of the United States end with *The Federalist*, though his contributions to it constitute his most distinguished literary performance. Upon the election of Washington to the presidency, Hamilton was at once appointed Secretary of the Treasury (1789), and this post he held until January, 1795. His conduct of his office was characteristically high-handed, and the execution of his plans worked grave injustice to a multitude of poor people, but, nevertheless, he triumphantly performed the almost miraculous feat of quickly restoring the credit of the national government, and so of placing it from the start on a sound financial basis.

In 1798 Hamilton did all that he could to promote a war against France, believing, apparently, that thus an opportunity would be afforded to strengthen the national government, and hoping to vindicate his life-long conviction that he was a born military genius. His efforts for war were fortunately unsuccessful, as were likewise his efforts to control the national election of 1800. In 1804 he was mortally wounded in a duel with his political opponent, Aaron Burr, and died on 12 July.

From 1789 to the present day he has had his idolatrous followers who have exalted him as the greatest figure of his time. He has, indeed, proved an excellent subject for romantic biography, but his worshipers have done much to obscure his real character and have helped to bring on a reaction against their hero. Jefferson, who was violently abused by Hamilton, and who himself detested Hamilton's political principles, nevertheless described him as "of acute understanding, disinterested, honest and honorable in all private transactions, amiable in society, and duly valuing virtue in private life." And Hamilton was more than this: he was a brave soldier, a financial genius, a phenomenal worker, and a brilliant writer. But he was also determined upon winning personal glory, capable of using even those to whom he owed most as tools, fanatically self-confident and correspondingly contemptuous of all opposition, and unscrupulous in the execution of his aims.

THE FEDERALIST¹

XV. THE INSUFFICIENCY OF THE PRESENT CONFEDERATION TO PRESERVE THE UNION

To the People of the State of New York.

In the course of the preceding papers, I have endeavored, my fellow-citizens, to place before you, in a clear and convincing light, the importance of Union to your political safety and happiness. I have unfolded to you a complication of dangers to which you would be exposed, should you permit that sacred knot which binds the people of America together to be severed or dissolved by ambition or by avarice, by jealousy or by misrepresentation. In the sequel of the inquiry through which I propose to accompany you, the truths intended to be inculcated will receive further confirmation from facts and arguments hitherto unnoticed. If the road over which you will still have to pass should in some places appear to you tedious or irksome, you will recollect that you are in quest of informa-

tion on a subject the most momentous which can engage the attention of a free people, that the field through which you have to travel is in itself spacious, and that the difficulties of the journey have been unnecessarily increased by the mazes with which sophistry has beset the way. It will be my aim to remove the obstacles from your progress in as compendious a manner as it can be done, without sacrificing utility to dispatch.

In pursuance of the plan which I have laid down for the discussion of the subject, the point next in order to be examined is the "insufficiency of the present Confederation to the preservation of the Union." It may perhaps be asked what need there is of reasoning or proof to illustrate a position which is not either controverted or doubted, to which the understandings and feelings of all classes of men assent, and which in substance is admitted by the opponents as well as by the friends of the new Constitution. It must in truth be acknowledged that, however these may differ in other respects, they in general appear to harmonize in this sentiment, at least, that there are material imperfections in our national sys-

¹ All of the essays, regardless of authorship, were, when first published, signed "Publius."

tem, and that something is necessary to be done to rescue us from impending anarchy. The facts that support this opinion are no longer objects of speculation. They have forced themselves upon the sensibility of the people at large, and have at length extorted from those, whose mistaken policy has had the principal share in precipitating the extremity at which we are arrived, a reluctant confession of the reality of those defects in the scheme of our federal government, which have been long pointed out and regretted by the intelligent friends of the Union.

We may indeed with propriety be said to have reached almost the last stage of national humiliation. There is scarcely anything that can wound the pride or degrade the character of an independent nation which we do not experience. Are there engagements to the performance of which we are held by every tie respectable among men? These are the subjects of constant and unblushing violation. Do we owe debts to foreigners and to our own citizens contracted in a time of imminent peril for the preservation of our political existence? These remain without any proper or satisfactory provision for their discharge. Have we valuable territories and important posts in the possession of a foreign power which, by express stipulations, ought long since to have been surrendered? These are still retained, to the prejudice of our interests, not less than of our rights. Are we in a condition to resent or to repel the aggression? We have neither troops, nor treasury, nor government.¹ Are we even in a condition to remonstrate with dignity? The just imputations on our own faith, in respect to the same treaty, ought first to be removed. Are we entitled by nature and compact to a free participation in the navigation of the Mississippi? Spain excludes us from it. Is public credit an indispensable resource in time of public danger? We seem to have abandoned its cause as desperate and irretrievable. Is commerce of importance to national wealth? Ours is at the lowest point of declension. Is respectability in the eyes of foreign powers a safeguard against foreign encroachments? The

imbecility of our government even forbids them to treat with us. Our ambassadors abroad are the mere pageants of mimic sovereignty. Is a violent and unnatural decrease in the value of land a symptom of national distress? The price of improved land in most parts of the country is much lower than can be accounted for by the quantity of waste land at market, and can only be fully explained by that want of private and public confidence which are so alarmingly prevalent among all ranks, and which have a direct tendency to depreciate property of every kind. Is private credit the friend and patron of industry? That most useful kind which relates to borrowing and lending is reduced within the narrowest limits, and this still more from an opinion of insecurity than from the scarcity of money. To shorten an enumeration of particulars which can afford neither pleasure nor instruction, it may in general be demanded, what indication is there of national disorder, poverty, and insignificance that could befall a community so peculiarly blessed with natural advantages as we are, which does not form a part of the dark catalogue of our public misfortunes?

This is the melancholy situation to which we have been brought by those very maxims and councils which would now deter us from adopting the proposed Constitution; and which, not content with having conducted us to the brink of a precipice, seem resolved to plunge us into the abyss that awaits us below. Here, my countrymen, impelled by every motive that ought to influence an enlightened people, let us make a firm stand for our safety, our tranquillity, our dignity, our reputation. Let us at last break the fatal charm which has too long seduced us from the paths of felicity and prosperity.

It is true, as has been before observed, that facts, too stubborn to be resisted, have produced a species of general assent to the abstract proposition that there exist material defects in our national system; but the usefulness of the concession, on the part of the old adversaries of federal measures, is destroyed by a strenuous opposition to a remedy, upon the only principles that can give it a chance of success. While they admit that the government of the United States is destitute of energy, they contend

¹ I mean for the Union. (Hamilton's note.)

against conferring upon it those powers which are requisite to supply that energy. They seem still to aim at things repugnant and irreconcilable; at an augmentation of federal authority, without a diminution of State authority; at sovereignty in the Union, and complete independence in the members. They still, in fine, seem to cherish with blind devotion the political monster of an *imperium in imperio*.¹ This renders a full display of the principal defects of the Confederation necessary, in order to show that the evils we experience do not proceed from minute or partial imperfections, but from fundamental errors in the structure of the building, which cannot be amended otherwise than by an alteration in the first principles and main pillars of the fabric.

The great and radical vice in the construction of the existing Confederation is in the principle of LEGISLATION for STATES or GOVERNMENTS, in their CORPORATE or COLLECTIVE CAPACITIES, and as contradistinguished from the INDIVIDUALS of which they consist. Though this principle does not run through all the powers delegated to the Union, yet it pervades and governs those on which the efficacy of the rest depends. Except as to the rule of apportionment, the United States has an indefinite discretion to make requisitions for men and money; but they have no authority to raise either, by regulations extending to the individual citizens of America. The consequence of this is, that though in theory their resolutions concerning those objects are laws, constitutionally binding on the members of the Union, yet in practice they are mere recommendations which the States observe or disregard at their option.

It is a singular instance of the capriciousness of the human mind, that, after all the admonitions we have had from experience on this head, there should still be found men who object to the new Constitution for deviating from a principle which has been found the bane of the old, and which is in itself evidently incompatible with the idea of *government*; a principle, in short, which, if it is to be executed at all, must substitute the violent and sanguinary agency of the sword to the mild influence of the magistracy.

There is nothing absurd or impracticable in the idea of a league or alliance between independent nations for certain defined purposes precisely stated in a treaty regulating all the details of time, place, circumstance, and quantity; leaving nothing to future discretion; and depending for its execution on the good faith of the parties. Compacts of this kind exist among all civilized nations, subject to the usual vicissitudes of peace and war, of observance and non-observance, as the interests or passions of the contracting powers dictate. In the early part of the present century there was an epidemical rage in Europe for this species of compacts, from which the politicians of the times fondly hoped for benefits which were never realized. With a view to establishing the equilibrium of power and the peace of that part of the world, all the resources of negotiation were exhausted, and triple and quadruple alliances were formed; but they were scarcely formed before they were broken, giving an instructive but afflicting lesson to mankind, how little dependence is to be placed on treaties which have no other sanction than the obligations of good faith, and which oppose general considerations of peace and justice to the impulse of any immediate interest or passion.

If the particular States in this country are disposed to stand in a similar relation to each other, and to drop the project of a general *discretionary superintendence*, the scheme would indeed be pernicious, and would entail upon us all the mischiefs which have been enumerated under the first head; but it would have the merit of being, at least, consistent and practicable. Abandoning all views towards a confederate government, this would bring us to a simple alliance offensive and defensive; and would place us in a situation to be alternate friends and enemies of each other, as our mutual jealousies and rivalships, nourished by the intrigues of foreign nations, should prescribe to us.

But if we are unwilling to be placed in this perilous situation; if we still will adhere to the design of a national government, or, which is the same thing, of a superintending power, under the direction of a common council, we must resolve to incorporate into our plan those ingredients which may be

¹ A sovereignty within a sovereignty.

considered as forming the characteristic difference between a league and a government; we must extend the authority of the Union to the persons of the citizens—the only proper objects of government.

Government implies the power of making laws. It is essential to the idea of a law that it be attended with a sanction; or, in others words, a penalty or punishment for disobedience. If there be no penalty annexed to disobedience, the resolutions or commands which pretend to be laws will, in fact, amount to nothing more than advice or recommendation. This penalty, whatever it may be, can only be inflicted in two ways: by the agency of the courts and ministers of justice, or by military force; by the *coercion* of the magistracy, or by the *coercion* of arms. The first kind can evidently apply only to men; the last kind must of necessity be employed against bodies politic, or communities, or States. It is evident that there is no process of a court by which the observance of the laws can, in the last resort, be enforced. Sentences may be denounced against them for violations of their duty; but these sentences can only be carried into execution by the sword. In an association where the general authority is confined to the collective bodies of the communities that compose it, every breach of the laws must involve a state of war; and military execution must become the only instrument of civil obedience. Such a state of things can certainly not deserve the name of government, nor would any prudent man choose to commit his happiness to it.

There was a time when we were told that breaches, by the States, of the regulations of the federal authority were not to be expected; that a sense of common interest would preside over the conduct of the respective members, and would beget a full compliance with all the constitutional requisitions of the Union. This language, at the present day, would appear as wild as a great part of what we now hear from the same quarter will be thought, when we shall have received further lessons from that best oracle of wisdom, experience. It at all times betrayed an ignorance of the true springs by which human conduct is actuated, and belied the original inducements to the establishment of civil power. Why has government

been instituted at all? Because the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason and justice, without constraint. Has it been found that bodies of men act with more rectitude or greater disinterestedness than individuals? The contrary of this has been inferred by all accurate observers of the conduct of mankind; and the inference is founded upon obvious reasons. Regard to reputation has a less active influence, when the infamy of a bad action is to be divided among a number, than when it is to fall singly upon one. A spirit of faction, which is apt to mingle its poison in the deliberations of all bodies of men, will often hurry the persons of whom they are composed into improprieties and excesses, for which they would blush in a private capacity.

In addition to all this, there is, in the nature of sovereign power, an impatience of control, that disposes those who are invested with the exercise of it, to look with an evil eye upon all external attempts to restrain or direct its operations. From this spirit it happens that in every political association which is formed upon the principle of uniting in a common interest a number of lesser sovereignties, there will be found a kind of eccentric tendency in the subordinate or inferior orbs, by the operation of which there will be a perpetual effort in each to fly off from the common center. This tendency is not difficult to be accounted for. It has its origin in the love of power. Power controlled or abridged is almost always the rival and enemy of that power by which it is controlled or abridged. This simple proposition will teach us how little reason there is to expect that the persons intrusted with the administration of the affairs of the particular members of a confederacy will at all times be ready, with perfect good humor, and an unbiased regard to the public weal, to execute the resolutions or decrees of the general authority. The reverse of this results from the constitution of human nature.

If, therefore, the measures of the Confederacy cannot be executed without the intervention of the particular administrations, there will be little prospect of their being executed at all. The rulers of the respective members, whether they have a constitutional right to do it or not, will undertake to judge

of the propriety of the measures themselves. They will consider the conformity of the thing proposed or required to their immediate interests or aims; the momentary conveniences or inconveniences that would attend its adoption. All this will be done; and in a spirit of interested and suspicious scrutiny, without that knowledge of national circumstances and reasons of state, which is essential to a right judgment, and with that strong predilection in favor of local objects, which can hardly fail to mislead the decision. The same process must be repeated in every member of which the body is constituted; and the execution of the plans, framed by the councils of the whole, will always fluctuate on the discretion of the ill-informed and prejudiced opinion of every part. Those who have been conversant in the proceedings of popular assemblies; who have seen how difficult it often is, where there is no exterior pressure of circumstances, to bring them to harmonious resolutions on important points, will readily conceive how impossible it must be to induce a number of such assemblies, deliberating at a distance from each other, at different times, and under different impressions, long to co-operate in the same views and pursuits.

In our case, the concurrence of thirteen distinct sovereign wills is requisite, under the Confederation, to the complete execution of every important measure that proceeds from the Union. It has happened as was to have been foreseen. The measures of the Union have not been executed; the delinquencies of the States have, step by step, matured themselves to an extreme, which has, at length, arrested all the wheels of the national government, and brought them to an awful stand. Congress at this time scarcely possess the means of keeping up the forms of administration, till the States can have time to agree upon a more substantial substitute for the present shadow of a federal government. Things did not come to this desperate extremity at once. The causes which have been specified produced at first only unequal and disproportionate degrees of compliance with the requisitions of the Union. The greater deficiencies of some States furnished the pretext of example and the temptation of interest to the complying, or to the least delinquent States. Why should we do more in

proportion than those who are embarked with us in the same political voyage? Why should we consent to bear more than our proper share of the common burden? These were suggestions which human selfishness could not withstand, and which even speculative men, who looked forward to remote consequences, could not, without hesitation, combat. Each State, yielding to the persuasive voice of immediate interest or convenience, has successively withdrawn its support, till the frail and tottering edifice seems ready to fall upon our heads, and to crush us beneath its ruins.

XVI. THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED

To the People of the State of New York:

The tendency of the principle of legislation for States, or communities, in their political capacities, as it has been exemplified by the experiment we have made of it, is equally attested by the events which have befallen all other governments of the confederate kind of which we have any account, in exact proportion to its prevalence in those systems. The confirmations of this fact will be worthy of a distinct and particular examination. I shall content myself with barely observing here, that of all the confederacies of antiquity which history has handed down to us, the Lycian and Achæan leagues, as far as there remain vestiges of them, appear to have been most free from the fetters of that mistaken principle, and were accordingly those which have best deserved, and have most liberally received, the applauding suffrages of political writers.

This exceptionable principle may, as truly as emphatically, be styled the parent of anarchy: It has been seen that delinquencies in the members of the Union are its natural and necessary offspring; and that whenever they happen the only constitutional remedy is force, and the immediate effect of the use of it, civil war.

It remains to inquire how far so odious an engine of government, in its application to us, would even be capable of answering its end. If there should not be a large army constantly at the disposal of the national government it would either not be able to employ force at all, or, when this could be done, it would

amount to a war between parts of the Confederacy concerning the infractions of a league, in which the strongest combination would be most likely to prevail, whether it consisted of those who supported or of those who resisted the general authority. It would rarely happen that the delinquency to be redressed would be confined to a single member, and if there were more than one who had neglected their duty, similarity of situation would induce them to unite for common defense. Independent of this motive of sympathy, if a large and influential State should happen to be the aggressing member, it would commonly have weight enough with its neighbors to win over some of them as associates to its cause. Specious arguments of danger to the common liberty could easily be contrived; plausible excuses for the deficiencies of the party could, without difficulty, be invented to alarm the apprehensions, inflame the passions, and conciliate the goodwill, even of those States which were not chargeable with any violation or omission of duty. This would be the more likely to take place, as the delinquencies of the larger members might be expected sometimes to proceed from an ambitious premeditation in their rulers, with a view to getting rid of all external control upon their designs of personal aggrandizement; the better to effect which it is presumable they would tamper beforehand with leading individuals in the adjacent States. If associates could not be found at home, recourse would be had to the aid of foreign powers, who would seldom be disinclined to encouraging the dissensions of a Confederacy from the firm union of which they had so much to fear. When the sword is once drawn, the passions of men observe no bounds of moderation. The suggestions of wounded pride, the instigations of irritated resentment, would be apt to carry the States against which the arms of the Union were exerted to any extremes necessary to avenge the affront or to avoid the disgrace of submission. The first war of this kind would probably terminate in a dissolution of the Union.

This may be considered as the violent death of the Confederacy. Its more natural death is what we now seem to be on the point of experiencing, if the federal system be not speedily renovated in a more substantial

form. It is not probable, considering the genius of this country, that the complying States would often be inclined to support the authority of the Union by engaging in a war against the non-complying States. They would always be more ready to pursue the milder course of putting themselves upon an equal footing with the delinquent members by an imitation of their example. And the guilt of all would thus become the security of all. Our past experience has exhibited the operation of this spirit in its full light. There would, in fact, be an insuperable difficulty in ascertaining when force could with propriety be employed. In the article of pecuniary contribution, which would be the most usual source of delinquency, it would often be impossible to decide whether it had proceeded from disinclination or inability. The pretense of the latter would always be at hand. And the case must be very flagrant in which its fallacy could be detected with sufficient certainty to justify the harsh expedient of compulsion. It is easy to see that this problem alone, as often as it should occur, would open a wide field for the exercise of factious views, of partiality, and of oppression, in the majority that happened to prevail in the national council.

It seems to require no pains to prove that the States ought not to prefer a national Constitution which could only be kept in motion by the instrumentality of a large army continually on foot to execute the ordinary requisitions or decrees of the government. And yet this is the plain alternative involved by those who wish to deny it the power of extending its operations to individuals. Such a scheme, if practicable at all, would instantly degenerate into a military despotism; but it will be found in every light impracticable. The resources of the Union would not be equal to the maintenance of an army considerable enough to confine the larger States within the limits of their duty; nor would the means ever be furnished of forming such an army in the first instance. Whoever considers the populousness and strength of several of these States singly at the present juncture, and looks forward to what they will become, even at the distance of half a century, will at once dismiss as idle and visionary any scheme which aims at regulating their movements by laws to operate upon them in their

collective capacities, and to be executed by a coercion applicable to them in the same capacities. A project of this kind is little less romantic than the monster-taming spirit which is attributed to the fabulous heroes and demi-gods of antiquity.

Even in those confederacies which have been composed of members smaller than many of our counties, the principle of legislation for sovereign States, supported by military coercion, has never been found effectual. It has rarely been attempted to be employed, but against the weaker members; and in most instances attempts to coerce the refractory and disobedient have been the signals of bloody wars, in which one half of the confederacy has displayed its banners against the other half.

The result of these observations to an intelligent mind must be clearly this, that if it be possible at any rate to construct a federal government capable of regulating the common concerns and preserving the general tranquillity, it must be founded, as to the objects committed to its care, upon the reverse of the principle contended for by the opponents of the proposed Constitution. It must carry its agency to the persons of the citizens. It must stand in need of no intermediate legislations; but must itself be empowered to employ the arm of the ordinary magistrate to execute its own resolutions. The majesty of the national authority must be manifested through the medium of the courts of justice. The government of the Union, like that of each State, must be able to address itself immediately to the hopes and fears of individuals; and to attract to its support those passions which have the strongest influence upon the human heart. It must, in short, possess all the means, and have a right to resort to all the methods, of executing the powers with which it is intrusted, that are possessed and exercised by the governments of the particular States.

To this reasoning it may perhaps be objected, that if any State should be disaffected to the authority of the Union, it could at any time obstruct the execution of its laws, and bring the matter to the same issue of force, with the necessity of which the opposite scheme is reproached.

The plausibility of this objection will vanish the moment we advert to the essential

difference between a mere *non-compliance* and a *direct and active resistance*. If the interposition of the State legislatures be necessary to give effect to a measure of the Union, they have only *not to act*, or to *act evasively*, and the measure is defeated. This neglect of duty may be disguised under affected but unsubstantial provisions, so as not to appear, and of course not to excite any alarm in the people for the safety of the Constitution. The State leaders may even make a merit of their surreptitious invasions of it on the ground of some temporary convenience, exemption, or advantage.

But if the execution of the laws of the national government should not require the intervention of the State legislatures, if they were to pass into immediate operation upon the citizens themselves, the particular governments could not interrupt their progress without an open and violent exertion of an unconstitutional power. No omissions nor evasions would answer the end. They would be obliged to act, and in such a manner as would leave no doubt that they had encroached on the national rights. An experiment of this nature would always be hazardous in the face of a constitution in any degree competent to its own defense, and of a people enlightened enough to distinguish between a legal exercise and an illegal usurpation of authority. The success of it would require not merely a factious majority in the legislature, but the concurrence of the courts of justice and of the body of the people. If the judges were not embarked in a conspiracy with the legislature, they would pronounce the resolutions of such a majority to be contrary to the supreme law of the land, unconstitutional, and void. If the people were not tainted with the spirit of their State representatives, they, as the natural guardians of the Constitution, would throw their weight into the national scale and give it a decided preponderancy in the contest. Attempts of this kind would not often be made with levity or rashness, because they could seldom be made without danger to the authors, unless in cases of a tyrannical exercise of the federal authority.

If opposition to the national government should arise from the disorderly conduct of refractory or seditious individuals, it could be overcome by the same means which are

daily employed against the same evil under the State governments. The magistracy, being equally the ministers of the law of the land, from whatever source it might emanate, would doubtless be as ready to guard the national as the local regulations from the inroads of private licentiousness. As to those partial commotions and insurrections which sometimes disquiet society, from the intrigues of an inconsiderable faction, or from sudden or occasional ill-humors that do not infect the great body of the community, the general government could command more extensive resources for the suppression of disturbances of that kind than would be in the power of any single member. And as to those mortal feuds which, in certain conjunctures, spread a conflagration through a whole nation, or through a very large proportion of it, proceeding either from weighty causes of discontent given by the government or from the contagion of some violent popular paroxysm, they do not fall within any ordinary rules of calculation. When they happen, they commonly amount to revolutions and dismemberments of empire. No form of government can always either avoid or control them. It is in vain to hope to guard against events too mighty for human foresight or precaution, and it would be idle to object to a government because it could not perform impossibilities.

XXIII. THE NECESSITY OF A GOVERNMENT AS ENERGETIC AS THE ONE PROPOSED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE UNION

To the People of the State of New York:

The necessity of a Constitution, at least equally energetic with the one proposed, to the preservation of the Union, is the point at the examination of which we are now arrived.

This inquiry will naturally divide itself into three branches—the objects to be provided for by the federal government, the quantity of power necessary to the accomplishment of those objects, the persons upon whom that power ought to operate. Its distribution and organization will more properly claim our attention under the succeeding head.

The principal purposes to be answered by union are these—the common defense of the members; the preservation of the public peace, as well against internal convulsions as external attacks; the regulation of commerce with other nations and between the States; the superintendence of our intercourse, political and commercial, with foreign countries.

The authorities essential to the common defense are these: to raise armies; to build and equip fleets; to prescribe rules for the government of both; to direct their operations; to provide for their support. These powers ought to exist without limitation, *because it is impossible to foresee or define the extent and variety of national exigencies, or the correspondent extent and variety of the means which may be necessary to satisfy them.* The circumstances that endanger the safety of nations are infinite, and for this reason no constitutional shackles can wisely be imposed on the power to which the care of it is committed. This power ought to be co-extensive with all the possible combinations of such circumstances; and ought to be under the direction of the same councils which are appointed to preside over the common defense.

This is one of those truths which, to a correct and unprejudiced mind, carries its own evidence along with it; and may be obscured, but cannot be made plainer by argument or reasoning. It rests upon axioms as simple as they are universal; the *means* ought to be proportioned to the *end*; the persons, from whose agency the attainment of any *end* is expected, ought to possess the *means* by which it is to be attained.

Whether there ought to be a federal government intrusted with the care of the common defense is a question in the first instance open for discussion; but, the moment it is decided in the affirmative, it will follow that that government ought to be clothed with all the powers requisite to complete execution of its trust. And unless it can be shown that the circumstances which may affect the public safety are reducible within certain determinate limits; unless the contrary of this position can be fairly and rationally disputed, it must be admitted, as a necessary consequence, that there can be no limitation of that authority which is to provide for the

defense and protection of the community, in any matter essential to its efficacy—that is, in any matter essential to the *formation, direction, or support* of the NATIONAL FORCES.

Defective as the present Confederation has been proved to be, this principle appears to have been fully recognized by the framers of it; though they have not made proper or adequate provision for its exercise. Congress have an unlimited discretion to make requisitions of men and money; to govern the army and navy; to direct their operations. As their requisitions are made constitutionally binding upon the States, who are in fact under the most solemn obligations to furnish the supplies required of them, the intention evidently was that the United States should command whatever resources were by them judged requisite to the “common defense and general welfare.” It was presumed that a sense of their true interests, and a regard to the dictates of good faith, would be found sufficient pledges for the punctual performance of the duty of the members to the federal head.

The experiment has, however, demonstrated that this expectation was ill-founded and illusory; and the observations, made under the last head, will, I imagine, have sufficed to convince the impartial and discerning that there is an absolute necessity for an entire change in the first principles of the system; that if we are in earnest about giving the Union energy and duration, we must abandon the vain project of legislating upon the States in their collective capacities; we must extend the laws of the federal government to the individual citizens of America; we must discard the fallacious scheme of quotas and requisitions, as equally impracticable and unjust. The result from all this is that the Union ought to be invested with full power to levy troops; to build and equip fleets; and to raise the revenues which will be required for the formation and support of an army and navy, in the customary and ordinary modes practiced in other governments.

If the circumstances of our country are such as to demand a compound instead of a simple, a confederate instead of a sole, government, the essential point which will remain to be adjusted will be to discriminate

the *objects*, as far as it can be done, which shall appertain to the different provinces or departments of power; allowing to each the most ample authority for fulfilling the objects committed to its charge. Shall the Union be constituted the guardian of the common safety? Are fleets and armies and revenues necessary to this purpose? The government of the Union must be empowered to pass all laws, and to make all regulations which have relation to them. The same must be the case in respect to commerce, and to every other matter to which its jurisdiction is permitted to extend. Is the administration of justice between the citizens of the same State the proper department of the local governments? These must possess all the authorities which are connected with this object, and with every other that may be allotted to their particular cognizance and direction. Not to confer in each case a degree of power commensurate to the end would be to violate the most obvious rules of prudence and propriety, and improvidently to trust the great interests of the nation to hands which are disabled from managing them with vigor and success.

Who so likely to make suitable provisions for the public defense as that body to which the guardianship of the public safety is confided; which, as the center of information, will best understand the extent and urgency of the dangers that threaten; as the representative of the WHOLE, will feel itself most deeply interested in the preservation of every part; which, from the responsibility implied in the duty assigned to it, will be most sensibly impressed with the necessity of proper exertions; and which, by the extension of its authority throughout the States, can alone establish uniformity and concert in the plans and measures by which the common safety is to be secured? Is there not a manifest inconsistency in devolving upon the federal government the care of the general defense, and leaving in the State governments the *effective* powers by which it is to be provided for? Is not a want of co-operation the infallible consequence of such a system? And will not weakness, disorder, and undue distribution of the burdens and calamities of war, an unnecessary and intolerable increase of expense, be its natural and inevitable concomitants? Have we not had unequivocal

experience of its effects in the course of the revolution which we have just accomplished?

Every view we may take of the subject, as candid inquirers after truth, will serve to convince us, that it is both unwise and dangerous to deny the federal government an unconfined authority as to all those objects which are intrusted to its management. It will indeed deserve the most vigilant and careful attention of the people, to see that it be modeled in such a manner as to admit of its being safely vested with the requisite powers. If any plan which has been, or may be, offered to our consideration, should not, upon a dispassionate inspection, be found to answer this description, it ought to be rejected. A government, good constitution of which renders it unfit to be trusted with all the powers which a free people *ought to delegate to any government*, would be an unsafe and improper depositary of the NATIONAL INTERESTS. Wherever *these* can with propriety be confided, the coincident powers may safely accompany them. This is the true result of all just reasoning upon the subject. And the adversaries of the plan promulgated by the convention ought to have confined themselves to showing that the internal structure of the proposed government was such as to render it unworthy of the confidence of the people. They ought not to have wandered into inflammatory declamations and unmeaning cavils about the extent of the powers. The *powers* are not too extensive for the *objects* of federal administration, or, in other words, for the management of OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS; nor can any satisfactory argument be framed to show that they are chargeable with such an excess. If it be true, as has been insinuated by some of the writers on the other side, that the difficulty arises from the nature of the thing, and that the extent of the country will not permit us to form a government in which such ample powers can safely be reposed, it would prove that we ought to contract our views, and resort to the expedient of separate confederacies, which will move within more practicable spheres. For the absurdity must continually stare us in the face of confiding to a government the direction of the most essential national interests, without daring to trust it to the authorities which are indispensable to their proper and efficient man-

agement. Let us not attempt to reconcile contradictions, but firmly embrace a rational alternative.

I trust, however, that the impracticability of one general system cannot be shown. I am greatly mistaken, if anything of weight has yet been advanced of this tendency; and I flatter myself that the observations which have been made in the course of these papers have served to place the reverse of that position in as clear a light as any matter still in the womb of time and experience can be susceptible of. This, at all events, must be evident, that the very difficulty itself, drawn from the extent of the country, is the strongest argument in favor of an energetic government; for any other can certainly never preserve the Union of so large an empire. If we embrace the tenets of those who oppose the adoption of the proposed Constitution, as the standard of our political creed, we cannot fail to verify the gloomy doctrines which predict the impracticability of a national system pervading entire limits of the present Confederacy.

LXX. THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT FURTHER CONSIDERED

To the People of the State of New York:

There is an idea, which is not without its advocates, that a vigorous Executive is inconsistent with the genius of republican government. The enlightened well-wishers to this species of government must at least hope that the supposition is destitute of foundation, since they can never admit its truth without at the same time admitting the condemnation of their own principles. Energy in the Executive is a leading character in the definition of good government. It is essential to the protection of the community against foreign attacks; it is not less essential to the steady administration of the laws; to the protection of property against those irregular and high-handed combinations which sometimes interrupt the ordinary course of justice; to the security of liberty against the enterprises and assaults of ambition, of faction, and of anarchy. Every man the least conversant in Roman story knows how often that republic was obliged to take refuge in the absolute power of a single man, under the formidable title of Dictator,

as well against the intrigues of ambitious individuals who aspired to the tyranny and the seditions of whole classes of the community whose conduct threatened the existence of all government, as against the invasions of external enemies who menaced the conquest and destruction of Rome.

There can be no need, however, to multiply arguments or examples on this head. A feeble Executive implies a feeble execution of the government. A feeble execution is but another phrase for a bad execution; and a government ill executed, whatever it may be in theory, must be, in practice, a bad government.

Taking it for granted, therefore, that all men of sense will agree in the necessity of an energetic Executive, it will only remain to inquire what are the ingredients which constitute this energy? How far can they be combined with those other ingredients which constitute safety in the republican sense? And how far does this combination characterize the plan which has been reported by the convention?

The ingredients which constitute energy in the Executive are, first, unity; secondly, duration; thirdly, an adequate provision for its support; fourthly, competent powers.

The ingredients which constitute safety in the republican sense are, first, a due dependence on the people; secondly, a due responsibility.

Those politicians and statesmen who have been the most celebrated for the soundness of their principles and for the justice of their views have declared in favor of a single Executive and a numerous legislature. They have, with great propriety, considered energy as the most necessary qualification of the former, and have regarded this as most applicable to power in a single hand; while they have, with equal propriety, considered the latter as best adapted to deliberation and wisdom, and best calculated to conciliate the confidence of the people and to secure their privileges and interests.

That unity is conducive to energy will not be disputed. Decision, activity, secrecy, and dispatch will generally characterize the proceedings of one man in a much more eminent degree than the proceedings of any greater number; and in proportion as the number is increased, these qualities will be diminished.

This unity may be destroyed in two ways: either by vesting the power in two or more magistrates of equal dignity and authority; or by vesting it ostensibly in one man, subject, in whole or in part, to the control and co-operation of others in the capacity of counselors to him. Of the first, the two Consuls of Rome may serve as an example; of the last, we shall find examples in the constitutions of several of the States. New York and New Jersey, if I recollect right, are the only States which have intrusted the executive authority wholly to single men.¹ Both these methods of destroying the unity of the Executive have their partisans; but the votaries of the executive council are the most numerous. They are both liable, if not to equal, to similar objections, and may in most lights be examined in conjunction.

The experience of other nations will afford little instruction on this head. As far, however, as it teaches anything, it teaches us not to be enamored of plurality in the Executive. We have seen that the Achæans, on an experiment of two Prætors, were induced to abolish one.² The Roman history records many instances of mischiefs to the republic from the dissensions between the Consuls, and between the military Tribunes, who were at times substituted for the Consuls. But it gives us no specimens of any peculiar advantages derived to the state from the circumstance of the plurality of those magistrates. That the dissensions between them were not more frequent or more fatal is matter of astonishment, until we advert to the singular position in which the republic was almost continually placed, and to the prudent policy pointed out by the circumstances of the state, and pursued by the Consuls, of making a division of the government between them. The patricians engaged in a perpetual struggle with the plebeians for the preservation of their ancient authorities and dignities; the Consuls, who were generally chosen out of the former body, were commonly united by the personal interest they had

¹ New York has no council except for the single purpose of appointing to offices; New Jersey has a council whom the governor may consult. But I think, from the terms of the constitution, their resolutions do not bind him. (Hamilton's note.)

² This is mentioned in No. XVIII.

in the defense of the privileges of their order. In addition to this motive of union, after the arms of the republic had considerably expanded the bounds of its empire, it became an established custom with the Consuls to divide the administration between themselves by lot—one of them remaining at Rome to govern the city and its environs, the other taking the command in the more distant provinces. This expedient must, no doubt, have had great influence in preventing those collisions and rivalships which might otherwise have embroiled the peace of the republic.

But quitting the dim light of historical research, attaching ourselves purely to the dictates of reason and good sense, we shall discover much greater cause to reject than to approve the idea of plurality in the Executive, under any modification whatever.

Wherever two or more persons are engaged in any common enterprise or pursuit there is always danger of difference of opinion. If it be a public trust or office, in which they are clothed with equal dignity and authority, there is peculiar danger of personal emulation and even animosity. From either, and especially from all these causes, the most bitter dissensions are apt to spring. Whenever these happen, they lessen the respectability, weaken the authority, and distract the plans and operations of those whom they divide. If they should unfortunately assail the supreme executive magistracy of a country, consisting of a plurality of persons, they might impede or frustrate the most important measures of the government in the most critical emergencies of the state. And what is still worse, they might split the community into the most violent and irreconcilable factions, adhering differently to the different individuals who composed the magistracy.

Men often oppose a thing, merely because they have had no agency in planning it, or because it may have been planned by those whom they dislike. But if they have been consulted, and have happened to disapprove, opposition then becomes, in their estimation, an indispensable duty of self-love. They seem to think themselves bound in honor, and by all the motives of personal infallibility, to defeat the success of what has been resolved upon contrary to their sentiments.

Men of upright, benevolent tempers have too many opportunities of remarking, with horror, to what desperate lengths this disposition is sometimes carried, and how often the great interests of society are sacrificed to the vanity, to the conceit, and to the obstinacy of individuals who have credit enough to make their passions and their caprices interesting to mankind. Perhaps the question now before the public may, in its consequences, afford melancholy proofs of the effects of this despicable frailty, or rather detestable vice, in the human character.

Upon the principles of a free government, inconveniences from the source just mentioned must necessarily be submitted to in the formation of the legislature; but it is unnecessary, and therefore unwise, to introduce them into the constitution of the Executive. It is here, too, that they may be most pernicious. In the legislature, promptitude of decision is oftener an evil than a benefit. The differences of opinion, and the jar-rings of parties in that department of the government, though they may sometimes obstruct salutary plans, yet often promote deliberation and circumspection, and serve to check excesses in the majority. When a resolution, too, is once taken, the opposition must be at an end. That resolution is a law, and resistance to it punishable. But no favorable circumstances palliate or atone for the disadvantages of dissension in the executive department. Here they are pure and unmixed. There is no point at which they cease to operate. They serve to embarrass and weaken the execution of the plan or measure to which they relate, from the first step to the final conclusion of it. They constantly counteract those qualities in the Executive which are the most necessary ingredients in its composition—vigor and expedition, and this without any counterbalancing good. In the conduct of war, in which the energy of the Executive is the bulwark of the national security, everything would be to be apprehended from its plurality.

It must be confessed that these observations apply with principal weight to the first case supposed—that is, to a plurality of magistrates of equal dignity and authority, a scheme the advocates for which are not likely to form a numerous sect; but they apply, though not with equal, yet with con-

siderable weight to the project of a council, whose concurrence is made constitutionally necessary to the operations of the ostensible Executive. An artful cabal in that council would be able to distract and to enervate the whole system of administration. If no such cabal should exist, the mere diversity of views and opinions would alone be sufficient to tincture the exercise of the executive authority with a spirit of habitual feebleness and dilatoriness.

But one of the weightiest objections to a plurality in the Executive, and which lies as much against the last as the first plan, is that it tends to conceal faults and destroy responsibility. Responsibility is of two kinds—to censure and to punishment. The first is the more important of the two, especially in an elective office. Man, in public trust, will much oftener act in such a manner as to render him unworthy of being any longer trusted, than in such a manner as to make him obnoxious to legal punishment. But the multiplication of the Executive adds to the difficulty of detection in either case. It often becomes impossible, amidst mutual accusations, to determine on whom the blame or the punishment of a pernicious measure, or series of pernicious measures, ought really to fall. It is shifted from one to another with so much dexterity, and under such plausible appearances, that the public opinion is left in suspense about the real author. The circumstances which may have led to any national miscarriage or misfortune are sometimes so complicated that, where there are a number of actors who may have had different degrees and kinds of agency, though we may clearly see upon the whole that there has been mismanagement, yet it may be impracticable to pronounce to whose account the evil which may have been incurred is truly chargeable.

“I was overruled by my council. The council were so divided in their opinions that it was impossible to obtain any better resolution on the point.” These and similar pretexts are constantly at hand, whether true or false. And who is there that will either take the trouble or incur the odium of a strict scrutiny into the secret springs of the transaction? Should there be found a citizen zealous enough to undertake the unpromising task, if there happen to be collu-

sion between the parties concerned, how easy it is to clothe the circumstances with so much ambiguity as to render it uncertain what was the precise conduct of any of those parties!

In the single instance in which the governor of this State¹ is coupled with a council—that is, in the appointment to offices, we have seen the mischiefs of it in the view now under consideration. Scandalous appointments to important offices have been made. Some cases, indeed, have been so flagrant that *all parties* have agreed in the impropriety of the thing. When inquiry has been made, the blame has been laid by the governor on the members of the council, who, on their part, have charged it upon his nomination; while the people remain altogether at a loss to determine by whose influence their interests have been committed to hands so unqualified and so manifestly improper. In tenderness to individuals, I forbear to descend to particulars.

It is evident from these considerations that the plurality of the Executive tends to deprive the people of the two greatest securities they can have for the faithful exercise of any delegated power: *first*, the restraints of public opinion, which lose their efficacy, as well on account of the division of the censure attendant on bad measures among a number as on account of the uncertainty on whom it ought to fall; and, *secondly*, the opportunity of discovering with facility and clearness the misconduct of the persons they trust, in order either to their removal from office, or to their actual punishment in cases which admit of it.

In England, the king is a perpetual magistrate; and it is a maxim which has obtained for the sake of the public peace, that he is unaccountable for his administration, and his person sacred. Nothing, therefore, can be wiser in that kingdom, than to annex to the king a constitutional council, who may be responsible to the nation for the advice they give. Without this, there would be no responsibility whatever in the executive department—an idea inadmissible in a free government. But even there the king is not bound by the resolutions of his council, though they are answerable for the advice

¹ *I.e.*, New York.

they give. He is the absolute master of his own conduct in the exercise of his office, and may observe or disregard the counsel given to him at his sole discretion.

But in a republic, where every magistrate ought to be personally responsible for his behavior in office, the reason which in the British Constitution dictates the propriety of a council, not only ceases to apply, but turns against the institution. In the monarchy of Great Britain, it furnishes a substitute for the prohibited responsibility of the chief magistrate, which serves in some degree as a hostage to the national justice for his good behavior. In the American republic it would serve to destroy, or would greatly diminish, the intended and necessary responsibility of the Chief Magistrate himself.

The idea of a council to the Executive, which has so generally obtained in the State constitutions, has been derived from that maxim of republican jealousy which considers power as safer in the hands of a number of men than of a single man. If the maxim should be admitted to be applicable to the case, I should contend that the advantage on that side would not counterbalance the numerous disadvantages on the opposite side. But I do not think the rule at all applicable to the executive power. I clearly concur in opinion, in this particular, with a writer whom the celebrated Junius pronounces to be "deep, solid, and ingenious," that "the executive power is more easily confined when it is ONE";¹ that it is far more safe there should be a single object for the jealousy and watchfulness of the people; and, in a word, that all multiplication of the Executive is rather dangerous than friendly to liberty.

A little consideration will satisfy us that the species of security sought for in the multiplication of the *Executive* is unattainable. Numbers must be so great as to render combination difficult, or they are rather a source of danger than of security. The

united credit and influence of several individuals must be more formidable to liberty than the credit and influence of either of them separately. When power, therefore, is placed in the hands of so small a number of men as to admit of their interests and views being easily combined in a common enterprise, by an artful leader, it becomes more liable to abuse, and more dangerous when abused, than if it be lodged in the hands of one man; who, from the very circumstance of his being alone, will be more narrowly watched and more readily suspected, and who cannot unite so great a mass of influence as when he is associated with others. The Decemvirs of Rome, whose name denotes their number,² were more to be dreaded in their usurpation than any *one* of them would have been. No person would think of proposing an Executive much more numerous than that body; from six to a dozen have been suggested for the number of the council. The extreme of these numbers is not too great for an easy combination; and from such a combination America would have more to fear than from the ambition of any single individual. A council to a magistrate, who is himself responsible for what he does, are generally nothing better than a clog upon his good intentions, are often the instruments and accomplices of his bad, and are almost always a cloak to his faults.

I forbear to dwell upon the subject of expense; though it be evident that if the council should be numerous enough to answer the principal end aimed at by the institution, the salaries of the members, who must be drawn from their homes to reside at the seat of government, would form an item in the catalogue of public expenditures too serious to be incurred for an object of equivocal utility. I will only add that, prior to the appearance of the Constitution, I rarely met with an intelligent man from any of the States, who did not admit, as the result of experience, that the *unity* of the executive of this State was one of the best of the distinguishing features of our constitution.

¹ De Lolme. (Hamilton's note.) A Swiss constitutional writer (born at Geneva, 1740, died 1806) who lived in England for some years and wrote a treatise on *The Constitution of England* (1771, English ed'n, 1775).

² Ten. (Hamilton's note.)

JOEL BARLOW (1754-1812)

Barlow was born at Redding, Connecticut, on 24 March, 1754. He attended Dartmouth College and Yale College, and was graduated from the latter. During college vacations he served as a volunteer in the Revolutionary army, and, after his graduation, as a chaplain. Before holding the latter post he had begun the study of the law. In the early 1780's he settled at Hartford, working as a journalist and perhaps looking forward to a legal career. But he was also writing poetry, and in 1787 published *The Vision of Columbus*, a reflective poem of considerable length (4,700 lines), which was received with warm praise not only in America, but also in England and France. In the following year Barlow went to France as an agent of a group of speculators who styled themselves the Scioto (Ohio) Land Company. It is said that he was ignorant of the fraudulent nature of the enterprise. In France he became a supporter of the Revolution, and went almost as far in identifying himself with the movement as did Paine. While he was visiting England (1791-1792) he published in London a poem entitled *The Conspiracy of Kings*, and he was delegated by the London Constitutional Society to present an address to the French Convention. In 1792 he published a political tract in Paris, *Advice to the Privileged Orders in the Several States of Europe* (a later republican tract, published in Philadelphia, 1801, was entitled: *Joel Barlow to his Fellow-Citizens in the United States*). In 1792 he also was a candidate for membership in the Convention, and it was while he was forwarding his candidacy in Chambéry that he had placed before him the hasty pudding (boiled Indian meal) which took him in memory back to his own land and caused him to write the poem here reprinted. It "is certainly his most original and enduring poem and also one of the best pieces of humorous verse in our early literature." It "is a mock-heroic of the conventional eighteenth-century type. . . . The pastoral scenes are native, not imitated, the diction is simple and natural, and the humor, though rather thin, is sufficiently amusing." (S. M. Tucker, *Camb. Hist. Am. Lit.*, I.)

In 1795 Barlow went to Algiers as American consul, where he remained two years. During this time he procured the release of some American prisoners. In 1798 he was back in Paris, and was of some service to the American government there. At the same time he engaged in speculations which were so successful as to yield him a moderate fortune. In 1805 he returned to the United States, and two years afterwards published a large expansion of his *Vision of Columbus*—in its new form called *The Columbiad*—in which he sought to outstrip Homer as the creator of a national epic. His ambition was mistaken and the poem was at once set down a failure—a verdict which no later generation has cared to dispute. In 1811 Madison appointed Barlow Minister to France. In the following year he set out for Wilna to hold a conference with Napoleon. Owing to the hardships of the journey he fell ill, and died near Cracow, Poland, on 24 December, 1812.

THE HASTY PUDDING¹

CANTO I

YE Alps audacious, through the heavens
that rise,
To cramp the day and hide me from the
skies;
Ye Gallic flags, that o'er their heights un-
furled,
Bear death to kings and freedom to the
world,
I sing not you. A softer theme I choose,
A virgin theme, unconscious of the muse,
But fruitful, rich, well suited to inspire
The purest frenzy of poetic fire.

Despise it not, ye bards to terror steeled,
Who hurl your thunders round the epic
field; 10
Nor ye who strain your midnight throats to
sing
Joys that the vineyard and the stillhouse
bring;
Or on some distant fair your notes employ,
And speak of raptures that you ne'er enjoy.
I sing the sweets I know, the charms I feel,
My morning incense, and my evening
meal,—
The sweets of Hasty Pudding. Come, dear
bowl,
Glide o'er my palate, and inspire my soul.
The milk beside thee, smoking from the
kine,

¹ First published in 1796.

Its substance mingled, married in with
thine, 20

Shall cool and temper thy superior heat,
And save the pains of blowing while I eat.

Oh! could the smooth, the emblematic
song

Flow like the genial juices o'er my tongue,
Could those mild morsels in my numbers
chime,

And, as they roll in substance, roll in rhyme,
No more thy awkward, unpoetic name
Should shun the muse or prejudice thy fame;
But, rising grateful to the accustomed ear,
All bards should catch it, and all realms
revere! 30

Assist me first with pious toil to trace
Through wrecks of time, thy lineage and thy
race;

Declare what lovely squaw, in days of yore
(Ere great Columbus sought thy native
shore),

First gave thee to the world; her works of
fame
Have lived indeed, but lived without a
name.

Some tawny Ceres, goddess of her days,
First learned with stones to crack the well-
dried maize,

Through the rough sieve to shake the golden
shower,

In boiling water stir the yellow flour: 40
The yellow flour, bestrewed and stirred with
haste,

Swells in the flood and thickens to a paste,
Then puffs and wallops, rises to the brim,
Drinks the dry knobs that on the surface
swim;

The knobs at last the busy ladle breaks,
And the whole mass its true consistence
takes.

Could but her sacred name, unknown so
long,

Rise, like her labors, to the son of song,
To her, to them I'd consecrate my lays,
And blow her pudding with the breath of
praise. 50

If 'twas Oella whom I sang before,¹
I here ascribe her one great virtue more.
Not through the rich Peruvian realms alone
The fame of Sol's sweet daughter should be
known,

¹ Peruvian princess, said to have discovered the art
of spinning. Barlow had sung her praise before in
The Vision of Columbus, Bk. II.

But o'er the world's wide climes should live
secure,

Far as his rays extend, as long as they en-
dure.

Dear Hasty Pudding, what unpromised
joy

Expands my heart, to meet thee in Savoy!
Doomed o'er the world through devious
paths to roam,

Each clime my country, and each house my
home, 60

My soul is soothed, my cares have found an
end;

I greet my long-lost, unforgotten friend.

For thee through Paris, that corrupted
town,

How long in vain I wandered up and down,
Where shameless Bacchus, with his drench-
ing hoard,

Cold from his cave usurps the morning
board.

London is lost in smoke and steeped in tea;
No Yankee there can lisp the name of thee;
The uncouth word, a libel on the town,

Would call a proclamation from the crown. 70
For climes oblique, that fear the sun's full
rays,

Chilled in their fogs, exclude the generous
maize;

A grain whose rich, luxuriant growth re-
quires

Short, gentle showers, and bright, ethereal
fires.

But here, though distant from our native
shore,

With mutual glee, we meet and laugh once
more.

The same! I know thee by that yellow face,
That strong complexion of true Indian race,
Which time can never change, nor soil im-
pair,

Nor Alpine snows, nor Turkey's morbid
air; 80

For endless years, through every mild
domain,

Where grows the maize, there thou art sure
to reign.

But man, more fickle, the bold license
claims,

In different realms to give thee different
names.

Thee the soft nations round the warm
Levant

Polanta call; the French, of course, *Polante*.

E'en in thy native regions, how I blush
To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee *Mush!*
On Hudson's banks, while men of Belgic
spawn

Insult and eat thee by the name *Suppawon*. 90
All spurious appellations, void of truth;
I've better known thee from my earliest
youth:

Thy name is *Hasty Pudding!* thus my sire
Was wont to greet thee fuming from his fire;
And while he argued in thy just defense
With logic clear he thus explained the sense:
"In haste the boiling caldron, o'er the blaze,
Receives and cooks the ready powdered
maize;

In haste 'tis served, and then in equal haste,
With cooling milk, we make the sweet re-
past. 100

No carving to be done, no knife to grate
The tender ear and wound the stony plate;
But the smooth spoon, just fitted to the lip,
And taught with art the yielding mass to
dip,

By frequent journeys to the bowl well stored,
Performs the hasty honors of the board."
Such is thy name, significant and clear,
A name, a sound to every Yankee dear,
But most to me, whose heart and palate
chaste

Preserve my pure, hereditary taste. 110
There are who strive to stamp with dis-
repute

The luscious food, because it feeds the brute;
In tropes of high-strained wit, while gaudy
prigs

Compare thy nursling, man, to pampered
pigs,

With sovereign scorn I treat the vulgar jest,
Nor fear to share thy bounties with the beast.
What though the generous cow gives me to
quaff

The milk nutritious: am I then a calf?
Or can the genius of the noisy swine,
Though nursed on pudding, thence lay claim
to mine? 120

Sure the sweet song I fashion to thy praise,
Runs more melodious than the notes they
raise.

My song, resounding in its grateful glee,
No merit claims: I praise myself in thee.
My father loved thee through his length of
days!

For thee his fields were shaded o'er with
maize;

From thee what health, what vigor he pos-
sessed,

Ten sturdy freemen from his loins attest;¹
Thy constellation ruled my natal morn,
And all my bones were made of Indian
corn. 130

Delicious grain, whatever form it take,
To roast or boil, to smother or to bake,
In every dish 'tis welcome still to me,
But most, my Hasty Pudding, most in thee.

Let the green succotash with thee contend;
Let beans and corn their sweetest juices
blend;

Let butter drench them in its yellow tide,
And a long slice of bacon grace their side;
Not all the plate, how famed soe'er it be,
Can please my palate like a bowl of thee. 140
Some talk of hoe-cake, fair Virginia's pride!
Rich johnny-cake this mouth has often tried;
Both please me well, their virtues much the
same,

Alike their fabric, as allied their fame—
Except in dear New England, where the last
Receives a dash of pumpkin in the paste,
To give it sweetness and improve the taste.
But place them all before me, smoking hot,
The big, round dumpling, rolling from the
pot;

The pudding of the bag, whose quivering
breast, 150
With suet lined, leads on the Yankee feast;
The charlotte brown, within whose crusty
sides

A belly soft the pulpy apple hides;
The yellow bread whose face like amber
glows,

And all of Indian that the bake-pan knows—
You tempt me not; my favorite greets my
eyes,

To that loved bowl my spoon by instinct
flies.

CANTO II

To mix the food by vicious rules of art,
To kill the stomach and to sink the heart,
To make mankind to social virtue sour,
Cram o'er each dish, and be what they de-
vour;

For this the kitchen muse first framed her
book,
Commanding sweats to stream from every
cook;

¹ In some early editions: "freemen sprung from him attest."

Children no more their antic gambols tried,
And friends to physic wondered why they
died.

Not so the Yankee: his abundant feast,
With simples furnished and with plainness
dressed, 10

A numerous offspring gathers round the
board,

And cheers alike the servant and the lord;
Whose well-bought hunger prompts the joy-
ous taste,

And health attends them from the short
repast.

While the full pail rewards the milkmaid's
toil,

The mother sees the morning caldron boil;
To stir the pudding next demands their care;
To spread the table and the bowls prepare;
To feed the household as their portions cool
And send them all to labor or to school.¹ 20

Yet may the simplest dish some rules im-
part,

For nature scorns not all the aids of art.
E'en Hasty Pudding, purest of all food,
May still be bad, indifferent, or good,
As sage experience the short process guides,
Or want of skill, or want of care presides.

Whoe'er would form it on the surest plan,
To rear the child and long sustain the man,
To shield the morals while it mends the
size,

And all the powers of every food sup-
plies— 30

Attend the lesson that the muse shall bring,
Suspend your spoons, and listen while I sing.

But since, O man! thy life and health de-
mand

Not food alone, but labor from thy hand,
First, in the field, beneath the sun's strong
rays,

Ask of thy mother earth the needful maize;
She loves the race that courts her yielding
soil,

And gives her bounties to the sons of toil.

When now the ox, obedient to thy call,
Repays the loan that filled the winter stall, 40
Pursue his traces o'er the furrowed plain,
And plant in measured hills the golden grain.
But when the tender germ begins to shoot,
And the green spire declares the sprouting
root,

Then guard your nursling from each greedy
foe,

The insidious worm, the all-devouring crow.
A little ashes sprinkled round the spire,
Soon steeped in rain, will bid the worm re-
tire;

The feathered robber with his hungry maw
Swift flies the field before your man of
straw, 50

A frightful image, such as schoolboys bring
When met to burn the Pope or hang the
King.

Thrice in the season, through each verdant
row,

Wield the strong plowshare and the faithful
hoe—

The faithful hoe, a double task that takes,
To till the summer corn and roast the winter
cakes.

Slow springs the blade, while checked by
chilling rains,

Ere yet the sun the seat of Cancer gains;
But when his fiercest fires emblaze the land,
Then start the juices, then the roots ex-
pand; 60

Then, like a column of Corinthian mold,
The stalk struts upward and the leaves un-
fold;

The bushy branches all the ridges fill,
Entwine their arms, and kiss from hill to hill.
Here cease to vex them; all your cares are
done:

Leave the last labors to the parent sun;
Beneath his genial smiles, the well-dressed
field,

When autumn calls, a plenteous crop shall
yield.

Now the strong foliage bears the standards
high,

And shoots the tall top-gallants to the sky; 70
The suckling ears their silky fringes bend,
And, pregnant grown, their swelling coats
distend;

The loaded stalk, while still the burden
grows,

O'erhangs the space that runs between the
rows;

High as a hop-field waves the silent grove,
A safe retreat for little thefts of love,
When the pledged roasting-ears invite the
maid

To meet her swain beneath the new-formed
shade;

His generous hand unloads the cumbrous hill,

¹In some early editions: "And comb their heads,
and send them off to school."

And the green spoils her ready basket fill; 80
Small compensation for the twofold bliss,
The promised wedding and the present kiss.

Slight depredations these; but now the
moon

Calls from his hollow tree the sly raccoon;
And while by night he bears his prize away,
The bolder squirrel labors through the day.
Both thieves alike, but provident of time,
A virtue rare, that almost hides their crime.
Then let them steal the little stores they can,
And fill their granaries from the toils of
man; 90

We've one advantage where they take no
part—

With all their wiles, they ne'er have found
the art

To boil the Hasty Pudding; here we shine
Superior far to tenants of the pine;
This envied boon to man shall still belong
Unshared by them in substance or in song.

At last the closing season browns the plain,
And ripe October gathers in the grain;
Deep-loaded carts the spacious corn-house
fill;

The sack distended marches to the mill; 100
The laboring mill beneath the burden groans,
And showers the future pudding from the
stones;

Till the glad housewife greets the powdered
gold,

And the new crop exterminates the old.
Ah, who can sing what every wight must feel,
The joy that enters with the bag of meal,
A general jubilee pervades the house,
Wakes every child and gladdens every
mouse.¹

CANTO III

The days grow short; but though the fall-
ing sun

To the glad swain proclaims his day's work
done,

Night's pleasing shades his various tasks pro-
long,

And yield new subjects to my various song.
For now, the corn-house filled, the harvest
home,

The invited neighbors to the husking come;
A frolic scene, where work, and mirth, and
play,

Unite their charms to chase the hours away.

¹ The last four lines of this canto do not appear in some early editions.

Where the huge heap lies centered in the hall,
The lamp suspended from the cheerful
wall, 10

Brown, corn-fed nymphs, and strong, hard-
handed beaux,

Alternate ranged, extend in circling rows,
Assume their seats, the solid mass attack;
The dry husks rustle, and the corncobs
crack;

The song, the laugh, alternate notes resound,
And the sweet cider trips in silence round.

The laws of husking every wight can tell;
And sure no laws he ever keeps so well:

For each red ear a general kiss he gains,
With each smut ear she smuts the luckless
swains; 20

But when to some sweet maid a prize is cast,
Red as her lips and taper as her waist,
She walks the round and culls one favored
beau,

Who leaps the luscious tribute to bestow.
Various the sport, as are the wits and brains
Of well-pleased lasses and contending swains;
Till the vast mound of corn is swept away,
And he that gets the last ear wins the day.

Meanwhile, the housewife urges all her care
The well-earned feast to hasten and pre-
pare. 30

The sifted meal already waits her hand,
The milk is strained, the bowls in order
stand,

The fire flames high; and as a pool—that
takes

The headlong stream that o'er the mill-
dam breaks—

Foams, roars, and rages with incessant toils,
So the vexed caldron rages, roars, and boils.

First with clean salt she seasons well the
food,

Then strews the flour, and thickens all the
flood.

Long o'er the simmering fire she lets it stand;
To stir it well demands a stronger hand; 40

The husband takes his turn: and round and
round

The ladle flies. At last the toil is crowned;
When to the board the thronging huskers
pour,

And take their seats as at the corn before.

I leave them to their feast. There still
belong

More useful² matters to my faithful song. 1

² In some early editions: "copious."

For rules there are, though ne'er unfolded
yet,
Nice rules and wise, how pudding should be
ate.

Some with molasses line the luscious treat,
And mix, like bards, the useful with the
sweet:¹

50
A wholesome dish, and well deserving praise,
A great resource in those bleak wintry days,
When the chilled earth lies buried deep in
snow,

And raging Boreas dries² the shivering cow.
Bless'd cow, thy praise shall still my notes
employ,

Great source of health, the only source of
joy!

Mother of Egypt's god,—but sure, for me,
Were I to leave my God, I'd worship thee.³
How oft thy teats these pious hands have
pressed!

How oft thy bounties proved my only
feast!

60
How oft I've fed thee with my favorite grain!
And roared, like thee, to see⁴ thy children
slain!

Ye swains who know her various worth to
prize,

Ah! house her well from winter's angry skies.
Potatoes, pumpkins, should her sadness
cheer,

Corn from your crib, and mashies from your
beer;

When spring returns, she'll well acquit the
loan,

And nurse at once your infants and her
own.

Milk, then, with pudding I should always
choose;

To this in future I confine my muse, 70
Till she in haste some further hints unfold,
Well for the young, nor useless to the old.
First in your bowl the milk abundant take,

¹ In allusion to l. 343 of Horace's *De Arte Poetica*: *Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci*. The early editions carry this line on their title-pages and, underneath: "He makes a good breakfast who mixes pudding with molasses."

² Some early editions: "drives."

³ This and the preceding line do not appear in some early editions.

⁴ Some early editions: "find."

Then drop with care along the silver lake
Your flakes of pudding; these at first will hide
Their little bulk beneath the swelling tide;
But when their growing mass no more can
sink,

When the soft island looms above the brink,
Then check your hand; you've got the por-
tion due;

So taught our sires, and what they taught is
true. 80

There is a choice in spoons. Though small
appear

The nice distinction, yet to me 'tis clear.
The deep-bowled Gallic spoon, contrived to
scoop

In ample draughts the thin, diluted soup,
Performs not well in those substantial things,
Whose mass adhesive to the metal clings;
Where the strong labial muscles must em-
brace

The gentle curve, and sweep the hollow
space,

With ease to enter and discharge the freight,
A bowl less concave, but still more dilate, 90
Becomes the pudding best. The shape, the
size,

A secret rests, unknown to vulgar eyes.

Experienced feeders can alone impart

A rule so much above the lore of art.

These tuneful lips that thousand spoons have
tried,

With just precision could the point decide,
Though not in song; the muse but poorly
shines

In cones, and cubes, and geometric lines.

Yet the true form, as near as she can tell,

Is that small section of a goose-egg shell, 100
Which in two equal portions shall divide

The distance from the center to the side.

Fear not to slaver; 'tis no deadly sin.

Like the free Frenchman, from your joyous
chin

Suspend the ready napkin; or, like me,
Poise with one hand your bowl upon your
knee;

Just in the zenith your wise head project,

Your full spoon, rising in a line direct,

Bold as a bucket, heeds no drops that fall;

The wide-mouthed bowl will surely catch
them all!

PHILIP FRENEAU (1752-1832)

Philip Morin Freneau was born in New York on 13 January, 1752, the son of a prosperous Huguenot merchant who also owned a large country estate in New Jersey. In his sixteenth year Philip entered the sophomore class of the college at Princeton. Several of his classmates were youths who were to become notable men, one of them being James Madison; and in the class below him was Aaron Burr. Already when he entered college Philip was an easy and copious writer, particularly of heroic verse, and at Princeton his writing was continued and encouraged. After his graduation (1771) Freneau spent several years teaching school, at first in Flatbush, Long Island, where, however, he remained only thirteen days, after which he wrote to Madison: "Long Island I have bid adieu, With all its brutish, brainless crew. The youth of that detested place Are void of reason and of grace. From Flushing hills to Flatbush plains Deep ignorance unrivaled reigns." The remainder of his school-teaching was done near Princess Anne, Maryland. Already he had published a number of poems, and in the summer of 1775 he was in New York, fired by the impending trouble with England, and writing many satiric verses against the British. Even thus early in his career, however, he was beginning to suffer from the lack of poetic appreciation amongst his contemporaries, and in the autumn he sailed with a friend for Santa Cruz. On the voyage the mate died, and Freneau had to learn the art of navigation and take his place. For two years he made his home on the island of Santa Cruz, spending some time in short voyages, and writing poetry—notably *The Beauties of Santa Cruz*, *The House of Night*, and *The Jamaica Funeral*. The second of these is a long poem on death and the grave—too long to be reprinted here (only fragments of it, which lead to an incorrect impression, have been reprinted, save in F. L. Pattee's edition of Freneau's poems). This poem suffers from some radical defects, but has, nevertheless, received high praise for isolated lines of great beauty. It is, moreover, important for the connection it helps to establish between some of Freneau's work and the romantic movement, inasmuch as it anticipates both Coleridge and Poe.

In the summer of 1778 Freneau returned to America, and almost at once began publishing verses. He was an important and extensive contributor to the *United States Magazine*, edited by his college classmate, H. H. Brackenridge, which lived through twelve issues. Some notion of the condition of literature in 1779 may be gained from the editor's closing words. He declares that large numbers of Americans "inhabit the region of stupidity, and cannot bear to have the tranquillity of their repose disturbed by the villainous shock of a book. Reading is to them the worst of all torments, and I remember very well that at the commencement of the work it was their language, 'Art thou come to torment us before the time?' We will now say to them, 'Sleep on and take your rest.'"

In the winter of 1779-1780 Freneau was again on the sea, acting as supercargo on a ship sailing to the Azores. In the summer of 1780 he sailed from Philadelphia to revisit the West Indies, but his ship was taken by the British and the poet was kept a prisoner for some weeks, during which he was attacked by a dangerous fever. His experiences he described in *The Prison Ship*, a satiric poem. In 1781 he became, upon its establishment in Philadelphia, editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, a post which he held for three years. "During all of this time," says his editor (F. L. Pattee), "his muse was exceedingly active. He followed carefully the last years of the war, and put into satiric verse every movement of the 'insolent foe.' He sang the victory of Jones, and mourned in plaintive numbers the dead at Eutaw Springs. He voiced his indignation over the destructive career of Cornwallis, and burst into a *Laus Deo* at his fall. The ludicrous plight of Rivington and Gaines [royalist printers], the distress of the Tories, and the final departure of the British filled him with glee, which he poured out in song after song. It was his most prolific and spontaneous period." Yet he was not without moods of discouragement. "Barbers cannot possibly exist as such," he wrote, "among a people who have neither hair nor beards. How, then, can a poet hope for success in a city where there are not three persons possessed of elegant ideas?" As editor he wrote, besides verse, much prose, some of which should be better known. A convinced democrat, he not only assailed British tyranny but, like Thomas Paine, attacked negro slavery, and cruelty in every form, and championed the rights of woman. A journalistic attack upon him is thought to have caused his withdrawal from the paper in June, 1784, whereupon, as was usual with him throughout his life when he became hard pressed, he again took to the sea, and was chiefly engaged in sailing merchant ships until 1790. During this period, how-

ever, the first collected edition of his poems appeared (1786) and a supplementary volume containing prose and additional poems (1788).

In 1790 Freneau was married to Miss Eleanor Forman, and from this year until the spring of 1798 he was engaged in journalism in New York and Philadelphia. As was said, he was a democrat, and he regarded the French Revolution with enthusiasm. He wrote with intense zeal for the cause of the anti-federalists, and during a portion of the time was supported by Jefferson, who gave him a minor government post (at a salary of \$250 the year). The period was one of bitter controversy, and Washington, who sympathized with the federalists, came in for attack. On one occasion he angrily spoke of "That rascal, Freneau." No disinterested inquirer any longer doubts that Freneau was honest, and was sincere in his political beliefs, yet Washington's splenetic remark has often been used against him and has done much to injure his reputation, not only as a man, but as a poet. After the failure of several journalistic enterprises, Freneau retired with his family to his farm at Mount Pleasant, New Jersey, in 1798, and there he lived, often on the verge of poverty, during the greater part of his remaining years. From 1803 to 1807 he was once more on the sea, constrained by need; but after this his life at Mount Pleasant was unbroken, until his death from exposure in a snow-storm, on the night of 18 December, 1832. New editions of his poems had been published in 1795, 1809, and 1815.

Freneau has been called "the poet of the Revolution," and, as well, "the father of American verse." There is justice in both phrases. A great poet he was not, but his talent was genuine within its limits. He was a cultured and well-read gentleman, and in his earliest verses went to school to the best masters, Milton, Gray, and Goldsmith. But, too, he was sensitive to the beauties of natural scenery and capable of romantic feeling, and he presently struck an independent note, simple and unaffected, in the lyrical appreciation of the American Indian and American nature. Further, there can be no doubt that Freneau's deepest feelings were touched by the democratic principles of Thomas Paine and by the cause of democracy in America and in France. He served America as best he could in many satiric poems, a few of which, by reason of their vigor and originality, have intrinsic worth, beyond their historic interest. Some of his lyrics, too, inspired by the French Revolution, are among his best. And, finally, his experiences on shipboard stimulated him to the composition of lyrics of the sea which at the time were new in kind and which remain interesting for their spirited tone and their authentic quality. There can be no doubt that Freneau's development was hindered by his environment and personal circumstances. The greater part of his verse is interesting only to the historian or antiquarian. Yet he wrote a few poems which are intrinsically fine in conception and workmanship and which are not derivative in character;—enough to distinguish him as America's earliest genuine poet.

ON THE MEMORABLE VICTORY OF PAUL JONES¹

O'ER the rough main with flowing sheet
The guardian of a numerous fleet,
 Seraphis from the Baltic came;
A ship of less tremendous force
Sailed by her side the self-same course,
 Countess of Scarb'ro' was her name.

And now their native coasts appear,
Britannia's hills their summits rear
 Above the German main;
Fond to suppose their dangers o'er, 10
They southward coast along the shore,
Thy waters, gentle Thames, to gain.

Full forty guns *Seraphis* bore,
And *Scarb'ro's Countess* twenty-four,
Manned with Old England's boldest tars—

What flag that rides the Gallic seas
Shall dare attack such piles as these,
 Designed for tumults and for wars!

Now from the top-mast's giddy height
A seaman cried—"Four sail in sight 20
 Approach with favoring gales";
Pearson, resolved to save the fleet,
Stood off to sea these ships to meet,
 And closely braced his shivering sails.

With him advanced the *Countess* bold,
Like a black tar in wars grown old:
 And now these floating piles drew nigh;
But, muse, unfold what chief of fame
In th' other warlike squadron came,
 Whose standards at his mast-head fly. 30

'Twas Jones, brave Jones, to battle led
As bold a crew as ever bled
 Upon the sky-surrounded main;
The standards of the Western World
Were to the willing winds unfurled,
 Denying Britain's tyrant reign.

¹ Written early in August, 1781. Published in *Free-man's Journal*. The event celebrated occurred on 23 September, 1779.

The *Good Man Richard* led the line;
 The *Alliance* next: with these combine
 The Gallic ship they *Pallas* call:
 The *Vengeance*, armed with sword and
 flame, 40
 These to attack the Britons came—
 But two accomplished all.

Now Phœbus sought his pearly bed:
 But who can tell the scenes of dread,
 The horrors of that fatal night!
 Close up these floating castles came;
 The *Good Man Richard* bursts in flame:
Seraphis trembled at the sight.

She felt the fury of her ball,
 Down, prostrate down, the Britons fall; 50
 The decks were strewn with slain:
 Jones to the foe his vessel lashed;
 And, while the black artillery flashed,
 Loud thunders shook the main.

Alas! that mortals should employ
 Such murdering engines, to destroy
 That frame by heav'n so nicely joined;
 Alas! that e'er the god decreed
 That brother should by brother bleed,
 And poured such madness in the mind. 60

But thou, brave Jones, no blame shalt bear,
 The rights of men demand thy care:
 For these you dare the greedy waves—
 No tyrant on destruction bent
 Has planned thy conquests—thou art sent
 To humble tyrants and their slaves.

See!—dread *Seraphis* flames again—
 And art thou, Jones, among the slain,
 And sunk to Neptune's caves below—
 He lives—though crowds around him fall, 70
 Still he, unhurt, survives them all;
 Almost alone he fights the foe.

And can thy ship these strokes sustain?
 Behold thy brave companions slain,
 All clasped in ocean's dark embrace.
 "Strike, or be sunk!"—the Briton cries—
 "Sink, if you can!"—the chief replies,
 Fierce lightnings blazing in his face.

Then to the side three guns he drew
 (Almost deserted by his crew), 80
 And charged them deep with woe:

By Pearson's flash he aimed the balls;
 His main-mast totters—down it falls—
 Tremendous was the blow.

Pearson as yet disdained to yield,
 But scarce his secret fears concealed,
 And thus was heard to cry—
 "With hell, not mortals, I contend;
 What art thou—human, or a fiend,
 That dost my force defy? 90

"Return, my lads, the fight renew!"
 So called bold Pearson to his crew;
 But called, alas! in vain;
 Some on the decks lay maimed and dead;
 Some to their deep recesses fled,
 And more were buried in the main.

Distressed, forsaken, and alone,
 He hauled his tattered standard down,
 And yielded to his gallant foe;
 Bold *Pallas* soon the *Countess* took, 100
 Thus both their haughty colors struck,
 Confessing what the brave can do.

But, Jones, too dearly didst thou buy
 These ships possessed so gloriously,
 Too many deaths disgraced the fray:
 Thy bark that bore the conquering flame,
 That the proud Briton overcame,
 Even she forsook thee on thy way;

For when the morn began to shine,
 Fatal to her, the ocean brine 110
 Poured through each spacious wound;
 Quick in the deep she disappeared,
 But Jones to friendly *Belgia* steered,
 With conquest and with glory crowned.

Go on, great man, to daunt the foe,
 And bid the haughty Britons know
 They to our Thirteen Stars shall bend;
 The Stars that veiled in dark attire,
 Long glimmered with a feeble fire,
 But radiant now ascend; 120

Bend to the Stars that flaming rise
 In western, not in eastern, skies,
 Fair Freedom's reign restored.
 So when the magi, come from far,
 Beheld the God-attending Star,
 They trembled and adored.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE BRAVE
AMERICANS¹

UNDER GENERAL GREENE, IN SOUTH CAROLINA,
WHO FELL IN THE ACTION OF
SEPTEMBER 8, 1781

At Eutaw Springs the valiant died;
Their limbs with dust are covered o'er—
Weep on, ye springs, your tearful tide;
How many heroes are no more!

If in this wreck of ruin they
Can yet be thought to claim a tear,
O smite your gentle breast, and say
The friends of freedom slumber here!

Thou, who shalt trace this bloody plain,
If goodness rules thy generous breast, 10
Sigh for the wasted rural reign;
Sigh for the shepherds, sunk to rest!

Stranger, their humble graves adorn;
You too may fall, and ask a tear;
'Tis not the beauty of the morn
That proves the evening shall be clear.

They saw their injured country's woe;
The flaming town, the wasted field;
Then rushed to meet the insulting foe;
They took the spear—but left the 20
shield.²

Led by thy conquering genius, Greene,
The Britons they compelled to fly;
None distant viewed the fatal plain,
None grieved, in such a cause to die—

But, like the Parthian, famed of old,
Who, flying, still their arrows threw,
These routed Britons, full as bold,
Retreated, and retreating slew.

Now rest in peace, our patriot band;
Though far from nature's limits thrown, 30
We trust they find a happier land,
A brighter sunshine of their own.

¹ First published in *Freeman's Journal*, 21 November, 1781. The number of Americans lost, counting killed, wounded, and missing, was 554.

² Sir Walter Scott praised this poem and also used this line in the introduction to Canto III of *Marmion* (l. 64): "And snatched the spear but left the shield."

THE POLITICAL BALANCE³

OR, THE FATES OF BRITAIN AND AMERICA
COMPARED

A TALE

*Deciding Fates, in Homer's style, we show,
And bring contending gods once more to view.*

As Jove the Olympian (whom both I and you
know,
Was brother to Neptune, and husband to
Juno)
Was lately reviewing his papers of state,
He happened to light on the records of Fate:

In Alphabet order this volume was written—
So he opened at B, for the article Britain—
She struggles so well, said the god, I will see
What the sisters in Pluto's dominions decree.

And first, on the top of a column he read
"Of a king with a mighty soft place in his
head, 10
Who should join in his temper the ass and the
mule,
The third of his name, and by far the worst
fool:

"His reign shall be famous for multiplication,
The sire and the king of a whelp generation:
But such is the will and the purpose of fate,
For each child he begets he shall forfeit a
State:

"In the course of events, he shall find to his
cost
That he cannot regain what he foolishly
lost;
Of the nations around he shall be the de-
rision,
And know by experience the rule of Divi-
sion." 20

So Jupiter read—a god of first rank—
And still had read on—but he came to a
blank:
For the Fates had neglected the rest to
reveal—
They either forgot it, or chose to conceal:

When a leaf is torn out, or a blot on a page
That pleases our fancy, we fly in a rage—

³ First published in *Freeman's Journal*, 3 April, 1782.

So, curious to know what the Fates would
say next,
No wonder if Jove, disappointed, was vexed.

But still as true genius not frequently fails,
He glanced at the Virgin, and thought of the
Scales;¹ 30
And said, "To determine the will of the
Fates,
One scale shall weigh Britain, the other the
States."

Then turning to Vulcan, his maker of thunder,
Said he, "My dear Vulcan, I pray you look
yonder,
Those creatures are tearing each other to
pieces,
And, instead of abating, the carnage in-
creases.

"Now, as you are a blacksmith, and lusty
stout ham-eater,
You must make me a globe of a shorter
diameter;
The world in abridgment, and just as it
stands
With all its proportions of waters and
lands; 40

"But its various divisions must so be de-
signed,
That I can unhinge it whene'er I've a
mind—
How else should I know what the portions
will weigh,
Or which of the combatants carry the day?"

Old Vulcan complied (we've no reason to
doubt it),
So he put on his apron and straight went
about it—
Made center, and circles as round as a pan-
cake,
And here the Pacific, and there the Atlantic.

An axis he hammered, whose ends were the
poles
(On which the whole body perpetually
rolls), 50
A brazen meridian he added to these,
Where four times repeated were ninety
degrees.

I am sure you had laughed to have seen his
droll attitude,
When he bent round the surface the circles
of latitude,
The zones and the tropics, meridians,
equator,
And other fine things that are drawn on
salt water.

Away to the southward (instructed by
Pallas)
He placed in the ocean the Terra Australis,
New Holland, New Guinea, and so of the
rest—
America lay by herself in the west: 60

From the regions where winter eternally
reigns,
To the climes of Peru he extended her plains;
Dark groves, and the zones did her bosom
adorn,
And the Crosiers,² new burnished, he hung
at Cape Horn.

The weight of two oceans she bore on her
sides,
With all their convulsions of tempests and
tides;
Vast lakes on her surface did fearfully roll,
And the ice from her rivers surrounded the
pole.

Then Europe and Asia he northward ex-
tended,
Where under the Arctic with Zembla they
ended 70
(The length of these regions he took with
his garters,
Including Siberia, the land of the Tartars).

In the African clime (where the cocoa-nut
tree grows)
He laid down the deserts, and even the
negroes,
The shores by the waves of four oceans em-
braced,
And elephants strolling about in the waste.

In forming East India, he had a wide scope,
Beginning his work at the cape of Good
Hope;
Then eastward of that he continued his plan,
Till he came to the empire and isles of
Japan. 80

² Stars, in the form of a cross, which mark the South Pole in southern latitudes. (Freneau's note.)

¹ This sign of the zodiac stands next to the Virgin.

Adjacent to Europe he struck up an island
(One part of it low, but the other was high
land),

With many a comical creature upon it,
And one wore a hat, and another a bonnet.

Like emmets or ants in a fine summer's day,
They ever were marching in battle array,
Or skipping about on the face of the brine,
Like witches in egg-shells (their ships of the
line).

These poor little creatures were all in a flame,
To the lands of America urging their
claim,
Still biting, or stinging, or spreading their
sails
(For Vulcan had formed them with stings in
their tails).⁹⁰

So poor and so lean, you might count all
their ribs.¹

Yet were so enraptured with crackers and
squibs,

That Vulcan with laughter almost split
asunder,

"Because they imagined their crackers were
thunder."

Due westward from these, with a channel
between,

A servant to slaves, Hibernia was seen,
Once crowded with monarchs, and high in
renown,

But all she retained was the Harp and the
Crown!¹⁰⁰

Insulted for ever by nobles and priests,
And managed by bullies, and governed by
beasts,

She looked!—to describe her I hardly know
how—

Such an image of death in the scowl on her
brow.

For scaffolds and halters were full in her
view,

And the fiends of perdition their cutlasses
drew:

And axes and gibbets around her were placed,
And the demons of murder her honors
defaced.

With the blood of the worthy her mantle
was stained,

And hardly a trace of her beauty re-
mained.¹¹⁰

Her genius, a female, reclined in the shade,
And, sick of oppression, so mournfully
played,

That Jove was uneasy to hear her complain,
And ordered his blacksmith to loosen her
chain:

Then tipped her a wink, saying, "Now is
your time

(To rebel is the sin, to revolt is no crime),

When your fetters are off, if you dare not
be free

Be a slave and be damned, but complain
not to me."

But finding her timid, he cried in a rage—
"Though the doors are flung open, she stays
in the cage!¹²⁰

Subservient to Britain then let her remain,
And her freedom shall be but the choice of
her chain."

At length, to discourage all stupid preten-
sions,

Jove looked at the globe, and approved its
dimensions,

And cried in a transport—"Why what have
we here!

Friend Vulcan, it is a most beautiful sphere!

"Now while I am busy in taking apart
This globe that is formed with such exquisite
art,

Go, Hermes, to Libra (you're one of her
gallants),

And ask, in my name, for the loan of her
balance."¹³⁰

Away posted Hermes, as swift as the gales,
And as swiftly returned with the ponderous
scales,

And hung them aloft to a beam in the air,
So equally poised, they had turned with a
hair.

Now Jove to Columbia his shoulders applied,
But aiming to lift her, his strength she
defied—

Then, turning about to their godships, he
says:

"A body so vast is not easy to raise;

¹ Their national debt being now above £200,000,000 sterling. (Freneau's note.)

"But if you assist me, I still have a notion
Our forces, united, can put her in motion, 140
And swing her aloft (though alone I might
fail),
And place her, in spite of her bulk, in our
scale;

"If six years together the Congress have
strove,
And more than divided the empire with
Jove;
With a Jove like myself, who am nine times
as great,
You can join, like their soldiers, to heave
up this weight."

So to it they went, with hand-spikes and
levers,
And upward she sprung, with her mountains
and rivers!
Rocks, cities, and islands, deep waters and
shallows,
Ships, armies, and forests, high heads and
fine fellows: 150

"Stick to it!" cries Jove, "now heave one
and all!
At least we are lifting 'one-eighth of the
ball'!
If backward she tumbles—then trouble
begins,
And then have a care, my dear boys, of your
shins!"

When gods are determined what project can
fail?
So they gave a hard shove, and she mounted
the scale;
Suspended aloft, Jove viewed her with awe—
And the gods,¹ for their pay, had a hearty—
huzza!

But Neptune bawled out—"Why Jove
you're a noddy,
Is Britain sufficient to poise that vast
body? 160
'Tis nonsense such castles to build in the
air—
As well might an oyster with Britain com-
pare."

"Away to your waters, you blustering
bully,"
Said Jove, "or I'll make you repent of your
folly."

Is Jupiter, Sir, to be tutored by you?—
Get out of my sight, for I know what to do!"

Then searching about with his fingers for
Britain,
Thought he, "This same island I cannot
well hit on;
The devil take him who first called her the
Great:
If she was—she is vastly diminished of
late!" 170

Like a man that is searching his thigh for a
flea,
He peeped and he fumbled, but nothing could
see;
At last he exclaimed: "I am surely upon
it—
I think I have hold of a Highlander's
bonnet."

But finding his error, he said with a sigh,
"This bonnet is only the island of Skie!"²
So away to his namesake the planet he goes,
And borrowed two moons to hang on his
nose.

Through these, as through glasses, he saw
her quite clear,
And in raptures cried out: "I have found
her—she's here! 180
If this be not Britain, then call me an ass—
She looks like a gem in an ocean of glass.

"But, faith, she's so small I must mind how
I shake her;
In a box I'll enclose her, for fear I should
break her:
Though a god, I might suffer for being
aggressor,
Since scorpions, and vipers, and hornets
possess her;

"The white cliffs of Albion I think I descry—
And the hills of Plinlimmon appear rather
nigh—
But, Vulcan, inform me what creatures are
these,
That smell so of onions, and garlic, and
cheese?" 190

Old Vulcan replied—"Odds splutter a nails!
Why, these are the Welsh, and the country
is Wales!

¹ American soldiers. (Freneau's note.)

² An island on the north-west of Scotland. (Freneau's note.)

When Taffy is vexed, no devil is ruder—
Take care how you trouble the offspring of
Tudor!

“On the crags of the mountains *hur* living
hur seeks,
Hur country is planted with garlic and leeks;
So great is *hur* choler, beware how you tease
hur,
For these are the Britons—unconquered by
Cæsar.”

Jove peeped through his moons, and ex-
amined their features,
And said: “By my truth, they are wonderful
creatures, 200
The beards are so long that encircle their
throats,
That (unless they are Welshmen) I swear
they are *goats*.”

“But now, my dear Juno, pray give me my
mittens
(These insects I am going to handle are
Britons),
I’ll draw up their isle with a finger and
thumb,
As the doctor extracts an old tooth from
the gum.”

Then he raised her aloft—but to shorten
our tale,
She looked like a clod in the opposite scale—
Britannia so small, and Columbia so large—
A ship of first rate, and a ferryman’s barge!

Cried Pallas to Vulcan: “Why, Jove’s in a
dream— 211
Observe how he watches the turn of the
beam!
Was ever a mountain outweighed by a grain!
Or what is a drop when compared to the
main?”

But Momus alleged: “In my humble opin-
ion,
You should add to Great Britain her foreign
dominion,
When this is appended, perhaps she will rise,
And equal her rival in weight and in size.”

“Alas!” said the monarch, “your project is
vain,
But little is left of her foreign domain; 220

And, scattered about in the liquid expanse,
That little is left to the mercy of France.

“However, we’ll lift them, and give her fair
play”—
And soon in the scale with their mistress
they lay;
But the gods were confounded and struck
with surprise,
And Vulcan could hardly believe his own
eyes!

For (such was the purpose and guidance of
fate)
Her foreign dominions diminished her
weight—
By which it appeared, to Britain’s disaster,
Her foreign possessions were changing their
master. 230

Then, as he replaced them, said Jove with a
smile:
“Columbia shall never be ruled by an isle—
But vapors and darkness around her may
rise,
And tempests conceal her awhile from our
eyes;

“So locusts in Egypt their squadrons dis-
play,
And rising, disfigure the face of the day;
So the moon, at her full, has a frequent
eclipse,
And the sun in the ocean diurnally dips.

“Then cease your endeavors, ye vermin of
Britain”
(And here, in derision, their island he spit
on); 240
“’Tis madness to seek what you never can
find,
Or to think of uniting what nature disjoined;

“But still you may flutter awhile with your
wings,
And spit out your venom and brandish your
stings:
Your hearts are as black and as bitter as gall,
A curse to mankind—and a blot on the Ball.”¹

¹ It is hoped that such a sentiment may not be
deemed wholly illiberal. Every candid person will
certainly draw a line between a brave and magnanimous
people and a most vicious and vitiating government.
(Freneau’s note.)

ON CAPTAIN BARNEY'S VICTORY OVER THE SHIP *GENERAL MONK*¹

O'ER the waste of waters cruising,
Long the *General Monk* had reigned;
All subduing, all reducing,
None her lawless rage restrained.
Many a brave and hearty fellow,
Yielding to this warlike foe,
When her guns began to bellow
Struck his humbled colors low.

But grown bold with long successes,
Leaving the wide watery way,
She, a stranger to distresses,
Came to cruise within Cape May:
"Now we soon," said Captain Rogers,
"Shall their men of commerce meet;
In our hold we'll have them lodgers,
We shall capture half their fleet.

"Lo! I see their van appearing—
Back our topsails to the mast—
They toward us full are steering
With a gentle western blast:
I've a list of all their cargoes,
All their guns, and all their men:
I am sure these modern Argos
Can't escape us one in ten:

"Yonder comes the *Charming Sally*
Sailing with the *General Greene*—
First we'll fight the *Hyder Ali*,
Taking her is taking them:
She intends to give us battle,
Bearing down with all her sail—
Now, boys, let our cannon rattle!
To take her we cannot fail.

"Our eighteen guns, each a nine-pounder,
Soon shall terrify this foe;
We shall maul her, we shall wound her,
Bringing rebel colors low."
While he thus anticipated
Conquests that he could not gain,
He in the Cape May channel waited
For the ship that caused his pain.

Captain Barney then preparing,
Thus addressed his gallant crew—
"Now, brave lads, be bold and daring,
Let your hearts be firm and true;

This is a proud English cruiser,
Roving up and down the main,
We must fight her—must reduce her,
Though our decks be strewn with slain.

"Let who will be the survivor,
We must conquer or must die,
We must take her up the river,
Whate'er comes of you or I:
Though she shows most formidable
With her eighteen pointed nines,
And her quarters clad in sable,
Let us balk her proud designs.

"With four nine-pounders, and twelve sixes
We will face that daring band;
Let no dangers damp your courage
Nothing can the brave withstand.
Fighting for your country's honor,
Now to gallant deeds aspire;
Helmsman, bear us down upon her,
Gunner, give the word to fire!"

Then yard-arm and yard-arm meeting,
Straight began the dismal fray,
Cannon mouths, each other greeting,
Belched their smoky flames away:
Soon the langrage,² grape, and chain shot,
That from Barney's cannons flew,
Swept the *Monk*, and cleared each round top,
Killed and wounded half her crew.

Captain Rogers strove to rally,
But they from their quarters fled,
While the roaring *Hyder Ali*
Covered o'er his decks with dead.
When from their tops their dead men
tumbled,
And the streams of blood did flow,
Then their proudest hopes were humbled
By their brave inferior foe.

All aghast, and all confounded,
They beheld their champions fall,
And their captain, sorely wounded,
Bade them quick for quarters call.
Then the *Monk's* proud flag descended,
And her cannon ceased to roar;
By her crew no more defended,
She confessed the contest o'er.

¹ First published in *Freeman's Journal*, 8 May, 1782.

² Kind of shot at this time used for tearing sails and rigging.

Come, brave boys, and fill your glasses,
 You have humbled one proud foe; 90
 No brave action this surpasses,
 Fame shall tell the nations so.
 Thus be Britain's woes completed,
 Thus abridged her cruel reign,
 Till she ever, thus defeated,
 Yields the scepter of the main.

THE WILD HONEY SUCKLE¹

FAIR flower, that dost so comely grow,
 Hid in this silent, dull retreat,
 Untouched thy honied blossoms blow,
 Unseen thy little branches greet:
 No roving foot shall crush thee here,
 No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white arrayed,
 She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
 And planted here the guardian shade,
 And sent soft waters murmuring by; 10
 Thus quietly thy summer goes,
 Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,
 I grieve to see your future doom;
 They died—nor were those flowers more
 gay,
 The flowers that did in Eden bloom;
 Unpitying frosts, and Autumn's power,
 Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dew
 At first thy little being came: 20
 If nothing once, you nothing lose,
 For when you die you are the same;
 The space between, is but an hour,
 The frail duration of a flower.

TO AN AUTHOR²

YOUR leaves bound up compact and fair,
 In neat array at length prepare
 To pass their hour on learning's stage,
 To meet the surly critic's rage;
 The statesman's slight, the smatterer's
 sneer—

Were these, indeed, your only fear,
 You might be tranquil and resigned:
 What most should touch your fluttering
 mind
 Is that few critics will be found
 To sift your works, and deal the wound. 10

Thus, when one fleeting year is past
 On some bye-shelf your book is cast—
 Another comes, with something new,
 And drives you fairly out of view:
 With some to praise, but more to blame,
 The mind returns to—whence it came;
 And some alive, who scarce could read
 Will publish satires on the dead.

Thrice happy Dryden, who could meet
 Some rival bard in every street! 20
 When all were bent on writing well
 It was some credit to excel!

Thrice happy Dryden, who could find
 A Milbourne for his sport designed—
 And Pope, who saw the harmless rage
 Of Dennis bursting o'er his page,
 Might justly spurn the critic's aim,
 Who only helped to swell his fame.

On these bleak climes by Fortune thrown,
 Where rigid Reason reigns alone, 30
 Where lovely Fancy has no sway,
 Nor magic forms about us play,
 Nor nature takes her summer hue,
 Tell me, what has the muse to do?

An age employed in edging steel
 Can no poetic raptures feel;
 No solitude's attracting power,
 No leisure of the noonday hour,
 No shaded stream, no quiet grove
 Can this fantastic century move. 40

The muse of love in no request—
 Go—try your fortune with the rest,
 One of the nine you should engage,
 To meet the follies of the age.

On one, we fear, your choice must fall,
 The least engaging of them all;
 Her visage stern—an angry style—
 A clouded brow—malicious smile—
 A mind on murdered victims placed—
 She, only she, can please the taste! 50

¹ First published in *Freeman's Journal*, 2 August, 1786.

² First published in collective edition of 1788.

THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND¹

In spite of all the learn'd have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The posture that we give the dead,
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands—
The Indian, when from life released,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.²

His imaged birds, and painted bowl,
And venison, for a journey dressed, 10
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
Activity, that knows no rest.

His bow, for action ready bent,
And arrows, with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit—
Observe the swelling turf, and say
They do not lie, but here they sit. 20

Here still a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace
(Now wasted, half, by wearing rains)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
Beneath whose far-projecting shade
(And which the shepherd still admires)
The children of the forest played!

There oft a restless Indian queen
(Pale Shebah, with her braided hair) 30
And many a barbarous form is seen
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
In habit for the chase arrayed,
The hunter still the deer pursues,
The hunter and the deer, a shade!³

And long shall timorous fancy see
The painted chief, and pointed spear,
And Reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here. 40

ODE⁴

God save the Rights of Man!
Give us a heart to scan
Blessings so dear;
Let them be spread around
Wherever man is found,
And with the welcome sound
Ravish his ear.

Let us with France agree,
And bid the world be free,
While tyrants fall! 10
Let the rude savage host
Of their vast numbers boast—
Freedom's almighty trust
Laughs at them all!

Though hosts of slaves conspire
To quench fair Gallia's fire,
Still shall they fail:
Though traitors round her rise,
Leagued with her enemies, 20
To war each patriot flies,
And will prevail.

No more is valor's flame
Devoted to a name,
Taught to adore—
Soldiers of Liberty
Disdain to 'bow the knee,
But teach Equality
To every shore.

The world at last will join
To aid thy grand design, 30
Dear Liberty!
To Russia's frozen lands
The generous flame expands:
On Afric's burning sands
Shall man be free!

In this our western world
Be Freedom's flag unfurled
Through all its shores!

¹ First published in collective edition of 1788.

² The North American Indians bury their dead in a sitting posture, decorating the corpse with wampum, the images of birds, quadrupeds, etc.; and (if that of a warrior) with bows, arrows, tomahawks, and other military weapons. (Freneau's note.)

³ Thomas Campbell borrowed this line, using it in the fourth stanza of his poem entitled *O'Connor's Child*.

⁴ First published, as far as is known, in collective edition of 1795, but said to have been sung at the November Festival of the London Revolution Society in 1791. It was sung at the Civic Feast held in honor of Citizen Genêt in Philadelphia on 1 June, 1793.

May no destructive blast
Our heaven of joy o'ercast,
May Freedom's fabric last
While time endures.

If e'er her cause require!—
Should tyrants e'er aspire
To aim their stroke,
May no proud despot daunt—
Should he his standard plant,
Freedom will never want
Her heart of oak!

ON A HONEY BEE¹

DRINKING FROM A GLASS OF WINE AND
DROWNED THEREIN

THOU, born to sip the lake or spring,
Or quaff the waters of the stream,
Why hither come on vagrant wing?—
Does Bacchus tempting seem—
Did he, for you, this glass prepare?—
Will I admit you to a share?

Did storms harass or foes perplex,
Did wasps or king-birds bring dismay—
Did wars distress, or labors vex,
Or did you miss your way?—
A better seat you could not take
Than on the margin of this lake.

Welcome!—I hail you to my glass:
All welcome, here, you find;
Here, let the cloud of trouble pass,
Here, be all care resigned.
This fluid never fails to please,
And drown the griefs of men or bees.

What forced you here, we cannot know,
And you will scarcely tell—
But cheery we would have you go
And bid a glad farewell:
On lighter wings we bid you fly,
Your dart will now all foes defy.

Yet take not, oh! too deep a drink,
And in this ocean die;
Here bigger bees than you might sink,
Even bees full six feet high.
Like Pharaoh, then, you would be said
To perish in a sea of red.

40

Do as you please, your will is mine;
Enjoy it without fear—
And your grave will be this glass of wine,
Your epitaph—a tear—
Go, take your seat in Charon's boat,
We'll tell the hive, you died afloat.

ON THE ANNIVERSARY²

OF THE STORMING OF THE BASTILLE, AT PARIS,
14 JULY, 1789

THE chiefs that bow to Capet's reign,
In mourning, now, their weeds display;
But we, that scorn a monarch's chain,
Combine to celebrate the day

To Freedom's birth that put the seal,
And laid in dust the proud Bastille.

To Gallia's rich and splendid crown,
This mighty Day gave such a blow
As Time's recording hand shall own
No former age had power to do:

10

No single gem some Brutus stole,
But instant ruin seized the whole.

Now tyrants rise, once more to bind
In royal chains a nation freed—
Vain hope! for they, to death consigned,
Shall soon, like perjured Louis, bleed:
O'er every king, o'er every queen,
Fate hangs the sword, and guillotine.

10

"Plunged in a gulf of deep distress
France turns her back (so traitors say);
Kings, priests, and nobles, round her press,
Resolved to seize their destined prey:
Thus Europe swears (in arms combined)
To Poland's doom is France consigned."

20

Yet those, who now are thought so low
From conquests that were basely gained,
Shall rise tremendous from the blow
And free Two Worlds, that still are chained,
Restrict the Briton to his isle,
And Freedom plant in every soil.

30

Ye sons of this degenerate clime,
Haste, arm the bark, expand the sail;
Assist to speed that golden time
When Freedom rules, and monarchs fail;
All left to France—new powers may join,
And help to crush the cause divine.

30

¹ Published in the collective edition of 1809.

² First published in *National Gazette*, 17 July, 1793.

Ah! while I write, dear France Allied,
 My ardent wish I scarce restrain,
 To throw these Sybil leaves aside,
 And fly to join you on the main: 40
 Unfurl the topsail for the chase
 And help to crush the tyrant race!

THE REPUBLICAN GENIUS OF EUROPE¹

Emperors and kings! in vain you strive
 Your torments to conceal—
 The age is come that shakes your thrones,
 Tramples in dust despotic crowns
 And bids the scepter fail.

In western worlds the flame began:
 From thence to France it flew—
 Through Europe, now, it takes its way,
 Beams an insufferable day,
 And lays all tyrants low. 10

Genius of France! pursue the chase
 Till Reason's laws restore
 Man to be Man, in every clime;—
 That Being, active, great, sublime,
 Debased in dust no more.

In dreadful pomp he takes his way
 O'er ruined crowns, demolished thrones—
 Pale tyrants shrink before his blaze—
 Round him terrific lightnings play—
 With eyes of fire, he looks them through,
 Crushes the vile despotic crew, 21
 And Pride in ruin lays.

TO A CATY-DID²

IN A branch of willow hid
 Sings the evening Caty-did:
 From the lofty locust bough
 Feeding on a drop of dew,
 In her suit of green arrayed
 Hear her singing in the shade
 Caty-did, Caty-did, Caty-did!

While upon a leaf you tread,
 Or repose your little head,
 On your sheet of shadows laid, 10
 All the day you nothing said:
 Half the night your cheery tongue
 Reveled out its little song,
 Nothing else but Caty-did.

From your lodgings on the leaf
 Did you utter joy or grief?
 Did you only mean to say,
 I have had my summer's day,
 And am passing, soon, away
 To the grave of Caty-did:— 20
 Poor, unhappy Caty-did!

But you would have uttered more
 Had you known of nature's power—
 From the world when you retreat,
 And a leaf's your winding sheet
 Long before your spirit fled,
 Who can tell but nature said,
 Live again, my Caty-did!
 Live, and chatter Caty-did.

Tell me, what did Caty do? 30
 Did she mean to trouble you?—
 Why was Caty not forbid
 To trouble little Caty-did?—
 Wrong, indeed at you to fling,
 Hurting no one while you sing
 Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

Why continue to complain?
 Caty tells me, she again
 Will not give you plague or pain:—
 Caty says you may be hid; 40
 Caty will not go to bed
 While you sing us Caty-did.
 Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

But, while singing, you forgot
 To tell us what did Caty not:
 Caty-did not think of cold,
 Flocks retiring to the fold,
 Winter, with his wrinkles old,
 Winter, that yourself foretold
 When you gave us Caty-did. 50

Stay securely in your nest;
 Caty now will do her best,
 All she can to make you bless'd;
 But, you want no human aid—
 Nature, when she formed you, said,
 "Independent you are made,
 My dear little Caty-did:
 Soon yourself must disappear
 With the verdure of the year,"—
 And to go, we know not where, 60
 With your song of Caty-did.

¹ First published in *Jersey Chronicle*, 23 May, 1795.

² Published in collective edition of 1815.

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783-1859)

"The first ambassador whom the New World of Letters sent to the Old"—the description is Thackeray's—was born in New York on 3 April, 1783. His father was a merchant, honest and blameless in his life, but severe and devoted to a stern religion—so devoted that he would have had his children believe that all pleasures were sinful. Mrs. Irving was of sotter, gentler temper, like Washington, her youngest and eleventh child. Thanks to her the child was tenderly brought up. In his boyhood he was mischievous and an indifferent student, though an eager reader of such narratives of adventure as he could find. In 1799, after he had attended for varying periods some four different schools, he entered a law office to prepare himself for a legal career. His study was not over-zealous and was much interrupted—by literary reading, which included novels by Mrs. Radcliffe and Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, by attempts at essay-writing, by social diversion, and by travel. It was owing to poor health that he was sent abroad in 1804, where he traveled in Sicily, Italy, France, Holland, and England, returning to America early in 1806. In the fall of the same year he was admitted to the bar, rather, it has been thought, because of the friendship of one of his examiners than because of his knowledge of the law. He never made more than a vague pretense at the practice of his profession, but instead gave himself over to a gay social life, fell in love with a beautiful young girl, Matilda Hoffman, and joined his brother and a friend in writing a series of essays, *Salmagundi*, imitative of Addison's *Spectator*, to "amuse, edify, and castigate the town." The castigation was mild and the town was genuinely amused. Following this success, Irving, with another brother, undertook to write a parody of "a small handbook which had recently appeared, entitled *A Picture of New York*." Presently the brother went to Europe, and Irving, working on alone, altered the plan, so that the book became a humorous *History of New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty*, by *Diedrich Knickerbocker*. It was published in December, 1809. Earlier in the same year Matilda Hoffman had died, causing Irving grief which was deep and not easily forgotten, but which has been exaggerated by most of his biographers.

In 1810 he was taken into their hardware business by his brothers, their object being to give him an income, but to leave him free for literary work. Though during the next few years he was connected with two periodicals, he did little writing, and chiefly used his freedom to enjoy social life. His most recent biographer (G. S. Hellman) believes that during this period Irving proposed marriage to a Scotchwoman some years his senior but, if he did so, his proposal was rejected. In the late spring of 1815 he sailed for Liverpool, where one of his brothers conducted the English establishment of the firm. He expected to remain in England only a few months, but in fact did not return to America until seventeen years later. His brother in Liverpool had become practically an invalid, and Irving took charge of the business, but was able also to travel occasionally. His circle of acquaintance, always wide, soon included Thomas Campbell, Francis Jeffrey, editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, and Sir Walter Scott. In 1818 the Irving firm, which had been suffering from unsettled business conditions, became bankrupt, and Irving now had, for the first time, to face the problem of earning a living. After a period of distress and hesitation he determined to try to make his way by writing, and began the series of essays which was published in seven numbers, or parts, in 1819-1820, with the title, *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent*. The book was an immediate and great success in both America and England, and it seemed that Irving would have no difficulty in earning his living by his pen. For many years, however, he was more or less embarrassed financially, because he was almost uniformly unfortunate in the speculations into which he ventured with the large profits from this and succeeding volumes. *Bracebridge Hall* was published in 1822, and *Tales of a Traveler* in 1824.

Meanwhile in 1821 Irving had left England for the Continent, had spent some time in Paris, and then had traveled in Germany, where, in the winter of 1822-1823, he had met an English girl, Emily Foster, whom he had sought to marry. Probably he continued for several years to press his suit, but without success. In 1826 he went to Madrid as a member of the American legation, and began work upon his *History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (published 1828). He traveled extensively in Spain, visiting the Alhambra in 1828, and living there for some time in 1829. In the latter year his *Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* was published, and he returned to England to

become secretary of the legation in London. His continued success and increasing reputation were signalized by high honors, which included a D.C.L. from Oxford in 1831. In the same year the *Italian Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus* was published, and in 1832 *The Alhambra*. In this year also Irving returned to New York, where he met with an overwhelming reception. He continued, however, to be a wanderer, traveling in the West and South. In 1836 he settled in the house at Tarrytown, on the Hudson, which he later called "Sunnyside." About this time were published several books resulting from his Western travels—notably *A Tour of the Prairies* (1835). Irving was now and later embarrassed by multiplied indications of his eminence, and had to decline two invitations to high public office, as well as many lesser invitations. As early as 1838 he began to work upon his *Life of George Washington*. In 1841 he accepted appointment as American Minister to Spain, and from 1842 until 1846 he was again in Europe. During the remaining years of his life he published his books on Goldsmith (1849), Mahomet (1849-1850), and Washington (1855-1859), besides other volumes. He died at "Sunnyside" on 28 November, 1859.

Irving's mild, gentle, companionable nature gave him a multitude of warm friends and, communicated to his books, made him perhaps the best loved, as well as one of the most highly honored, of nineteenth-century writers. He probably never understood his father's austere Calvinism, but he felt and resented the conscientious officiousness which seemed to be its chief outward sign. Given his own character, his conclusion was inevitable: "For my part, I have not so bad an opinion of mankind as many of my brother philosophers. I do not think poor human nature so sorry a piece of workmanship as they would make it out to be; and as far as I have observed, I am fully satisfied that man, if left to himself, would about as readily go right as wrong." His bent was for worldly enjoyment and the cultivation of sentiment, and he gave himself free rein, with at least innocent results. Thomas Moore, after unsuccessful attempts to exhibit Irving to several acquaintances, wrote that he was "not strong as a lion, but delightful as a domestic animal." Francis Jeffrey, a friendly and appreciative critic, pointed out that the sweetness and charm which made him thus delightful were, if unrelieved, in danger of proving insipid. Mildness and gentleness are well, but we want, too, positive force. Irving, however, shrank from the actual world about him. As a boy he loved what was picturesque, strange, and distant. As a young man he seized upon the Dutch past of New York as its "poetic age, . . . poetic from its very obscurity," and he sought "to clothe home scenes and places and familiar names with those imaginative and whimsical associations so seldom met with in our new country, but which live like charms and spells about the cities of the old world, binding the heart of the native inhabitant to his home." In this aim he was at the time eminently successful, though *Knickerbocker's History* is immature, diffuse, and no longer really readable as a whole. But again, in those of his writings which still secure his fame because of their intrinsic worth—in *Rip Van Winkle*, the English essays, and *The Alhambra*—Irving finds himself most at home in an imaginative or legendary past. Indeed, one is not far wrong who thinks of him as a gracious ambassador, to us an ambassador from the world of sentimental fancy, as he was in his own time an ambassador who succeeded remarkably in creating friendly feeling for America in England and Europe.

THE SKETCH BOOK

THE AUTHOR'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF

"I am of this mind with Homer, that as the snail that crept out of her shell was turned afterwards into a toad, and thereby was forced to make a stool to sit on; so the traveller that straggleth from his own country is in a short time transformed into so monstrous a shape, that he is faine to alter his mansion with his manners, and to live where he can, not where he would."

LYLY'S *EUPHUES*.

I WAS always fond of visiting new scenes, and observing strange characters and manners. Even when a mere child I began my travels, and made many tours of discovery into foreign parts and unknown regions of

my native city, to the frequent alarm of my parents and the emolument of the town-crier. As I grew into boyhood, I extended the range of my observations. My holiday afternoons were spent in rambles about the surrounding country. I made myself familiar with all its places famous in history or fable. I knew every spot where a murder or robbery had been committed, or a ghost seen. I visited the neighboring villages, and added greatly to my stock of knowledge, by noting their habits and customs, and conversing with their sages and great men. I even journeyed one long summer's day to the summit of the most distant hill, whence I stretched my eye over many a mile of terra incognita, and was astonished to find how vast a globe I inhabited.

This rambling propensity strengthened with my years. Books of voyages and travels became my passion, and in devouring their contents I neglected the regular exercises of the school. How wistfully would I wander about the pier-heads in fine weather, and watch the parting ships, bound to distant climes; with what longing eyes would I gaze after their lessening sails, and waft myself in imagination to the ends of the earth!

Further reading and thinking, though they brought this vague inclination into more reasonable bounds, only served to make it more decided. I visited various parts of my own country; and had I been merely a lover of fine scenery, I should have felt little desire to seek elsewhere its gratification, for on no country have the charms of nature been more prodigally lavished. Her mighty lakes, like oceans of liquid silver; her mountains, with their bright ærial tints; her valleys, teeming with wild fertility; her tremendous cataracts, thundering in their solitudes; her boundless plains, waving with spontaneous verdure; her broad deep rivers, rolling in solemn silence to the ocean; her trackless forests, where vegetation puts forth all its magnificence; her skies, kindling with the magic of summer clouds and glorious sunshine;—no, never need an American look beyond his own country for the sublime and beautiful of natural scenery.

But Europe held forth the charms of storied and poetical association. There were to be seen the masterpieces of art, the refinements of highly cultivated society, the quaint peculiarities of ancient and local custom. My native country was full of youthful promise: Europe was rich in the accumulated treasures of age. Her very ruins told the history of times gone by, and every moldering stone was a chronicle. I longed to wander over the scenes of renowned achievement—to tread, as it were, in the footsteps of antiquity—to loiter about the ruined castle—to meditate on the falling tower—to escape, in short, from the commonplace realities of the present, and lose myself among the shadowy grandeurs of the past.

I had, beside all this, an earnest desire to see the great men of the earth. We have, it is true, our great men in America: not a city but has an ample share of them. I have

mingled among them in my time, and been almost withered by the shade into which they cast me; for there is nothing so baleful to a small man as the shade of a great one, particularly the great man of a city. But I was anxious to see the great men of Europe; for I had read in the works of various philosophers, that all animals degenerated in America, and man among the number. A great man of Europe, thought I, must therefore be as superior to a great man of America as a peak of the Alps to a highland of the Hudson, and in this idea I was confirmed, by observing the comparative importance and swelling magnitude of many English travelers among us, who, I was assured, were very little people in their own country. I will visit this land of wonders, thought I, and see the gigantic race from which I am degenerated.

It has been either my good or evil lot to have my roving passion gratified. I have wandered through different countries, and witnessed many of the shifting scenes of life. I cannot say that I have studied them with the eye of a philosopher; but rather with the sauntering gaze with which humble lovers of the picturesque stroll from the window of one print-shop to another; caught sometimes by the delineations of beauty, sometimes by the distortions of caricature, and sometimes by the loveliness of landscape. As it is the fashion for modern tourists to travel pencil in hand, and bring home their portfolios filled with sketches, I am disposed to get up a few for the entertainment of my friends. When, however, I look over the hints and memorandums I have taken down for the purpose, my heart almost fails me at finding how my idle humor has led me aside from the great objects studied by every regular traveler who would make a book. I fear I shall give equal disappointment with an unlucky landscape painter, who had traveled on the continent, but, following the bent of his vagrant inclination, had sketched in nooks and corners and by-places. His sketch-book was accordingly crowded with cottages and landscapes and obscure ruins; but he had neglected to paint St. Peter's, or the Coliseum; the Cascade of Terni, or the Bay of Naples; and had not a single glacier or volcano in his whole collection.

ENGLISH WRITERS ON AMERICA

"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle, mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam."

MILTON ON THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.¹

It is with feelings of deep regret that I observe the literary animosity daily growing up between England and America. Great curiosity has been awakened of late with respect to the United States, and the London press has teemed with volumes of travels through the Republic; but they seem intended to diffuse error rather than knowledge; and so successful have they been, that, notwithstanding the constant intercourse between the nations, there is no people concerning whom the great mass of the British public have less pure information, or entertain more numerous prejudices.

English travelers are the best and the worst in the world. Where no motives of pride or interest intervene, none can equal them for profound and philosophical views of society, or faithful and graphical descriptions of external objects; but when either the interest or reputation of their own country comes in collision with that of another, they go to the opposite extreme, and forget their usual probity and candor, in the indulgence of splenetic remark and an illiberal spirit of ridicule.

Hence, their travels are more honest and accurate, the more remote the country described. I would place implicit confidence in an Englishman's descriptions of the regions beyond the cataracts of the Nile; of unknown islands in the Yellow Sea; of the interior of India; or of any other tract which other travelers might be apt to picture out with the illusions of their fancies; but I would cautiously receive his account of his immediate neighbors, and of those nations with which he is in habits of most frequent intercourse. However I might be disposed to trust his probity, I dare not trust his prejudices.

It has also been the particular lot of our country to be visited by the worst kind of English travelers. While men of philosoph-

ical spirit and cultivated minds have been sent from England to ransack the poles, to penetrate the deserts, and to study the manners and customs of barbarous nations with which she can have no permanent intercourse of profit or pleasure; it has been left to the broken-down tradesman, the scheming adventurer, the wandering mechanic, the Manchester and Birmingham agent, to be her oracles respecting America. From such sources she is content to receive her information respecting a country in a singular state of moral and physical development; a country in which one of the greatest political experiments in the history of the world is now performing; and which presents the most profound and momentous studies to the statesman and the philosopher.

That such men should give prejudicial accounts of America is not a matter of surprise. The themes it offers for contemplation are too vast and elevated for their capacities. The national character is yet in a state of fermentation; it may have its frothiness and sediment, but its ingredients are sound and wholesome; it has already given proofs of powerful and generous qualities; and the whole promises to settle down into something substantially excellent. But the causes which are operating to strengthen and ennoble it, and its daily indications of admirable properties, are all lost upon these purblind observers; who are only affected by the little asperities incident to its present situation. They are capable of judging only of the surface of things; of those matters which come in contact with their private interests and personal gratifications. They miss some of the snug conveniences and petty comforts which belong to an old, highly finished, and over-populous state of society; where the ranks of useful labor are crowded, and many earn a painful and servile subsistence by studying the very caprices of appetite and self-indulgence. These minor comforts, however, are all-important in the estimation of narrow minds; which either do not perceive, or will not acknowledge, that they are more than counterbalanced among us by great and generally diffused blessings.

They may, perhaps, have been disappointed in some unreasonable expectation of sudden gain. They may have pictured America to themselves an El Dorado, where gold

¹ I.e., *Areopagitica*.

and silver abounded and the natives were lacking in sagacity; and where they were to become strangely and suddenly rich in some unforeseen but easy manner. The same weakness of mind that indulges absurd expectations produces petulance in disappointment. Such persons become embittered against the country on finding that there, as everywhere else, a man must sow before he can reap; must win wealth by industry and talent; and must contend with the common difficulties of nature and the shrewdness of an intelligent and enterprising people.

Perhaps, through mistaken or ill-directed hospitality, or from the prompt disposition to cheer and countenance the stranger, prevalent among my countrymen, they may have been treated with unwonted respect in America; and having been accustomed all their lives to consider themselves below the surface of good society, and brought up in a servile feeling of inferiority, they become arrogant on the common boon of civility; they attribute to the lowliness of others their own elevation; and underrate a society where there are no artificial distinctions, and where by any chance such individuals as themselves can rise to consequence.

One would suppose, however, that information coming from such sources, on a subject where the truth is so desirable, would be received with caution by the censors of the press; that the motives of these men, their veracity, their opportunities of inquiry and observation, and their capacities for judging correctly, would be rigorously scrutinized before their evidence was admitted in such sweeping extent against a kindred nation. The very reverse, however, is the case, and it furnishes a striking instance of human inconsistency. Nothing can surpass the vigilance with which English critics will examine the credibility of the traveler who publishes an account of some distant and comparatively unimportant country. How warily will they compare the measurements of a pyramid or the descriptions of a ruin; and how sternly will they censure any inaccuracy in these contributions of merely curious knowledge: while they will receive, with eagerness and unhesitating faith, the gross misrepresentations of coarse and obscure writers, concerning a country with which their own is placed in the most important

and delicate relations. Nay, they will even make these apocryphal volumes text-books, on which to enlarge with a zeal and an ability worthy of a more generous cause.

I shall not, however, dwell on this irksome and hackneyed topic; nor should I have adverted to it, but for the undue interest apparently taken in it by my countrymen, and certain injurious effects which I apprehend it might produce upon the national feeling. We attach too much consequence to these attacks. They cannot do us any essential injury. The tissue of misrepresentations attempted to be woven round us are like cobwebs woven round the limbs of an infant giant. Our country continually outgrows them. One falsehood after another falls off of itself. We have but to live on, and every day we live a whole volume of refutation.

All the writers of England united, if we could for a moment suppose their great minds stooping to so unworthy a combination, could not conceal our rapidly growing importance and matchless prosperity. They could not conceal that these are owing, not merely to physical and local, but also to moral causes,—to the political liberty, the general diffusion of knowledge, the prevalence of sound moral and religious principles, which give force and sustained energy to the character of a people; and which, in fact, have been the acknowledged and wonderful supporters of their own national power and glory.

But why are we so exquisitely alive to the aspersions of England? Why do we suffer ourselves to be so affected by the contumely she has endeavored to cast upon us? It is not in the opinion of England alone that honor lives and reputation has its being. The world at large is the arbiter of a nation's fame; with its thousand eyes it witnesses a nation's deeds, and from their collective testimony is national glory or national disgrace established.

For ourselves, therefore, it is comparatively of but little importance whether England does us justice or not; it is perhaps of far more importance to herself. She is instilling anger and resentment into the bosom of a youthful nation, to grow with its growth and strengthen with its strength. If in America, as some of her writers are laboring to convince her, she is hereafter to find an invidious rival and a gigantic foe, she may

thank those very writers for having provoked rivalry and irritated hostility. Every one knows the all-pervading influence of literature at the present day, and how much the opinions and passions of mankind are under its control. The mere contests of the sword are temporary; their wounds are but in the flesh, and it is the pride of the generous to forgive and forget them; but the slanders of the pen pierce to the heart; they rankle longest in the noblest spirits; they dwell ever present in the mind, and render it morbidly sensitive to the most trifling collision. It is but seldom that any one overt act produces hostilities between two nations; there exists, most commonly, a previous jealousy and ill-will; a predisposition to take offense. Trace these to their cause, and how often will they be found to originate in the mischievous effusions of mercenary writers; who, secure in their closets, and for ignominious bread, concoct and circulate the venom that is to inflame the generous and the brave.

I am not laying too much stress upon this point; for it applies most emphatically to our particular case. Over no nation does the press hold a more absolute control than over the people of America; for the universal education of the poorest classes makes every individual a reader. There is nothing published in England on the subject of our country that does not circulate through every part of it. There is not a calumny dropped from English pen, nor an unworthy sarcasm uttered by an English statesman, that does not go to blight good-will, and add to the mass of latent resentment. Possessing, then, as England does, the fountain-head whence the literature of the language flows, how completely is it in her power, and how truly is it her duty, to make it the medium of amiable and magnanimous feeling—a stream where the two nations might meet together, and drink in peace and kindness. Should she, however, persist in turning it to waters of bitterness, the time may come when she may repent her folly. The present friendship of America may be of but little moment to her; but the future destinies of that country do not admit of a doubt; over those of England there lower some shadows of uncertainty. Should, then, a day of gloom arrive; should these reverses overtake her, from

which the proudest empires have not been exempt; she may look back with regret at her infatuation, in repulsing from her side a nation she might have grappled to her bosom, and thus destroying her only chance for real friendship beyond the boundaries of her own dominions.

There is a general impression in England, that the people of the United States are inimical to the parent country. It is one of the errors which have been diligently propagated by designing writers. There is, doubtless, considerable political hostility, and a general soreness at the illiberality of the English press; but, generally speaking, the prepossessions of the people are strongly in favor of England. Indeed, at one time, they amounted, in many parts of the Union, to an absurd degree of bigotry. The bare name of Englishman was a passport to the confidence and hospitality of every family, and too often gave a transient currency to the worthless and the ungrateful. Throughout the country there was something of enthusiasm connected with the idea of England. We looked to it with a hallowed feeling of tenderness and veneration, as the land of our forefathers—the august repository of the monuments and antiquities of our race—the birthplace and mausoleum of the sages and heroes of our paternal history. After our own country, there was none in whose glory we more delighted—none whose good opinion we were more anxious to possess—none towards which our hearts yearned with such throbbings of warm consanguinity. Even during the late war,¹ whenever there was the least opportunity for kind feelings to spring forth, it was the delight of the generous spirits of our country to show that, in the midst of hostilities, they still kept alive the sparks of future friendship.

Is all this to be at an end? Is this golden band of kindred sympathies, so rare between nations, to be broken forever?—Perhaps it is for the best—it may dispel an illusion which might have kept us in mental vassalage; which might have interfered occasionally with our true interests, and prevented the growth of proper national pride. But it is hard to give up the kindred tie! and there are feelings dearer than interest—closer to

¹ The War of 1812.

the heart than pride—that will still make us cast back a look of regret, as we wander farther and farther from the paternal roof, and lament the waywardness of the parent that would repel the affections of the child.

Short-sighted and injudicious, however, as the conduct of England may be in this system of aspersion, recrimination on our part would be equally ill-judged. I speak not of a prompt and spirited vindication of our country, nor the keenest castigation of her slanderers—but I allude to a disposition to retaliate in kind, to retort sarcasm and inspire prejudice, which seems to be spreading widely among our writers. Let us guard particularly against such a temper, for it would double the evil instead of redressing the wrong. Nothing is so easy and inviting as the retort of abuse and sarcasm; but it is a paltry and an unprofitable contest. It is the alternative of a morbid mind, fretted into petulance, rather than warmed into indignation. If England is willing to permit the mean jealousies of trade or the rancorous animosities of politics to deprave the integrity of her press and poison the fountain of public opinion, let us beware of her example. She may deem it her interest to diffuse error and engender antipathy for the purpose of checking emigration; we have no purpose of the kind to serve. Neither have we any spirit of national jealousy to gratify, for as yet, in all our rivalships with England, we are the rising and the gaining party. There can be no end to answer, therefore, but the gratification of resentment—a mere spirit of retaliation; and even that is impotent. Our retorts are never republished in England; they fall short, therefore, of their aim, but they foster a querulous and peevish temper among our writers; they sour the sweet flow of our early literature, and sow thorns and brambles among its blossoms. What is still worse, they circulate through our own country, and, as far as they have effect, excite virulent national prejudices. This last is the evil most especially to be deprecated. Governed as we are entirely by public opinion, the utmost care should be taken to preserve the purity of the public mind. Knowledge is power and truth is knowledge; whoever, therefore, knowingly propagates a prejudice, willfully saps the foundation of his country's strength.

The members of a republic, above all other men, should be candid and dispassionate. They are, individually, portions of the sovereign mind and sovereign will, and should be enabled to come to all questions of national concern with calm and unbiased judgments. From the peculiar nature of our relations with England, we must have more frequent questions of a difficult and delicate character with her than with any other nation; questions that affect the most acute and excitable feelings; and as in the adjusting of these our national measures must ultimately be determined by popular sentiment, we cannot be too anxiously attentive to purify it from all latent passion or prepossession.

Opening, too, as we do, an asylum for strangers from every portion of the earth, we should receive all with impartiality. It should be our pride to exhibit an example of one nation, at least, destitute of national antipathies, and exercising not merely the overt acts of hospitality, but those more rare and noble courtesies which spring from liberality of opinion.

What have we to do with national prejudices? They are the inveterate diseases of old countries, contracted in rude and ignorant ages when nations knew but little of each other, and looked beyond their own boundaries with distrust and hostility. We, on the contrary, have sprung into national existence in an enlightened and philosophic age, when the different parts of the habitable world and the various branches of the human family have been indefatigably studied and made known to each other; and we forgo the advantages of our birth, if we do not shake off the national prejudices, as we would the local superstitions of the old world.

But above all let us not be influenced by any angry feelings, so far as to shut our eyes to the perception of what is really excellent and amiable in the English character. We are a young people, necessarily an imitative one, and must take our examples and models in a great degree from the existing nations of Europe. There is no country more worthy of our study than England. The spirit of her constitution is most analogous to ours. The manners of her people—their intellectual activity—their freedom of opinion—their habits of thinking on those subjects which concern the dearest interests and most

sacred charities of private life, are all congenial to the American character; and, in fact, are all intrinsically excellent; for it is in the moral feeling of the people that the deep foundations of British prosperity are laid; and however the superstructure may be time-worn, or overrun by abuses, there must be something solid in the basis, admirable in the materials, and stable in the structure of an edifice that so long has towered unshaken amidst the tempests of the world.

Let it be the pride of our writers, therefore, discarding all feelings of irritation, and disdaining to retaliate the illiberality of British authors, to speak of the English nation without prejudice and with determined candor. While they rebuke the indiscriminating bigotry with which some of our countrymen admire and imitate everything English merely because it is English, let them frankly point out what is really worthy of approbation. We may thus place England before us as a perpetual volume of reference, wherein are recorded sound deductions from ages of experience; and while we avoid the errors and absurdities which may have crept into the page, we may draw thence golden maxims of practical wisdom, wherewith to strengthen and to embellish our national character.

RURAL LIFE IN ENGLAND

Oh! friendly to the best pursuits of man,
Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
Domestic life in rural pleasures past!

COWPER.

THE stranger who would form a correct opinion of the English character must not confine his observations to the metropolis. He must go forth into the country; he must sojourn in villages and hamlets; he must visit castles, villas, farmhouses, cottages; he must wander through parks and gardens; along hedges and green lanes; he must loiter about country churches; attend wakes and fairs and other rural festivals; and cope with the people in all their conditions and all their habits and humors.

In some countries the large cities absorb the wealth and fashion of the nation; they are the only fixed abodes of elegant and intelligent society, and the country is inhabited almost entirely by boorish peasantry. In England, on the contrary, the metropolis is

a mere gathering place, or general rendezvous, of the polite classes, where they devote a small portion of the year to a hurry of gayety and dissipation, and, having indulged this kind of carnival, return again to the apparently more congenial habits of rural life. The various orders of society are therefore diffused over the whole surface of the kingdom, and the most retired neighborhoods afford specimens of the different ranks.

The English, in fact, are strongly gifted with the rural feeling. They possess a quick sensibility to the beauties of nature and a keen relish for the pleasures and employments of the country. This passion seems inherent in them. Even the inhabitants of cities, born and brought up among brick walls and bustling streets, enter with facility into rural habits, and evince a tact for rural occupation. The merchant has his snug retreat in the vicinity of the metropolis, where he often displays as much pride and zeal in the cultivation of his flower-garden and the maturing of his fruits, as he does in the conduct of his business and the success of a commercial enterprise. Even those less fortunate individuals who are doomed to pass their lives in the midst of din and traffic, contrive to have something that shall remind them of the green aspect of nature. In the most dark and dingy quarters of the city, the drawing-room window resembles frequently a bank of flowers; every spot capable of vegetation has its grass-plot and flower-bed; and every square its mimic park, laid out with picturesque taste and gleaming with refreshing verdure.

Those who see the Englishman only in town are apt to form an unfavorable opinion of his social character. He is either absorbed in business, or distracted by the thousand engagements that dissipate time, thought, and feeling, in this huge metropolis. He has, therefore, too commonly a look of hurry and abstraction. Wherever he happens to be, he is on the point of going somewhere else; at the moment he is talking on one subject, his mind is wandering to another; and while paying a friendly visit, he is calculating how he shall economize time so as to pay the other visits allotted in the morning. An immense metropolis like London is calculated to make men selfish and uninteresting. In their casual and transient

meetings they can but deal briefly in commonplaces. They present but the cold superficialities of character—its rich and genial qualities have no time to be warmed into a flow.

It is in the country that the Englishman gives scope to his natural feelings. He breaks loose gladly from the cold formalities and negative civilities of town; throws off his habits of shy reserve, and becomes joyous and free-hearted. He manages to collect around him all the conveniences and elegancies of polite life, and to banish its restraints. His country-seat abounds with every requisite, either for studious retirement, tasteful gratification, or rural exercise. Books, paintings, music, horses, dogs, and sporting implements of all kinds, are at hand. He puts no constraint either upon his guests or himself, but in the true spirit of hospitality provides the means of enjoyment and leaves every one to partake according to his inclination.

The taste of the English in the cultivation of land, and in what is called landscape gardening, is unrivaled. They have studied nature intently, and discover an exquisite sense of her beautiful forms and harmonious combinations. Those charms, which in other countries she lavishes in wild solitudes, are here assembled round the haunts of domestic life. They seem to have caught her coy and furtive graces, and spread them like witchery about their rural abodes.

Nothing can be more imposing than the magnificence of English park scenery. Vast lawns that extend like sheets of vivid green, with here and there clumps of gigantic trees heaping up rich piles of foliage; the solemn pomp of groves and woodland glades with the deer trooping in silent herds across them, the hare bounding away to the covert, or the pheasant suddenly bursting upon the wing; the brook, taught to wind in natural meanderings or expand into a glassy lake; the sequestered pool, reflecting the quivering trees, with the yellow leaf sleeping on its bosom, and the trout roaming fearlessly about its limpid waters; while some rustic temple or sylvan statue, grown green and dank with age, gives an air of classic sanctity to the seclusion.

These are but a few of the features of park scenery; but what most delights me is the creative talent with which the English deco-

rate the unostentatious abodes of middle life. The rudest habitation, the most unpromising and scanty portion of land, in the hands of an Englishman of taste, becomes a little paradise. With a nicely discriminating eye, he seizes at once upon its capabilities, and pictures in his mind the future landscape. The sterile spot grows into loveliness under his hand; and yet the operations of art which produce the effect are scarcely to be perceived. The cherishing and training of some trees; the cautious pruning of others; the nice distribution of flowers and plants of tender and graceful foliage; the introduction of a green slope of velvet turf; the partial opening to a peep of blue distance or silver gleam of water: all these are managed with a delicate tact, a pervading yet quiet assiduity, like the magic touchings with which a painter finishes up a favorite picture.

The residence of people of fortune and refinement in the country has diffused a degree of taste and elegance in rural economy that descends to the lowest class. The very laborer, with his thatched cottage and narrow slip of ground, attends to their embellishment. The trim hedge, the grass-plot before the door, the little flower-bed bordered with snug box, the woodbine trained up against the wall and hanging its blossoms about the lattice, the pot of flowers in the window, the holly providently planted about the house to cheat winter of its dreariness, and to throw in a semblance of green summer to cheer the fireside: all these bespeak the influence of taste, flowing down from high sources, and pervading the lowest levels of the public mind. If ever Love, as poets sing, delights to visit a cottage, it must be the cottage of an English peasant.

The fondness for rural life among the higher classes of the English has had a great and salutary effect upon the national character. I do not know a finer race of men than the English gentlemen. Instead of the softness and effeminacy which characterize the men of rank in most countries, they exhibit a union of elegance and strength, a robustness of frame and freshness of complexion, which I am inclined to attribute to their living so much in the open air, and pursuing so eagerly the invigorating recreations of the country. These hardy exercises produce also a healthful tone of mind and spirits,

and a manliness and simplicity of manners, which even the follies and dissipations of the town cannot easily pervert, and can never entirely destroy. In the country, too, the different orders of society seem to approach more freely, to be more disposed to blend and operate favorably upon each other. The distinctions between them do not appear to be so marked and impassable as in the cities. The manner in which property has been distributed into small estates and farms has established a regular gradation from the nobleman, through the classes of gentry, small landed proprietors, and substantial farmers, down to the laboring peasantry; and while it has thus banded the extremes of society together, has infused into each intermediate rank a spirit of independence. This, it must be confessed, is not so universally the case at present as it was formerly; the larger estates having, in late years of distress, absorbed the smaller, and, in some parts of the country, almost annihilated the sturdy race of small farmers. These, however, I believe, are but casual breaks in the general system I have mentioned.

In rural occupation there is nothing mean and debasing. It leads a man forth among scenes of natural grandeur and beauty; it leaves him to the workings of his own mind, operated upon by the purest and most elevating of external influences. Such a man may be simple and rough, but he cannot be vulgar. The man of refinement, therefore, finds nothing revolting in an intercourse with the lower orders in rural life, as he does when he casually mingles with the lower orders of cities. He lays aside his distance and reserve, and is glad to waive the distinctions of rank, and to enter into the honest, heartfelt enjoyments of common life. Indeed the very amusements of the country bring men more and more together; and the sound of hound and horn blend all feelings into harmony. I believe this is one great reason why the nobility and gentry are more popular among the inferior orders in England than they are in any other country; and why the latter have endured so many excessive pressures and extremities, without repining more generally at the unequal distribution of fortune and privilege.

To this mingling of cultivated and rustic

society may also be attributed the rural feeling that runs through British literature; the frequent use of illustrations from rural life; those incomparable descriptions of nature that abound in the British poets, that have continued down from *The Flower and the Leaf* of Chaucer,¹ and have brought into our closets all the freshness and fragrance of the dewy landscape. The pastoral writers of other countries appear as if they had paid nature an occasional visit, and become acquainted with her general charms; but the British poets have lived and reveled with her—they have wooed her in her most secret haunts—they have watched her minutest caprices. A spray could not tremble in the breeze—a leaf could not rustle to the ground—a diamond-drop could not patter in the stream—a fragrance could not exhale from the humble violet, nor a daisy unfold its crimson tints to the morning, but it has been noticed by these impassioned and delicate observers, and wrought up into some beautiful morality.

The effect of this devotion of elegant minds to rural occupations has been wonderful on the face of the country. A great part of the island is rather level, and would be monotonous were it not for the charms of culture: but it is studded and gemmed, as it were, with castles and palaces, and embroidered with parks and gardens. It does not abound in grand and sublime prospects, but rather in little home scenes of rural repose and sheltered quiet. Every antique farmhouse and moss-grown cottage is a picture; and as the roads are continually winding, and the view is shut in by groves and hedges, the eye is delighted by a continual succession of small landscapes of captivating loveliness.

The great charm, however, of English scenery is the moral feeling that seems to pervade it. It is associated in the mind with ideas of order, of quiet, of sober well-established principles, of hoary usage and reverend custom. Everything seems to be the growth of ages of regular and peaceful existence. The old church of remote architecture, with its low massive portal, its Gothic tower, its windows rich with tracery and painted glass,

¹ Since Irving's death it has been shown by Skeat that this poem was not written by Chaucer, but probably by an unknown woman at a time later than the year of Chaucer's death.

in scrupulous preservation, its stately monuments of warriors and worthies of the olden time, ancestors of the present lords of the soil, its tombstones recording successive generations of sturdy yeomanry whose progeny still plough the same fields and kneel at the same altar; the parsonage, a quaint irregular pile, partly antiquated, but repaired and altered in the tastes of various ages and occupants; the stile and footpath leading from the churchyard across pleasant fields and along shady hedgerows, according to an immemorial right of way; the neighboring village, with its venerable cottages, its public green sheltered by trees, under which the forefathers of the present race have sported; the antique family mansion, standing apart in some little rural domain, but looking down with a protecting air on the surrounding scene: all these common features of English landscape evince a calm and settled security, and hereditary transmission of home-bred virtues and local attachments, that speak deeply and touchingly for the moral character of the nation.

It is a pleasing sight of a Sunday morning, when the bell is sending its sober melody across the quiet fields, to behold the peasantry in their best finery, with ruddy faces and modest cheerfulness, thronging tranquilly along the green lanes to church; but it is still more pleasing to see them in the evenings, gathering about their cottage doors, and appearing to exult in the humble comforts and embellishments which their own hands have spread around them.

It is this sweet home feeling, this settled repose of affection in the domestic scene, that is, after all, the parent of the steadiest virtues and purest enjoyments; and I cannot close these desultory remarks better than by quoting the words of a modern English poet, who has depicted it with remarkable felicity:

Through each gradation, from the castled hall,
The city dome, the villa crowned with shade,
But chief from modest mansions numberless,
In town or hamlet, shelt'ring middle life,
Down to the cottaged vale and straw-roofed shed;
This western isle hath long been famed for scenes
Where bliss domestic finds a dwelling-place;
Domestic bliss, that, like a harmless dove
(Honor and sweet endearment keeping guard),
Can center in a little quiet nest

All that desire would fly for through the earth;
That can, the world eluding, be itself
A world enjoyed; that wants no witnesses
But its own sharers and approving heaven;
That, like a flower deep hid in rocky cleft,
Smiles, though 'tis looking only at the sky.¹

JOHN BULL

An old song, made by an aged old pate,
Of an old worshipful gentleman who had a great
estate,
That kept a brave old house at a bountiful rate,
And an old porter to relieve the poor at his gate.
With an old study filled full of learned old books,
With an old reverend chaplain, you might know
him by his looks,
With an old buttery hatch worn quite off the
hooks,
And an old kitchen that maintained half-a-dozen
old cooks.

Like an old courtier, *etc.*

OLD SONG.

THERE is no species of humor in which the English more excel than that which consists in caricaturing and giving ludicrous appellations or nicknames. In this way they have whimsically designated, not merely individuals, but nations; and in their fondness for pushing a joke they have not spared even themselves. One would think that in personifying itself a nation would be apt to picture something grand, heroic, and imposing; but it is characteristic of the peculiar humor of the English, and of their love for what is blunt, comic, and familiar, that they have embodied their national oddities in the figure of a sturdy, corpulent old fellow, with a three-cornered hat, red waistcoat, leather breeches, and stout oaken cudgel. Thus they have taken a singular delight in exhibiting their most private foibles in a laughable point of view; and have been so successful in their delineations that there is scarcely a being in actual existence more absolutely present to the public mind than that eccentric personage, John Bull.

Perhaps the continual contemplation of the character thus drawn of them has contributed to fix it upon the nation, and thus to give reality to what at first may have been painted in a great measure from the imagina-

¹ From a Poem on the death of the Princess Charlotte, by the Reverend Rann Kennedy, A.M. (Irving's note.)

tion. Men are apt to acquire peculiarities that are continually ascribed to them. The common orders of English seem wonderfully captivated with the *beau ideal* which they have formed of John Bull, and endeavor to act up to the broad caricature that is perpetually before their eyes. Unluckily, they sometimes make their boasted Bull-ism an apology for their prejudice or grossness; and this I have especially noticed among those truly home-bred and genuine sons of the soil who have never migrated beyond the sound of Bow-bells.¹ If one of these should be a little uncouth in speech and apt to utter impertinent truths, he confesses that he is a real John Bull and always speaks his mind. If he now and then flies into an unreasonable burst of passion about trifles, he observes that John Bull is a choleric old blade, but then his passion is over in a moment and he bears no malice. If he betrays a coarseness of taste and an insensibility to foreign refinements, he thanks Heaven for his ignorance—he is a plain John Bull and has no relish for frippery and knickknacks. His very proneness to be gulled by strangers and to pay extravagantly for absurdities is excused under the plea of munificence—for John is always more generous than wise.

Thus, under the name of John Bull, he will contrive to argue every fault into a merit, and will frankly convict himself of being the honestest fellow in existence.

However little, therefore, the character may have suited in the first instance, it has gradually adapted itself to the nation, or rather they have adapted themselves to each other; and a stranger who wishes to study English peculiarities may gather much valuable information from the innumerable portraits of John Bull as exhibited in the windows of the caricature-shops. Still, however, he is one of those fertile humorists that are continually throwing out new portraits and presenting different aspects from different points of view; and, often as he has been described, I cannot resist the temptation to give a slight sketch of him, such as he has met my eye.

John Bull, to all appearance, is a plain, downright, matter-of-fact fellow, with much less of poetry about him than rich prose.

¹ Bells of the church of St. Mary le Bow, Cheapside, London.

There is little of romance in his nature, but a vast deal of strong natural feeling. He excels in humor more than in wit, is jolly rather than gay, melancholy rather than morose; can easily be moved to a sudden tear, or surprised into a broad laugh; but he loathes sentiment and has no turn for light pleasantry. He is a boon companion if you allow him to have his humor and to talk about himself; and he will stand by a friend in a quarrel, with life and purse, however soundly he may be cudgelled.

In this last respect, to tell the truth, he has a propensity to be somewhat too ready. He is a busy-minded personage, who thinks not merely for himself and family, but for all the country round, and is most generously disposed to be everybody's champion. He is continually volunteering his services to settle his neighbors' affairs, and takes it in great dudgeon if they engage in any matter of consequence without asking his advice, though he seldom engages in any friendly office of the kind without finishing by getting into a squabble with all parties, and then railing bitterly at their ingratitude. He unluckily took lessons in his youth in the noble science of defense, and having accomplished himself in the use of his limbs and his weapons, and become a perfect master at boxing and cudgel play, he has had a troublesome life of it ever since. He cannot hear of a quarrel between the most distant of his neighbors but he begins incontinently to fumble with the head of his cudgel, and consider whether his interest or honor does not require that he should meddle in the broil. Indeed, he has extended his relations of pride and policy so completely over the whole country that no event can take place without infringing some of his finely spun rights and dignities. Couched in his little domain, with these filaments stretching forth in every direction, he is like some choleric, bottle-bellied old spider who has woven his web over a whole chamber, so that a fly cannot buzz, nor a breeze blow, without startling his repose and causing him to sally forth wrathfully from his den.

Though really a good-hearted, good-tempered old fellow at bottom, yet he is singularly fond of being in the midst of contention. It is one of his peculiarities, however, that he only relishes the beginning of an affray; he always goes into a fight with

alacrity, but comes out of it grumbling even when victorious; and though no one fights with more obstinacy to carry a contested point, yet when the battle is over and he comes to the reconciliation, he is so much taken up with the mere shaking of hands that he is apt to let his antagonist pocket all that they have been quarreling about. It is not, therefore, fighting that he ought so much to be on his guard against as making friends. It is difficult to cudgel him out of a farthing, but, put him in good humor, and you may bargain him out of all the money in his pocket. He is like a stout ship, which will weather the roughest storm uninjured, but roll its masts overboard in the succeeding calm.

He is a little fond of playing the magnifico abroad, of pulling out a long purse, flinging his money bravely about at boxing matches, horse races, cock fights, and carrying a high head among "gentlemen of the fancy";¹ but immediately after one of these fits of extravagance, he will be taken with violent qualms of economy, stop short at the most trivial expenditure, talk desperately of being ruined and brought upon the parish, and in such moods will not pay the smallest tradesman's bill without violent altercation. He is, in fact, the most punctual and discontented paymaster in the world; drawing his coin out of his breeches pocket with infinite reluctance, paying to the uttermost farthing, but accompanying every guinea with a growl.

With all his talk of economy, however, he is a bountiful provider and a hospitable housekeeper. His economy is a whimsical kind, its chief object being to devise how he may afford to be extravagant; for he will begrudge himself a beefsteak and a pint of port one day, that he may roast an ox whole, broach a hogshead of ale, and treat all his neighbors on the next.

His domestic establishment is enormously expensive; not so much from any great outward parade as from the great consumption of solid beef and pudding, the vast number of followers he feeds and clothes, and his singular disposition to pay hugely for small services. He is a most kind and indulgent master, and, provided his servants humor his peculiarities, flatter his vanity a little now and

then, and do not peculate grossly on him before his face, they may manage him to perfection. Everything that lives on him seems to thrive and grow fat. His house-servants are well paid, and pampered, and have little to do. His horses are sleek and lazy, and prance slowly before his state carriage; and his house-dogs sleep quietly about the door, and will hardly bark at a house-breaker.

His family mansion is an old castellated manor-house, gray with age, and of a most venerable though weather-beaten appearance. It has been built upon no regular plan, but is a vast accumulation of parts erected in various tastes and ages. The center bears evident traces of Saxon architecture, and is as solid as ponderous stone and old English oak can make it. Like all the relics of that style, it is full of obscure passages, intricate mazes, and dusky chambers; and though these have been partially lighted up in modern days, yet there are many places where you must still grope in the dark. Additions have been made to the original edifice from time to time, and great alterations have taken place; towers and battlements have been erected during wars and tumults, wings built in times of peace, and outhouses, lodges, and offices run up according to the whim or convenience of different generations, until it has become one of the most spacious, rambling tenements imaginable. An entire wing is taken up with the family chapel, a reverend pile that must have been exceedingly sumptuous, and indeed in spite of having been altered and simplified at various periods has still a look of solemn religious pomp. Its walls within are stored with the monuments of John's ancestors; and it is snugly fitted up with soft cushions and well-lined chairs, where such of his family as are inclined to church services may doze comfortably in the discharge of their duties.

To keep up this chapel has cost John much money; but he is stanch in his religion and piqued in his zeal, from the circumstance that many dissenting chapels have been erected in his vicinity, and several of his neighbors, with whom he has had quarrels, are strong papists.

To do the duties of the chapel, he maintains at a large expense a pious and portly family chaplain. He is a most learned and decorous personage and a truly well-bred

¹ *I.e.*, sporting characters.

Christian, who always backs the old gentleman in his opinions, winks discreetly at his little peccadilloes, rebukes the children when refractory, and is of great use in exhorting the tenants to read their Bibles, say their prayers, and, above all, to pay their rents punctually and without grumbling.

The family apartments are in a very antiquated taste, somewhat heavy and often inconvenient, but full of the solemn magnificence of former times; fitted up with rich though faded tapestry, unwieldy furniture, and loads of massive, gorgeous old plate. The vast fireplaces, ample kitchens, extensive cellars, and sumptuous banqueting halls all speak of the roaring hospitality of days of yore, of which the modern festivity at the manor-house is but a shadow. There are, however, complete suites of rooms apparently deserted and time-worn, and towers and turrets that are tottering to decay, so that in high winds there is danger of their tumbling about the ears of the household.

John has frequently been advised to have the old edifice thoroughly overhauled, and to have some of the useless parts pulled down, and the others strengthened with their materials; but the old gentleman always grows testy on this subject. He swears the house is an excellent house, that it is tight and weatherproof, and not to be shaken by tempests; that it has stood for several hundred years, and therefore is not likely to tumble down now; that as to its being inconvenient, his family is accustomed to the inconveniences, and would not be comfortable without them; that as to its unwieldy size and irregular construction, these result from its being the growth of centuries, and being improved by the wisdom of every generation; that an old family like his requires a large house to dwell in; new, upstart families may live in modern cottages and snug boxes, but an old English family should inhabit an old English manor-house. If you point out any part of the building as superfluous, he insists that it is material to the strength or decoration of the rest and the harmony of the whole, and swears that the parts are so built into each other that if you pull down one, you run the risk of having the whole about your ears.

The secret of the matter is, that John has a great disposition to protect and patronize. He thinks it indispensable to the dignity of

an ancient and honorable family to be bounteous in its appointments and to be eaten up by dependents; and so, partly from pride and partly from kind-heartedness, he makes it a rule always to give shelter and maintenance to his superannuated servants.

The consequence is, that like many other venerable family establishments, his manor is encumbered by old retainers whom he cannot turn off, and an old style which he cannot lay down. His mansion is like a great hospital of invalids, and with all its magnitude is not a whit too large for its inhabitants. Not a nook or corner but is of use in housing some useless personage. Groups of veteran beef-eaters, gouty pensioners, and retired heroes of the buttery and the larder are seen lolling about its walls, crawling over its lawns, dozing under its trees, or sunning themselves upon the benches at its doors. Every office and outhouse is garrisoned by these supernumeraries and their families, for they are amazingly prolific, and when they die off are sure to leave John a legacy of hungry mouths to be provided for. A mattock cannot be struck against the most moldering tumble-down tower, but out pops, from some cranny or loophole, the gray pate of some superannuated hanger-on, who has lived at John's expense all his life, and makes the most grievous outcry at their pulling down the roof from over the head of a worn-out servant of the family. This is an appeal that John's honest heart never can withstand, so that a man who has faithfully eaten his beef and pudding all his life is sure to be rewarded with a pipe and tankard in his old days.

A great part of his park, also, is turned into paddocks, where his broken-down chargers are turned loose to graze undisturbed for the remainder of their existence—a worthy example of grateful recollection, which if some of his neighbors were to imitate would not be to their discredit. Indeed, it is one of his great pleasures to point out these old steeds to his visitors, to dwell on their good qualities, extol their past services, and boast with some little vainglory of the perilous adventures and hardy exploits through which they have carried him.

He is given, however, to indulge his veneration for family usages and family incumbrances to a whimsical extent. His manor

is infested by gangs of gypsies, yet he will not suffer them to be driven off, because they have infested the place time out of mind, and been regular poachers upon every generation of the family. He will scarcely permit a dry branch to be lopped from the great trees that surround the house, lest it should molest the rooks that have bred there for centuries. Owls have taken possession of the dovecote, but they are hereditary owls and must not be disturbed. Swallows have nearly choked up every chimney with their nests, martins build in every frieze and cornice, crows flutter about the towers and perch on every weathercock, and old gray-headed rats may be seen in every quarter of the house running in and out of their holes undauntedly in broad daylight. In short, John has such a reverence for everything that has been long in the family that he will not hear even of abuses being reformed, because they are good old family abuses.

All those whims and habits have concurred woefully to drain the old gentleman's purse, and as he prides himself on punctuality in money matters and wishes to maintain his credit in the neighborhood, they have caused him great perplexity in meeting his engagements. This, too, has been increased by the altercations and heart-burnings which are continually taking place in his family. His children have been brought up to different callings and are of different ways of thinking, and as they have always been allowed to speak their minds freely, they do not fail to exercise the privilege most clamorously in the present posture of his affairs. Some stand up for the honor of the race, and are clear that the old establishment should be kept up in all its state, whatever may be the cost; others, who are more prudent and considerate, entreat the old gentleman to retrench his expenses and to put his whole system of housekeeping on a more moderate footing. He has, indeed, at times seemed inclined to listen to their opinions, but their wholesome advice has been completely defeated by the obstreperous conduct of one of his sons. This is a noisy, rattle-pated fellow of rather low habits, who neglects his business to frequent alehouses, is the orator of village clubs, and a complete oracle among the poorest of his father's tenants. No sooner does he hear any of his

brothers mention reform or retrenchment, than up he jumps, takes the words out of their mouths, and roars out for an overturn. When his tongue is once going nothing can stop it. He rants about the room, hectors the old man about his spendthrift practices, ridicules his tastes and pursuits, insists that he shall turn the old servants out of doors, give the broken-down horses to the hounds, send the fat chaplain packing, and take a field-preacher in his place; nay, that the whole family mansion shall be leveled with the ground, and a plain one of brick and mortar built in its place. He rails at every social entertainment and family festivity, and skulks away growling to the alehouse whenever an equipage drives up to the door. Though constantly complaining of the emptiness of his purse, yet he scruples not to spend all his pocket money in these tavern convocations, and even runs up scores for the liquor over which he preaches about his father's extravagance.

It may readily be imagined how little such thwarting agrees with the old cavalier's fiery temperament. He has become so irritable from repeated crossings that the mere mention of retrenchment or reform is a signal for a brawl between him and the tavern oracle. As the latter is too sturdy and refractory for paternal discipline, having grown out of all fear of the cudgel, they have frequent scenes of wordy warfare, which at times run so high that John is fain to call in the aid of his son Tom, an officer who has served abroad, but is at present living at home on half-pay. This last is sure to stand by the old gentleman, right or wrong, likes nothing so much as a racketing, roystering life, and is ready at a wink or nod to outsaber and flourish it over the orator's head if he dares to array himself against paternal authority.

These family dissensions, as usual, have got abroad, and are rare food for scandal in John's neighborhood. People begin to look wise and shake their heads whenever his affairs are mentioned. They all hope that matters are not so bad with him as represented, but when a man's own children begin to rail at his extravagance, things must be badly managed. They understand he is mortgaged over head and ears and is continually dabbling with money lenders. He

is certainly an open-handed old gentleman, but they fear he has lived too fast; indeed, they never knew any good come of this fondness for hunting, racing, reveling, and prize-fighting. In short, Mr. Bull's estate is a very fine one and has been in the family a long time, but for all that they have known many finer estates come to the hammer.

What is worst of all, is the effect which these pecuniary embarrassments and domestic feuds have had on the poor man himself. Instead of that jolly round corporation and smug rosy face which he used to present, he has of late become as shriveled and shrunk as a frost-bitten apple. His scarlet, gold-laced waistcoat, which bellied out so bravely in those prosperous days when he sailed before the wind, now hangs loosely about him like a mainsail in a calm. His leather breeches are all in folds and wrinkles, and apparently have much ado to hold up the boots that yawn on both sides of his once sturdy legs.

Instead of strutting about as formerly, with his three-cornered hat on one side, flourishing his cudgel and bringing it down every moment with a hearty thump upon the ground, looking every one sturdily in the face, and trolling out a stave of a catch or a drinking song, he now goes about whistling thoughtfully to himself, with his head drooping down, his cudgel tucked under his arm, and his hands thrust to the bottom of his breeches pockets, which are evidently empty.

Such is the plight of honest John Bull at present; yet for all this the old fellow's spirit is as tall and as gallant as ever. If you drop the least expression of sympathy or concern he takes fire in an instant, swears that he is the richest and stoutest fellow in the country, talks of laying out large sums to adorn his house or buy another estate, and, with a valiant swagger and grasping of his cudgel, longs exceedingly to have another bout at quarter-staff.

Though there may be something rather whimsical in all this, yet I confess I cannot look upon John's situation without strong feelings of interest. With all his odd humors and obstinate prejudices, he is a sterling-hearted old blade. He may not be so wonderfully fine a fellow as he thinks himself, but he is at least twice as good as his neighbors represent him. His virtues are all his

own—all plain, homebred, and unaffected. His very faults smack of the raciness of his good qualities. His extravagance savors of his generosity, his quarrelsomeness of his courage, his credulity of his open faith, his vanity of his pride, and his bluntness of his sincerity. They are all the redundancies of a rich and liberal character. He is like his own oak, rough without, but sound and solid within; whose bark abounds with excrescences in proportion to the growth and grandeur of the timber; and whose branches make a fearful groaning and murmuring in the least storm, from their very magnitude and luxuriance. There is something, too, in the appearance of his old family mansion that is extremely poetical and picturesque; and as long as it can be rendered comfortably habitable, I should almost tremble to see it meddled with during the present conflict of tastes and opinions. Some of his advisers are no doubt good architects that might be of service, but many, I fear, are mere levelers, who, when they had once got to work with their mattocks on this venerable edifice, would never stop until they had brought it to the ground, and perhaps buried themselves among the ruins. All that I wish is, that John's present troubles may teach him more prudence in future; that he may cease to distress his mind about other people's affairs; that he may give up the fruitless attempt to promote the good of his neighbors and the peace and happiness of the world by dint of the cudgel; that he may remain quietly at home, gradually get his house into repair, cultivate his rich estate according to his fancy, husband his income—if he thinks proper, bring his unruly children into order—if he can, renew the jovial scenes of ancient prosperity, and long enjoy on his paternal lands a green, an honorable, and a merry old age.

THE ALHAMBRA¹

PALACE OF THE ALHAMBRA

To the traveler imbued with a feeling for the historical and poetical, so inseparably intertwined in the annals of romantic Spain,

¹ "Rough drafts of some of the following tales and essays were actually written during a residence in the Alhambra; others were subsequently added, founded on notes and observations made there. Care was

the Alhambra is as much an object of devotion as is the Caaba to all true Moslems. How many legends and traditions, true and fabulous,—how many songs and ballads, Arabian and Spanish, of love and war and chivalry, are associated with this Oriental pile! It was the royal abode of the Moorish kings, where, surrounded with the splendors and refinements of Asiatic luxury, they held dominion over what they vaunted as a terrestrial paradise, and made their last stand for empire in Spain. The royal palace forms but a part of a fortress, the walls of which, studded with towers, stretch irregularly round the whole crest of a hill, a spur of the Sierra Nevada or Snowy Mountains, and overlook the city; externally it is a rude congregation of towers and battlements, with no regularity of plan nor grace of architecture, and giving little promise of the grace and beauty which prevail within.

In the time of the Moors the fortress was capable of containing within its outward precincts an army of forty thousand men, and served occasionally as a stronghold of the sovereigns against their rebellious subjects. After the kingdom had passed into the hands of the Christians, the Alhambra continued to be a royal demesne, and was occasionally inhabited by the Castilian monarchs. The emperor Charles V commenced a sumptuous palace within its walls, but was deterred from completing it by repeated shocks of earthquakes. The last royal residents were Philip V and his beautiful queen, Elizabetta of Parma, early in the eighteenth century. Great preparations were made for their reception. The palace and gardens were placed in a state of repair, and a new suite of apartments erected, and decorated by artists brought from Italy. The sojourn of the sovereigns was transient, and after their

taken to maintain local coloring and verisimilitude; so that the whole might present a faithful and living picture of that microcosm, that singular little world into which I had been fortuitously thrown; and about which the external world had a very imperfect idea. It was my endeavor scrupulously to depict its half Spanish, half Oriental character; its mixture of the heroic, the poetic, and the grotesque; to revive the traces of grace and beauty fast fading from its walls; to record the regal and chivalrous traditions concerning those who once trod its courts; and the whimsical and superstitious legends of the motley race now burrowing among its ruins." (From Irving's Preface to Revised Ed'n, 1851.)

departure the palace once more became desolate. Still the place was maintained with some military state. The governor held it immediately from the crown, its jurisdiction extended down into the suburbs of the city and was independent of the captain-general of Granada. A considerable garrison was kept up; the governor had his apartments in the front of the old Moorish palace, and never descended into Granada without some military parade. The fortress, in fact, was a little town of itself, having several streets of houses within its walls, together with a Franciscan convent and a parochial church.

The desertion of the court, however, was a fatal blow to the Alhambra. Its beautiful halls became desolate, and some of them fell to ruin; the gardens were destroyed, and the fountains ceased to play. By degrees the dwellings became filled with a loose and lawless population: *contrabandistas*,¹ who availed themselves of its independent jurisdiction to carry on a wide and daring course of smuggling, and thieves and rogues of all sorts, who made this their place of refuge whence they might depredate upon Granada and its vicinity. The strong arm of government at length interfered; the whole community was thoroughly sifted; none were suffered to remain but such as were of honest character, and had legitimate right to a residence; the greater part of the houses were demolished and a mere hamlet left, with the parochial church and the Franciscan convent. During the recent troubles in Spain, when Granada was in the hands of the French, the Alhambra was garrisoned by their troops, and the palace was occasionally inhabited by the French commander. With that enlightened taste which has ever distinguished the French nation in their conquests, this monument of Moorish elegance and grandeur was rescued from the absolute ruin and desolation that were overwhelming it. The roofs were repaired, the saloons and galleries protected from the weather, the gardens cultivated, the water-courses restored, the fountains once more made to throw up their sparkling showers; and Spain may thank her invaders for having preserved to her the most beautiful and interesting of her historical monuments.

¹ Smugglers.

On the departure of the French they blew up several towers of the outer wall, and left the fortifications scarcely tenable. Since that time the military importance of the post is at an end. The garrison is a handful of invalid soldiers, whose principal duty is to guard some of the outer towers, which serve occasionally as a prison of state; and the governor, abandoning the lofty hill of the Alhambra, resides in the center of Granada, for the more convenient dispatch of his official duties. I cannot conclude this brief notice of the state of the fortress without bearing testimony to the honorable exertions of its present commander, Don Francisco de Serna, who is tasking all the limited resources at his command to put the palace in a state of repair, and by his judicious precautions has for some time arrested its too certain decay. Had his predecessors discharged the duties of their station with equal fidelity, the Alhambra might yet have remained in almost its pristine beauty; were government to second him with means equal to his zeal, this relic of it might still be preserved for many generations to adorn the land, and attract the curious and enlightened of every clime.

Our first object, of course, on the morning after our arrival, was a visit to this time-honored edifice; it has been so often, however, and so minutely described by travelers, that I shall not undertake to give a comprehensive and elaborate account of it, but merely occasional sketches of parts, with the incidents and associations connected with them.

Leaving our *posada*,¹ and traversing the renowned square of the Vivarrambla, once the scene of Moorish jousts and tournaments, now a crowded market-place, we proceeded along the Zacatin, the main street of what, in the time of the Moors, was the Great Bazaar, and where small shops and narrow alleys still retain the Oriental character. Crossing an open place in front of the palace of the captain-general, we ascended a confined and winding street, the name of which reminded us of the chivalric days of Granada. It is called the Calle, or street of the Gomeres, from a Moorish family famous in chronicle and song. This street led up to the Puerta de las Granadas,² a massive gate-

way of Grecian architecture, built by Charles V, forming the entrance to the domains of the Alhambra.

At the gate were two or three ragged superannuated soldiers, dozing on a stone bench, the successors of the Zegris and the Abencerrages;³ while a tall, meager varlet, whose rusty-brown cloak was evidently intended to conceal the ragged state of his nether garments, was lounging in the sunshine and gossiping with an ancient sentinel on duty. He joined us as we entered the gate, and offered his services to show us the fortress.

I have a traveler's dislike to officious ciceroni, and did not altogether like the garb of the applicant.

"You are well acquainted with the place, I presume?"

"*Ninguno mas; pues, señor, soy hijo de la Alhambra.*"—(Nobody better; in fact, sir, I am a son of the Alhambra!)

The common Spaniards have certainly a most poetic way of expressing themselves. "A son of the Alhambra!"—the appellation caught me at once; the very tattered garb of my new acquaintance assumed a dignity in my eyes. It was emblematic of the fortunes of the place, and befitted the progeny of a ruin.

I put some further questions to him, and found that his title was legitimate. His family had lived in the fortress from generation to generation ever since the time of the Conquest. His name was Mateo Ximenes. "Then, perhaps," said I, "you may be a descendant from the great Cardinal Ximenes?" "*Dios sabe!* God knows, "señor! It may be so. We are the oldest family in the Alhambra,—*Christianos viejos*, old Christians, without any taint of Moor or Jew. I know we belong to some great family or other, but I forget whom. My father knows all about it; he has the coat-of-arms hanging up in his cottage, up in the fortress." There is not any Spaniard, however poor, but has some claim to high pedigree. The first title of this ragged worthy, however, had completely captivated me, so I gladly accepted the services of the "son of Alhambra."

We now found ourselves in a deep, narrow ravine, filled with beautiful groves, with a

¹ Lodging house.

² Gate of the pomegranates.

³ Names of two famous Moorish families, according to tradition perpetually hostile to each other.

steep avenue, and various footpaths winding through it, bordered with stone seats, and ornamented with fountains. To our left we beheld the towers of the Alhambra beetling above us; to our right, on the opposite side of the ravine, we were equally dominated by rival towers on a rocky eminence. These, we were told, were the *torres bermejas*, or vermilion towers; so called from their ruddy hue. No one knows their origin. They are of a date much anterior to the Alhambra: some suppose them to have been built by the Romans; others, by some wandering colony of Phœnicians. Ascending the steep and shady avenue, we arrived at the foot of a huge square Moorish tower, forming a kind of barbican, through which passed the main entrance to the fortress. Within the barbican was another group of veteran invalids, one mounting guard at the portal, while the rest, wrapped in their tattered cloaks, slept on the stone benches. This portal is called the Gate of Justice, from the tribunal held within its porch during the Moslem domination, for the immediate trial of petty causes—a custom common to the Oriental nations, and occasionally alluded to in the sacred Scriptures. “Judges and officers shalt thou make thee *in all thy gates*, and they shall judge the people with just judgment.”¹

The great vestibule, or porch of the gate, is formed by an immense Arabian arch, of the horseshoe form, which springs to half the height of the tower. On the keystone of this arch is engraven a gigantic hand. Within the vestibule, on the keystone of the portal, is sculptured, in like manner, a gigantic key. Those who pretend to some knowledge of Mohammedan symbols affirm that the hand is the emblem of doctrine, the five fingers designating the five principal commandments of the creed of Islam, fasting, pilgrimage, almsgiving, ablution, and war against infidels. The key, say they, is the emblem of the faith or of power; the key of Daoud, or David, transmitted to the prophet. “And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open.” (Isaiah, xxii, 22.) The key we are told was emblazoned on the standard of the Moslems in opposition to the Christian emblem of the

cross, when they subdued Spain or Andalusia. It betokened the conquering power invested in the prophet. “He that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth.” (Revelation, iii, 7.)

A different explanation of these emblems, however, was given by the legitimate son of the Alhambra, and one more in unison with the notions of the common people, who attach something of mystery and magic to everything Moorish, and have all kinds of superstitions connected with this old Moslem fortress. According to Mateo, it was a tradition handed down from the oldest inhabitants, and which he had from his father and grandfather, that the hand and key were magical devices on which the fate of the Alhambra depended. The Moorish king who built it was a great magician, or, as some believed, had sold himself to the devil, and had laid the whole fortress under a magic spell. By this means it had remained standing for several years, in defiance of storms and earthquakes, while almost all other buildings of the Moors had fallen to ruin and disappeared. This spell, the tradition went on to say, would last until the hand on the outer arch should reach down and grasp the key, when the whole pile would tumble to pieces, and all the treasures buried beneath it by the Moors would be revealed.

Notwithstanding this ominous prediction, we ventured to pass through the spellbound gateway, feeling some little assurance against magic art in the protection of the Virgin, a statue of whom we observed above the portal.

After passing through the barbican, we ascended a narrow lane, winding between walls, and came on an open esplanade within the fortress, called the Plaza de los Albiges, or Place of the Cisterns, from great reservoirs which undermine it, cut in the living rock by the Moors to receive the water brought by conduits from the Darro, for the supply of the fortress. Here, also, is a well of immense depth, furnishing the purest and coldest of water,—another monument of the delicate taste of the Moors, who were indefatigable in their exertions to obtain that element in its crystal purity.

In front of this esplanade is the splendid pile commenced by Charles V, and intended, it is said, to eclipse the residence of the

¹ Deuteronomy, xvi, 18.

Moorish kings. Much of the Oriental edifice intended for the winter season was demolished to make way for this massive pile. The grand entrance was blocked up, so that the present entrance to the Moorish palace is through a simple and almost humble portal in a corner. With all the massive grandeur and architectural merit of the palace of Charles V, we regarded it as an arrogant intruder, and, passing by it with a feeling almost of scorn, rang at the Moslem portal.

While waiting for admittance, our self-imposed cicerone, Mateo Ximenes, informed us that the royal palace was entrusted to the care of a worthy old maiden dame called Doña Antonia-Molina, but who, according to Spanish custom, went by the more neighborly appellation of Tia Antonia (Aunt Antonia), who maintained the Moorish halls and gardens in order and showed them to strangers. While we were talking, the door was opened by a plump little black-eyed Andalusian damsel, whom Mateo addressed as Dolores, but who, from her bright looks and cheerful disposition, evidently merited a merrier name. Mateo informed me in a whisper that she was the niece of Tia Antonia, and I found she was the good fairy who was to conduct us through the enchanted palace. Under her guidance we crossed the threshold, and were at once transported, as if by magic wand, into other times and an Oriental realm, and were treading the scenes of Arabian story. Nothing could be in greater contrast than the unpromising exterior of the pile with the scene now before us. We found ourselves in a vast *patio*, or court, one hundred and fifty feet in length, and upwards of eighty feet in breadth, paved with white marble, and decorated at each end with light Moorish peristyles, one of which supported an elegant gallery of fretted architecture. Along the moldings of the cornices and on various parts of the walls were escutcheons and ciphers, and cufic¹ and Arabic characters in high relief, repeating the pious mottoes of the Moslem monarchs, the builders of the Alhambra, or extolling their grandeur and munificence. Along the center of the court extended an immense basin or tank (*estanque*), a hundred and twenty-four feet in length, twenty-seven in breadth, and five

in depth, receiving its water from two marble vases. Hence it is called the Court of the Alberca (from *al beerkah*, the Arabic for a pond or tank). Great numbers of gold-fish were to be seen gleaming through the waters of the basin, and it was bordered by hedges of roses.

Passing from the Court of the Alberca under a Moorish archway, we entered the renowned Court of Lions. No part of the edifice gives a more complete idea of its original beauty than this, for none has suffered so little from the ravages of time. In the center stands the fountain famous in song and story. The alabaster basins still shed their diamond drops; the twelve lions which support them, and give the court its name, still cast forth crystal streams as in the days of Boabdil.² The lions, however, are unworthy of their fame, being of miserable sculpture, the work probably of some Christian captive. The court is laid out in flower-beds, instead of its ancient and appropriate pavement of tiles or marble; the alteration, an instance of bad taste, was made by the French when in possession of Granada. Round the four sides of the court are light Arabian arcades of open filigree work, supported by slender pillars of white marble, which it is supposed were originally gilded. The architecture, like that in most parts of the interior of the palace, is characterized by elegance rather than grandeur, bespeaking a delicate and graceful taste, and a disposition to indolent enjoyment. When one looks upon the fairy traces of the peristyles, and the apparently fragile fretwork of the walls, it is difficult to believe that so much has survived the wear and tear of centuries, the shocks of earthquakes, the violence of war, and the quiet, though no less baneful, pilferings of the tasteful traveler: it is almost sufficient to excuse the popular tradition that the whole is protected by a magic charm.

On one side of the court a rich portal opens into the Hall of the Abencerrages: so called from the gallant cavaliers of that illustrious line who were here perfidiously massacred. There are some who doubt the whole story,

¹ Arabic alphabet anciently employed at Cufa, a town near the lower Euphrates.

² Last Moorish king of Granada; revolted and seized throne of his father in 1481; in 1491 was attacked, defeated, and captured by Ferdinand and Isabella, who gave him his liberty on the condition that he should acknowledge himself their vassal.

but our humble cicerone Mateo pointed out the very wicket of the portal through which they were introduced one by one into the Court of Lions, and the white marble fountain in the center of the hall beside which they were beheaded. He showed us also certain broad ruddy stains on the pavement, traces of their blood, which, according to popular belief, can never be effaced.

Finding we listened to him apparently with easy faith, he added that there was often heard at night, in the Court of Lions, a low confused sound, resembling the murmuring of a multitude, and now and then a faint tinkling, like the distant clank of chains. These sounds were made by the spirits of the murdered Abencerrages; who nightly haunt the scene of their suffering and invoke the vengeance of Heaven on their destroyer.

The sounds in question had no doubt been produced, as I had afterwards an opportunity of ascertaining, by the bubbling currents and tinkling falls of water conducted under the pavement through pipes and channels to supply the fountains; but I was too considerate to intimate such an idea to the humble chronicler of the Alhambra.

Encouraged by my easy credulity, Mateo gave me the following as an undoubted fact, which he had from his grandfather:

There was once an invalid soldier, who had charge of the Alhambra to show it to strangers; as he was one evening, about twilight, passing through the Court of Lions, he heard footsteps on the Hall of the Abencerrages; supposing some strangers to be lingering there, he advanced to attend upon them, when to his astonishment he beheld four Moors richly dressed, with gilded cuirasses and scimitars, and poniards glittering with precious stones. They were walking to and fro, with solemn pace; but paused and beckoned to him. The old soldier, however, took to flight, and could never afterwards be prevailed upon to enter the Alhambra. Thus it is that men sometimes turn their backs upon fortune; for it is the firm opinion of Mateo that the Moors intended to reveal the place where their treasures lay buried. A successor to the invalid soldier was more knowing; he came to the Alhambra poor; but at the end of a year went off to Malaga, bought houses, set up a carriage, and still lives there, one of the richest as well as oldest

men of the place; all which, Mateo sagely surmised, was in consequence of his finding out the golden secret of these phantom Moors.

I now perceived I had made an invaluable acquaintance in this son of the Alhambra, one who knew all the apocryphal history of the place, and firmly believed in it, and whose memory was stuffed with a kind of knowledge for which I have a lurking fancy, but which is too apt to be considered rubbish by less indulgent philosophers. I determined to cultivate the acquaintance of this learned Theban.

Immediately opposite the Hall of the Abencerrages, a portal, richly adorned, leads into a hall of less tragical associations. It is light and lofty, exquisitely graceful in its architecture, paved with white marble, and bears the suggestive name of the Hall of the Two Sisters. Some destroy the romance of the name by attributing it to two enormous slabs of alabaster which lie side by side, and form a great part of the pavement: an opinion strongly supported by Mateo Ximenes. Others are disposed to give the name a more poetical significance, as the vague memorial of Moorish beauties who once graced this hall, which was evidently a part of the royal harem. This opinion I was happy to find entertained by our little bright-eyed guide, Dolores, who pointed to a balcony over an inner porch, which gallery, she had been told, belonged to the women's apartment. "You see, señor," said she, "it is all grated and latticed, like the gallery in a convent chapel where the nuns hear mass; for the Moorish kings," added she, indignantly, "shut up their wives just like nuns."

The latticed jalousies, in fact, still remain, whence the dark-eyed beauties of the harem might gaze unseen upon the *zambra*s and other dances and entertainments of the hall below.

On each side of this hall are recesses or alcoves for ottomans and couches, on which the voluptuous lords of the Alhambra indulged in that dreamy repose so dear to the Orientalists. A cupola or lantern admits a tempered light from above and a free circulation of air; while on one side is heard the refreshing sound of waters from the Fountain of the Lions, and on the other side the soft plash from the basin in the garden of Lindaraxa.

It is impossible to contemplate this scene, so perfectly Oriental, without feeling the early associations of Arabian romance, and almost expecting to see the white arm of some mysterious princess beckoning from the gallery, or some dark eye sparkling through the lattice. The abode of beauty is here as if it had been inhabited but yesterday; but where are the two sisters, where the Zoraydas and Lindaraxas!

An abundant supply of water, brought from the mountains by old Moorish aqueducts, circulates throughout the palace, supplying its baths and fish-pools, sparkling in jets within its halls or murmuring in channels along the marble pavements. When it has paid its tribute to the royal pile, and visited its gardens and parterres, it flows down the long avenue leading to the city, tinkling in rills, gushing in fountains, and maintaining a perpetual verdure in those groves that embower and beautify the whole hill of the Alhambra.

Those only who have sojourned in the ardent climates of the South can appreciate the delights of an abode combining the breezy coolness of the mountain with the freshness and verdure of the valley. While the city below pants with the noontide heat, and the parched Vega trembles to the eye, the delicate airs from the Sierra Nevada play through these lofty halls, bringing with them the sweetness of the surrounding gardens. Everything invites to that indolent repose, the bliss of southern climes; and while the half-shut eye looks out from shaded balconies upon the glittering landscape, the ear is lulled by the rustling of groves and the murmur of running streams.

I forbear for the present, however, to describe the other delightful apartments of the palace. My object is merely to give the reader a general introduction into an abode where, if so disposed, he may linger and loiter with me day by day until we gradually become familiar with all its localities.

IMPORTANT NEGOTIATIONS. — THE AUTHOR SUCCEEDS TO THE THRONE OF BOABDIL

THE day was nearly spent before we could tear ourselves from this region of poetry and romance to descend to the city and return

to the forlorn realities of a Spanish *posada*. In a visit of ceremony to the Governor of the Alhambra, to whom we had brought letters, we dwelt with enthusiasm on the scenes we had witnessed, and could not but express surprise that he should reside in the city when he had such a paradise at his command. He pleaded the inconvenience of a residence in the palace from its situation on the crest of a hill, distant from the seat of business and the resorts of social intercourse. It did very well for monarchs, who often had need of castle walls to defend them from their own subjects. "But, señors," added he, smiling, "if you think a residence there so desirable, my apartments in the Alhambra are at your service."

It is a common and almost indispensable point of politeness in a Spaniard, to tell you his house is yours. "*Esta casa es siempre a la disposición de Vm.*"—"This house is always at the command of your Grace." In fact, anything of his which you admire is immediately offered to you. It is equally a mark of good breeding in you not to accept it; so we merely bowed our acknowledgments of the courtesy of the Governor in offering us a royal palace. We were mistaken, however. The Governor was in earnest. "You will find a rambling set of empty, unfurnished rooms," said he; "but Tia Antonia, who has charge of the palace, may be able to put them in some kind of order, and to take care of you while you are there. If you can make any arrangement with her for your accommodation, and are content with scanty fare in a royal abode, the palace of King Chico¹ is at your service."

We took the Governor at his word, and hastened up the steep Calle de los Gomerres, and through the Great Gate of Justice, to negotiate with Dame Antonia,—doubting at times if this were not a dream, and fearing at times that the sage *Dueña* of the fortress might be slow to capitulate. We knew we had one friend at least in the garrison who would be in our favor, the bright-eyed little Dolores, whose good graces we had propitiated on our first visit, and who hailed our return to the palace with her brightest looks.

All, however, went smoothly. The good Tia Antonia had a little furniture to put in

¹ Boabdil.

the rooms, but it was of the commonest kind. We assured her we could bivouac on the floor. She could supply our table, but only in her own simple way;—we wanted nothing better. Her niece, Dolores, would wait upon us; and at the word we threw up our hats and the bargain was complete.

The very next day we took up our abode in the palace, and never did sovereigns share a divided throne with more perfect harmony. Several days passed by like a dream, when my worthy associate,¹ being summoned to Madrid on diplomatic duties, was compelled to abdicate, leaving me sole monarch of this shadowy realm. For myself, being in a manner a haphazard loiterer about the world, and prone to linger in its pleasant places, here have I been suffering day by day to steal away unheeded, spellbound, for aught I know, in this old enchanted pile. Having always a companionable feeling for my reader, and being prone to live with him on confidential terms, I shall make it a point to communicate to him my reveries and researches during this state of delicious thralldom. If they have the power of imparting to his imagination any of the witching charms of the place, he will not repine at lingering with me for a season in the legendary halls of the Alhambra.

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THE HALL OF AMBASSADORS

IN one of my visits to the old Moorish chamber where the good Tia Antonia cooks her dinner and receives her company, I observed a mysterious door in one corner, leading apparently into the ancient part of the edifice. My curiosity being aroused, I opened it, and found myself in a narrow, blind corridor, groping along which I came to the head of a dark winding staircase, leading down an angle of the Tower of Comares. Down this staircase I descended darkling, guiding myself by the wall until I came to a small door at the bottom, throwing which open, I was suddenly dazzled by emerging into the brilliant antechamber of the Hall of Ambassadors; with the fountain of the Court of the Alberca sparkling before me. The

ante-chamber is separated from the court by an elegant gallery, supported by slender columns with spandrels of open work in the Morisco style. At each end of the ante-chamber are alcoves, and its ceiling is richly stuccoed and painted. Passing through a magnificent portal, I found myself in the far-famed Hall of Ambassadors, the audience chamber of the Moslem monarchs. It is said to be thirty-seven feet square and sixty feet high; occupies the whole interior of the Tower of Comares; and still bears the traces of past magnificence. The walls are beautifully stuccoed and decorated with Morisco fancifulness; the lofty ceiling was originally of the same favorite material, with the usual frostwork and pensile ornaments or stalactites; which, with the embellishments of vivid coloring and gilding, must have been gorgeous in the extreme. Unfortunately, it gave way during an earthquake, and brought down with it an immense arch which traversed the hall. It was replaced by the present vault or dome of larch or cedar, with intersecting ribs, the whole curiously wrought and richly colored; still Oriental in its character, reminding one of "those ceilings of cedar and vermilion that we read of in the Prophets and the *Arabian Nights*."²

From the great height of the vault above the windows, the upper part of the hall is almost lost in obscurity; yet there is a magnificence as well as solemnity in the gloom, as through it we have gleams of rich gilding and the brilliant tints of the Moorish pencil.

The royal throne was placed opposite the entrance in a recess, which still bears an inscription intimating that Yusef I (the monarch who completed the Alhambra) made this the throne of his empire. Everything in this noble hall seems to have been calculated to surround the throne with impressive dignity and splendor; there was none of the elegant voluptuousness which reigns in other parts of the palace. The tower is of massive strength, domineering over the whole edifice and overhanging the steep hillside. On three sides of the Hall of Ambassadors are windows cut through the immense thickness of the walls and commanding extensive prospects. The balcony of the central window especially looks down

¹ Prince Demetri Ivanovitch Dolgorouki, Secretary of the Russian Embassy at Madrid.

² Urquhart's *Pillars of Hercules*. (Irving's note.)

upon the verdant valley of the Darro, with its walks, its groves, and gardens. To the left it enjoys a distant prospect of the Vega; while directly in front rises the rival height of the Albaycin, with its medley of streets, and terraces, and gardens, and once crowned by a fortress that vied in power with the Alhambra. "Ill fated the man who lost all this!" exclaimed Charles V, as he looked forth from this window upon the enchanting scenery it commands.

The balcony of the window where this royal exclamation was made, has of late become one of my favorite resorts. I have just been seated there, enjoying the close of a long brilliant day. The sun, as he sank behind the purple mountains of Alhama, sent a stream of effulgence up the valley of the Darro, that spread a melancholy pomp over the ruddy towers of the Alhambra; while the Vega, covered with a slight sultry vapor that caught the setting ray, seemed spread out in the distance like a golden sea. Not a breath of air disturbed the stillness of the hour, and though the faint sound of music and merriment now and then rose from the gardens of the Darro, it but rendered more impressive the monumental silence of the pile which overshadowed me. It was one of those hours and scenes in which memory asserts an almost magical power; and, like the evening sun beaming on these moldering towers, sends back her retrospective rays to light up the glories of the past.

As I sat watching the effect of the declining daylight upon this Moorish pile, I was led into a consideration of the light, elegant, and voluptuous character prevalent throughout its internal architecture, and to contrast it with the grand but gloomy solemnity of the Gothic edifices reared by the Spanish conquerors. The very architecture thus bespeaks the opposite and irreconcilable natures of the two warlike people who so long battled here for the mastery of the Peninsula. By degrees I fell into a course of musing upon the singular fortunes of the Arabian or Morisco-Spaniards, whose whole existence is as a tale that is told, and certainly forms one of the most anomalous yet splendid episodes in history. Potent and durable as was their dominion, we scarcely know how to call them. They were a nation without a legitimate country or name. A remote wave of

the great Arabian inundation, cast upon the shores of Europe, they seem to have all the impetus of the first rush of the torrent. Their career of conquest, from the rock of Gibraltar to the cliffs of the Pyrenees, was as rapid and brilliant as the Moslem victories of Syria and Egypt. Nay, had they not been checked on the plains of Tours, all France, all Europe, might have been overrun with the same facility as the empires of the East, and the Crescent at this day have glittered on the fanes of Paris and London.

Repelled within the limits of the Pyrenees, the mixed hordes of Asia and Africa, that formed this great irruption, gave up the Moslem principle of conquest, and sought to establish in Spain a peaceful and permanent dominion. As conquerors, their heroism was only equaled by their moderation; and in both, for a time, they excelled the nations with whom they contended. Severed from their native homes, they loved the land given them as they supposed by Allah, and strove to embellish it with everything that could administer to the happiness of man. Laying the foundations of their power in a system of wise and equitable laws, diligently cultivating the arts and sciences, and promoting agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, they gradually formed an empire unrivaled for its prosperity by any of the empires of Christendom; and diligently drawing round them the graces and refinements which marked the Arabian empire of the East, at the time of its greatest civilization, they diffused the light of Oriental knowledge through the western regions of benighted Europe.

The cities of Arabian Spain became the resort of Christian artisans, to instruct themselves in the useful arts. The universities of Toledo, Cordova, Seville, and Granada were sought by the pale student from other lands to acquaint himself with the sciences of the Arabs and the treasured lore of antiquity; the lovers of the gay science resorted to Cordova and Granada, to imbibe the poetry and music of the East; and the steel-clad warriors of the North hastened thither to accomplish themselves in the graceful exercises and courteous usages of chivalry.

If the Moslem monuments in Spain, if the Mosque of Cordova, the Alcazar of Seville, and the Alhambra of Granada, still bear in-

scriptions fondly boasting of the power and permanency of their dominion, can the boast be derided as arrogant and vain? Generation after generation, century after century, passed away, and still they maintained possession of the land. A period elapsed longer than that which has passed since England was subjugated by the Norman Conqueror, and the descendants of Musa and Taric might as little anticipate being driven into exile across the same straits, traversed by their triumphant ancestors, as the descendants of Rollo and William and their veteran peers, may dream of being driven back to the shores of Normandy.

With all this, however, the Moslem empire in Spain was but a brilliant exotic, that took no permanent root in the soil it embellished. Severed from all their neighbors in the West by impassable barriers of faith and manners, and separated by seas and deserts from their kindred of the East, the Morisco-Spaniards were an isolated people. Their whole existence was a prolonged, though gallant and chivalric, struggle for a foothold in a usurped land.

They were the outposts and frontiers of Islamism. The Peninsula was the great battle-ground, where the Gothic conquerors of the North and the Moslem conquerors of the East met and strove for mastery; and the fiery courage of the Arab was at length subdued by the obstinate and persevering valor of the Goth.

Never was the annihilation of a people more complete than that of the Morisco-Spaniards. Where are they? Ask the shores of Barbary and its desert places. The exiled remnant of their once powerful empire disappeared among the barbarians of Africa, and ceased to be a nation. They have not even left a distinct name behind them, though for nearly eight centuries they were a distinct people. The home of their adoption, and of their occupation for ages, refuses to acknowledge them, except as invaders and usurpers. A few broken monuments are all that remain to bear witness to their power and dominion, as solitary rocks, left far in the interior, bear testimony to the extent of some vast inundation. Such is the Alhambra;—a Moslem pile in the midst of a Christian land; an Oriental palace amidst the Gothic edifices of the West; an elegant

memento of a brave, intelligent, and graceful people, who conquered, ruled, flourished, and passed away.

THE COURT OF LIONS

THE peculiar charm of this old dreamy palace is its power of calling up vague reveries and picturings of the past, and thus clothing naked realities with the illusions of the memory and the imagination. As I delight to walk in these "vain shadows," I am prone to seek those parts of the Alhambra which are most favorable to this phantasmagoria of the mind; and none are more so than the Court of Lions, and its surrounding halls. Here the hand of time has fallen the lightest, and the traces of Moorish elegance and splendor exist in almost their original brilliancy. Earthquakes have shaken the foundations of this pile, and rent its rudest towers; yet see! not one of those slender columns has been displaced, not an arch of that light and fragile colonnade given way, and all the fairy fretwork of these domes, apparently as unsubstantial as the crystal fabrics of a morning's frost, exist after the lapse of centuries, almost as fresh as if from the hand of the Moslem artist. I write in the midst of these mementos of the past, in the fresh hour of early morning, in the fated Hall of the Abencerrages. The blood-stained fountain, the legendary monument of their massacre, is before me; the lofty jet almost casts its dew upon my paper. How difficult to reconcile the ancient tale of violence and blood with the gentle and peaceful scene around! Everything here appears calculated to inspire kind and happy feelings, for everything is delicate and beautiful. The very light falls tenderly from above, through the lantern of a dome tinted and wrought as if by fairy hands. Through the ample and fretted arch of the portal I behold the Court of Lions, with brilliant sunshine gleaming along its colonnades and sparkling in its fountains. The lively swallow dives into the court, and, rising with a surge, darts away twittering over the roofs; the busy bee toils humming among the flower-beds; and painted butterflies hover from plant to plant, and flutter up and sport with each other in the sunny air. It needs but a slight exertion of the fancy to picture some pensive beauty of

the harem, loitering in these secluded haunts of Oriental luxury.

He, however, who would behold this scene under an aspect more in unison with its fortunes, let him come when the shadows of evening temper the brightness of the court, and throw a gloom into the surrounding halls. Then nothing can be more serenely melancholy, or more in harmony with the tale of departed grandeur.

At such times I am apt to seek the Hall of Justice, whose deep shadowy arcades extend across the upper end of the court. Here was performed, in presence of Ferdinand and Isabella and their triumphant court, the pompous ceremonial of High Mass, on taking possession of the Alhambra. The very cross is still to be seen upon the wall, where the altar was erected, and where officiated the Grand Cardinal of Spain, and others of the highest religious dignitaries of the land. I picture to myself the scene when this place was filled with the conquering host, that mixture of mitred prelate and shaven monk, and steel-clad knight and silken courtier; when crosses and crosiers and religious standards were mingled with proud armorial ensigns and the banners of the haughty chiefs of Spain, and flaunted in triumph through these Moslem halls. I picture to myself Columbus, the future discoverer of a world, taking his modest stand in a remote corner, the humble and neglected spectator of the pageant. I see in imagination the Catholic sovereigns prostrating themselves before the altar, and pouring forth thanks for their victory; while the vaults resound with sacred minstrelsy, and the deep-toned *Te Deum*.

The transient illusion is over,—the pageant melts from the fancy,—monarch, priest, and warrior return into oblivion with the poor Moslems over whom they exulted. The hall of their triumph is waste and desolate. The bat flits about its twilight vault, and the owl hoots from the neighboring Tower of Comares.

Entering the Court of the Lions a few evenings since, I was almost startled at beholding a turbaned Moor quietly seated near the fountain. For a moment one of the fictions of the place seemed realized: an enchanted Moor had broken the spell of centuries, and become visible. He proved, however, to be a mere ordinary mortal,—

a native of Tetuan, in Barbary, who had a shop in the Zacatin of Granada, where he sold rhubarb, trinkets, and perfumes. As he spoke Spanish fluently, I was enabled to hold conversation with him, and found him shrewd and intelligent. He told me that he came up the hill occasionally in the summer, to pass a part of the day in the Alhambra, which reminded him of the old palaces in Barbary, being built and adorned in similar style, though with more magnificence.

As we walked about the palace, he pointed out several of the Arabic inscriptions, as possessing much poetic beauty.

"Ah, señor," said he, "when the Moors held Granada, they were a gayer people than they are nowadays. They thought only of love, music, and poetry. They made stanzas upon every occasion, and set them all to music. He who could make the best verses, and she who had the most tuneful voice, might be sure of favor and preferment. In those days, if any one asked for bread, the reply was 'Make me a couplet'; and the poorest beggar, if he begged in rhyme, would often be rewarded with a piece of gold."

"And is the popular feeling for poetry," said I, "entirely lost among you?"

"By no means, señor; the people of Barbary, even those of the lower classes, still make couplets—and good ones too—as in old times; but talent is not rewarded as it was then. The rich prefer the jingle of their gold to the sound of poetry or music."

As he was talking, his eye caught one of the inscriptions which foretold perpetuity to the power and glory of the Moslem monarchs, the masters of this pile. He shook his head, and shrugged his shoulders, as he interpreted it. "Such might have been the case," said he; "the Moslems might still have been reigning in the Alhambra, had not Boabdil been a traitor, and given up his capital to the Christians. The Spanish monarchs would never have been able to conquer it by open force."

I endeavored to vindicate the memory of the unlucky Boabdil from this aspersion, and to show that the dissensions which led to the downfall of the Moorish throne originated in the cruelty of his tiger-hearted father. But the Moor would admit of no palliation.

"Muley Abul Hassan," said he, "might have been cruel; but he was brave, vigilant,

and patriotic. Had he been properly seconded, Granada would still have been ours; but his son Boabdil thwarted his plans, crippled his power, sowed treason in his palace and dissension in his camp. May the curse of God light upon him for his treachery!" With these words the Moor left the Alhambra.

The indignation of my turbaned companion agrees with an anecdote related by a friend, who, in the course of a tour in Barbary, had an interview with the Pacha of Tetuan. The Moorish governor was particular in his inquiries about Spain, and especially concerning the favored region of Andalusia, the delights of Granada, and the remains of its royal palace. The replies awakened all those fond recollections, so deeply cherished by the Moors, of the power and splendor of their ancient empire in Spain. Turning to his Moslem attendants, the Pacha stroked his beard, and broke forth in passionate lamentations that such a scepter should have fallen from the sway of true believers. He consoled himself, however, with the persuasion that the power and prosperity of the Spanish nation were on the decline; that a time would come when the Moors would conquer their rightful domains, and that the day was perhaps not far distant when Mohammedan worship would again be offered up in the mosque of Cordova, and a Mohammedan prince sit on his throne in the Alhambra.

Such is the general aspiration and belief among the Moors of Barbary, who consider Spain, or Andalus, as it was anciently called, their rightful heritage, of which they have been despoiled by treachery and violence. These ideas are fostered and perpetuated by the descendants of the exiled Moors of Granada, scattered among the cities of Barbary. Several of these reside in Tetuan, preserving their ancient names, such as Paez and Medina, and refraining from intermarriage with any families who cannot claim the same high origin. Their vaunted lineage is regarded with a degree of popular deference rarely shown in Mohammedan communities to any hereditary distinction, excepting in the royal line.

These families, it is said, continue to sigh after the terrestrial paradise of their ancestors, and to put up prayers in their mosques

on Fridays, imploring Allah to hasten the time when Granada shall be restored to the faithful: an event to which they look forward as fondly and confidently as did the Christian crusaders to the recovery of the Holy Sepulcher. Nay, it is added that some of them retain the ancient maps and deeds of the estates and gardens of their ancestors at Granada, and even the keys of the houses, holding them as evidences of their hereditary claims, to be produced at the anticipated day of restoration.

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LEGEND OF THE ARABIAN ASTROLOGER

IN old times, many hundred years ago, there was a Moorish king named Aben Habuz, who reigned over the kingdom of Granada. He was a retired conqueror, that is to say, one who, having in his more youthful days led a life of constant foray and depredation, now that he was grown feeble and superannuated, "languished for repose," and desired nothing more than to live at peace with all the world, to husband his laurels, and to enjoy in quiet the possessions he had wrested from his neighbors.

It so happened, however, that this most reasonable and pacific old monarch had young rivals to deal with; princes full of his early passion for fame and fighting, and who were disposed to call him to account for the scores he had run up with their fathers. Certain distant districts of his own territories, also, which during the days of his vigor he had treated with a high hand, were prone, now that he languished for repose, to rise in rebellion and threaten to invest him in his capital. Thus he had foes on every side; and as Granada is surrounded by wild and craggy mountains, which hide the approach of an enemy, the unfortunate Aben Habuz was kept in a constant state of vigilance and alarm, not knowing in what quarter hostilities might break out.

It was in vain that he built watch-towers on the mountains, and stationed guards at every pass with orders to make fires by night and smoke by day, on the approach of an enemy. His alert foes, baffling every precaution, would break out of some unthought-of defile, ravage his lands beneath

his very nose, and then make off with prisoners and booty to the mountains. Was ever peaceable and retired conqueror in a more uncomfortable predicament?

While Aben Habuz was harassed by these perplexities and molestations, an ancient Arabian physician arrived at his court. His gray beard descended to his girdle, and he had every mark of extreme age, yet he had traveled almost the whole way from Egypt on foot, with no other aid than a staff, marked with hieroglyphics. His fame had preceded him. His name was Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub; he was said to have lived ever since the days of Mahomet, and to be son of Abu Ayub, the last of the companions of the Prophet. He had, when a child, followed the conquering army of Amru into Egypt, where he had remained many years studying the dark sciences, and particularly magic, among the Egyptian priests.

It was, moreover, said that he had found out the secret of prolonging life, by means of which he had arrived to the great age of upwards of two centuries, though, as he did not discover the secret until well stricken in years, he could only perpetuate his gray hairs and wrinkles.

This wonderful old man was honorably entertained by the king; who, like most superannuated monarchs, began to take physicians into great favor. He would have assigned him an apartment in his palace, but the astrologer preferred a cave in the side of the hill which rises above the city of Granada, being the same on which the Alhambra has since been built. He caused the cave to be enlarged so as to form a spacious and lofty hall, with a circular hole at the top, through which, as through a well, he could see the heavens and behold the stars even at mid-day. The walls of this hall were covered with Egyptian hieroglyphics with cabalistic symbols, and with the figures of the stars in their signs. This hall he furnished with many implements, fabricated under his directions by cunning artificers of Granada, but the occult properties of which were known only to himself.

In a little while the sage Ibrahim became the bosom counselor of the king, who applied to him for advice in every emergency. Aben Habuz was once inveighing against the injustice of his neighbors, and bemoaning the

restless vigilance he had to observe to guard himself against their invasions; when he had finished, the astrologer remained silent for a moment, and then replied, "Know, O king, that, when I was in Egypt, I beheld a great marvel devised by a pagan priestess of old. On a mountain, above the city of Borsa, and overlooking the great valley of the Nile, was a figure of a ram, and above it a figure of a cock, both of molten brass, and turning upon a pivot. Whenever the country was threatened with invasion, the ram would turn in the direction of the enemy, and the cock would crow; upon this the inhabitants of the city knew of the danger, and of the quarter from which it was approaching, and could take timely means to guard against it."

"God is great!" exclaimed the pacific Aben Habuz, "what a treasure would be such a ram to keep an eye upon these mountains around me; and then such a cock, to crow in time of danger! Allah Akbar! how securely I might sleep in my palace with such sentinels on the top!"

The astrologer waited until the ecstasies of the king had subsided, and then proceeded:

"After the victorious Amru (may he rest in peace!) had finished his conquest of Egypt, I remained among the priests of the land, studying the rites and ceremonies of their idolatrous faith, and seeking to make myself master of the hidden knowledge for which they are renowned. I was one day seated on the banks of the Nile, conversing with an ancient priest, when he pointed to the mighty pyramids which rose like mountains out of the neighboring desert. 'All that we can teach thee,' said he, 'is nothing to the knowledge locked up in those mighty piles. In the center of the central pyramid is a sepulchral chamber, in which is enclosed the mummy of the high-priest who aided in rearing that stupendous pile; and with him is buried a wondrous book of knowledge, containing all the secrets of magic and art. This book was given to Adam after his fall, and was handed down from generation to generation to King Solomon the Wise, and by its aid he built the Temple of Jerusalem. How it came into the possession of the builder of the pyramids is known to Him alone who knows all things.'

"When I heard these words of the Egyptian priest, my heart burned to get possession of that book. I could command the services of many of the soldiers of our conquering army, and of a number of the native Egyptians: with these I set to work, and pierced the solid mass of the pyramid, until, after great toil, I came upon one of its interior and hidden passages. Following this up, and threading a fearful labyrinth, I penetrated into the very heart of the pyramids, even to the sepulchral chamber, where the mummy of the high-priest had lain for ages. I broke through the outer cases of the mummy, unfolded its many wrappers and bandages, and at length found the precious volume on its bosom. I seized it with a trembling hand, and groped my way out of the pyramid, leaving the mummy in its dark and silent sepulcher, there to await the final day of resurrection and judgment."

"Son of Abu Ayub," exclaimed Aben Habuz, "thou hast been a great traveler, and seen marvelous things; but of what avail to me is the secret of the pyramid, and the volume of knowledge of the wise Solomon?"

"This it is, O king! By the study of that book I am instructed in all magic arts, and can command the assistance of genii to accomplish my plans. The mystery of the Talisman of Borsa is therefore familiar to me, and such a talisman can I make, nay, one of greater virtues."

"O wise son of Abu Ayub," cried Aben Habuz, "better were such a talisman than all the watch-towers on the hills, and sentinels upon the borders. Give me such a safeguard, and the riches of my treasury are at thy command."

The astrologer immediately set to work to gratify the wishes of the monarch. He caused a great tower to be erected upon the top of the royal palace, which stood on the brow of the hill of the Albaycin. The tower was built of stones brought from Egypt, and taken, it is said, from one of the pyramids. In the upper part of the tower was a circular hall, with windows looking towards every point of the compass, and before each window was a table, on which was arranged, as on a chess-board, a mimic army of horse and foot, with the effigy of the potentate that ruled in that direction, all carved of

wood. To each of these tables there was a small lance, no bigger than a bodkin, on which were engraved certain Chaldaic characters. This hall was kept constantly closed, by a gate of brass, with a great lock of steel, the key of which was in possession of the king.

On the top of the tower was a bronze figure of a Moorish horseman, fixed on a pivot, with a shield on one arm, and his lance elevated perpendicularly. The face of this horseman was towards the city, as if keeping guard over it; but if any foe were at hand, the figure would turn in that direction, and would level the lance as if for action.

When this talisman was finished, Aben Habuz was all impatient to try its virtues, and longed as ardently for an invasion as he had ever sighed after repose. His desire was soon gratified. Tidings were brought, early one morning, by the sentinel appointed to watch the tower, that the face of the bronze horseman was turned towards the mountains of Elvira, and that his lance pointed directly against the Pass of Lope.

"Let the drums and trumpets sound to arms, and all Granada be put on the alert," said Aben Habuz.

"O king," said the astrologer, "let not your city be disquieted, nor your warriors called to arms; we need no aid of force to deliver you from your enemies. Dismiss your attendants, and let us proceed alone to the secret hall of the tower."

The ancient Aben Habuz mounted the staircase of the tower, leaning on the arm of the still more ancient Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub. They unlocked the brazen door and entered. The window that looked towards the Pass of Lope was open. "In this direction," said the astrologer, "lies the danger; approach, O king, and behold the mystery of the table."

King Aben Habuz approached the seeming chess-board, on which were arranged the small wooden effigies, when, to his surprise, he perceived that they were all in motion. The horses pranced and curveted, the warriors brandished their weapons, and there was a faint sound of drums and trumpets, and the clang of arms, and neighing of steeds; but all no louder, nor more distinct, than the hum of the bee, or the summer-fly,

in the drowsy ear of him who lies at noontide in the shade.

"Behold, O king," said the astrologer, "a proof that thy enemies are even now in the field. They must be advancing through yonder mountains, by the Pass of Lope. Would you produce a panic and confusion amongst them, and cause them to retreat without loss of life, strike these effigies with the butt-end of this magic lance; would you cause bloody feud and carnage, strike with the point."

A livid streak passed across the countenance of Aben Habuz; he seized the lance with trembling eagerness; his gray beard wagged with exultation as he tottered towards the table: "Son of Abu Ayub," exclaimed he, in chuckling tone, "I think we will have a little blood!"

So saying, he thrust the magic lance into some of the pigmy effigies, and belabored others with the butt-end, upon which the former fell as dead upon the board, and the rest, turning upon each other, began, pell-mell, a chance-medley fight.

It was with difficulty the astrologer could stay the hand of the most pacific of monarchs, and prevent him from absolutely exterminating his foes. At length he prevailed upon him to leave the tower, and to send out scouts to the mountains by the Pass of Lope.

They returned with the intelligence that a Christian army had advanced through the heart of the Sierra, almost within sight of Granada, where a dissension had broken out among them; they had turned their weapons against each other, and after much slaughter had retreated over the border.

Aben Habuz was transported with joy on thus proving the efficacy of the talisman. "At length," said he, "I shall lead a life of tranquillity, and have all my enemies in my power. O wise son of Abu Ayub, what can I bestow on thee in reward for such a blessing?"

"The wants of an old man and a philosopher, O king, are few and simple; grant me but the means of fitting up my cave as a suitable hermitage, and I am content."

"How noble is the moderation of the truly wise!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, secretly pleased at the cheapness of the recompense. He summoned his treasurer, and bade him

dispense whatever sums might be required by Ibrahim to complete and furnish his hermitage.

The astrologer now gave orders to have various chambers hewn out of the solid rock, so as to form ranges of apartments connected with his astrological hall; these he caused to be furnished with luxurious ottomans and divans, and the walls to be hung with the richest silks of Damascus. "I am an old man," said he, "and can no longer rest my bones on stone couches, and these damp walls require covering."

He had baths too constructed, and provided with all kinds of perfumes and aromatic oils. "For a bath," said he, "is necessary to counteract the rigidity of age, and to restore freshness and suppleness to the frame withered by study."

He caused the apartments to be hung with innumerable silver and crystal lamps, which he filled with a fragrant oil prepared according to a receipt discovered by him in the tombs of Egypt. This oil was perpetual in its nature, and diffused a soft radiance like the tempered light of day. "The light of the sun," said he, "is too garish and violent for the eyes of an old man, and the light of the lamp is more congenial to the studies of a philosopher."

The treasurer of King Aben Habuz groaned at the sums daily demanded to fit up this hermitage, and he carried his complaints to the king. The royal word, however, had been given; Aben Habuz shrugged his shoulders: "We must have patience," said he; "this old man has taken his idea of a philosophic retreat from the interior of the pyramids, and of the vast ruins of Egypt; but all things have an end, and so will the furnishing of his cavern."

The king was in the right; the hermitage was at length complete, and formed a sumptuous subterranean palace. The astrologer expressed himself perfectly content, and, shutting himself up, remained for three whole days buried in study. At the end of that time he appeared again before the treasurer. "One thing more is necessary," said he, "one trifling solace for the intervals of mental labor."

"O wise Ibrahim, I am bound to furnish everything necessary for thy solitude; what more dost thou require?"

"I would fain have a few dancing-women."

"Dancing-women!" echoed the treasurer, with surprise.

"Dancing-women," replied the sage, gravely; "and let them be young and fair to look upon; for the sight of youth and beauty is refreshing. A few will suffice, for I am a philosopher of simple habits and easily satisfied."

While the philosophic Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub passed his time thus sagely in his hermitage, the pacific Aben Habuz carried on furious campaigns in effigy in his tower. It was a glorious thing for an old man, like himself, of quiet habits, to have war made easy, and to be enabled to amuse himself in his chamber by brushing away whole armies like so many swarms of flies.

For a time he rioted in the indulgence of his humors, and even taunted and insulted his neighbors, to induce them to make incursions; but by degrees they grew wary from repeated disasters, until no one ventured to invade his territories. For many months the bronze horseman remained on the peace establishment, with his lance elevated in the air; and the worthy old monarch began to repine at the want of his accustomed sport, and to grow peevish at his monotonous tranquillity.

At length, one day, the talismanic horseman veered suddenly round, and lowering his lance, made a dead point towards the mountains of Guadix. Aben Habuz hastened to his tower, but the magic table in that direction remained quiet. Not a single warrior was in motion. Perplexed at the circumstance, he sent forth a troop of horse to scour the mountains and reconnoiter. They returned after three days' absence.

"We have searched every mountain pass," said they, "but not a helm nor spear was stirring. All that we have found in the course of our foray was a Christian damsel of surpassing beauty, sleeping at noontide beside a fountain, whom we have brought away captive."

"A damsel of surpassing beauty!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, his eyes gleaming with animation; "let her be conducted into my presence."

The beautiful damsel was accordingly conducted into his presence. She was arrayed with all the luxury of ornament that

had prevailed among the Gothic Spaniards at the time of the Arabian conquest. Pearls of dazzling whiteness were entwined with her raven tresses; and jewels sparkled on her forehead, rivaling the luster of her eyes. Around her neck was a golden chain, to which was suspended a silver lyre, which hung by her side.

The flashes of her dark refulgent eye were like sparks of fire on the withered, yet combustible, heart of Aben Habuz; the swimming voluptuousness of her gait made his senses reel. "Fairest of women," cried he, "who and what art thou?"

"The daughter of one of the Gothic princes, who but lately ruled over this land. The armies of my father have been destroyed, as if by magic, among these mountains; he has been driven into exile, and his daughter is a captive."

"Beware, O king!" whispered Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub, "this may be one of those northern sorceresses of whom we have heard, who assume the most seductive forms to beguile the unwary. Methinks I read witchcraft in her eye, and sorcery in every movement. Doubtless this is the enemy pointed out by the talisman."

"Son of Abu Ayub," replied the king, "thou art a wise man, I grant, a conjurer for aught I know; but thou art little versed in the ways of woman. In that knowledge will I yield to no man; no, not to the wise Solomon himself, notwithstanding the number of his wives and concubines. As to this damsel, I see no harm in her; she is fair to look upon, and finds favor in my eyes."

"Harken, O king!" replied the astrologer. "I have given thee many victories by means of my talisman, but have never shared any of the spoil. Give me then this stray captive, to solace me in my solitude with her silver lyre. If she be indeed a sorceress, I have counter spells that set her charms at defiance."

"What! more women!" cried Aben Habuz. "Hast thou not already dancing-women enough to solace thee?"

"Dancing-women have I, it is true, but no singing-women. I would fain have a little minstrelsy to refresh my mind when weary with the toils of study."

"A truce with thy hermit cravings," said the king, impatiently. "This damsel have

I marked for my own. I see much comfort in her: even such comfort as David, the father of Solomon the Wise, found in the society of Abishag the Shunamite."

Further solicitations and remonstrances of the astrologer only provoked a more peremptory reply from the monarch, and they parted in high displeasure. The sage shut himself up in his hermitage to brood over his disappointment; ere he departed, however, he gave the king one more warning to beware of his dangerous captive. But where is the old man in love that will listen to counsel? Aben Habuz resigned himself to the full sway of his passion. His only study was how to render himself amiable in the eyes of the Gothic beauty. He had not youth to recommend him, it is true, but then he had riches; and when a lover is old, he is generally generous. The Zacatin of Granada was ransacked for the most precious merchandise of the East; silks, jewels, precious gems, exquisite perfumes, all that Asia and Africa yielded of rich and rare, were lavished upon the princess. All kinds of spectacles and festivities were devised for her entertainment; minstrelsy, dancing, tournaments, bull-fights;—Granada for a time was a scene of perpetual pageant. The Gothic princess regarded all this splendor with the air of one accustomed to magnificence. She received everything as a homage due to her rank, or rather to her beauty; for beauty is more lofty in its exactions even than rank. Nay, she seemed to take a secret pleasure in exciting the monarch to expenses that made his treasury shrink, and then treating his extravagant generosity as a mere matter of course. With all his assiduity and munificence, also, the venerable lover could not flatter himself that he had made any impression on her heart. She never frowned on him, it is true, but then she never smiled. Whenever he began to plead his love, she struck her silver lyre. There was a mystic charm in the sound. In an instant the monarch began to nod; a drowsiness stole over him, and he gradually sank into a sleep, from which he awoke wonderfully refreshed, but perfectly cooled, for the time, of his passion. This was very baffling to his suit; but then these slumbers were accompanied by agreeable dreams, which completely enthralled the senses of

the drowsy lover; so he continued to dream on, while all Granada scoffed at his infatuation, and groaned at the treasures lavished for a song.

At length a danger burst on the head of Aben Habuz, against which his talisman yielded him no warning. An insurrection broke out in his very capital; his palace was surrounded by an armed rabble, who menaced his life and the life of his Christian paramour. A spark of his ancient warlike spirit was awakened in the breast of the monarch. At the head of a handful of his guards he sallied forth, put the rebels to flight, and crushed the insurrection in the bud.

When quiet was again restored, he sought the astrologer, who still remained shut up in his hermitage, chewing the bitter cud of resentment.

Aben Habuz approached him with a conciliatory tone. "O wise son of Abu Ayub," said he, "well didst thou predict dangers to me from this captive beauty: tell me then, thou who art so quick at foreseeing peril, what I should do to avert it."

"Put from thee the infidel damsel who is the cause."

"Sooner would I part with my kingdom," cried Aben Habuz.

"Thou art in danger of losing both," replied the astrologer.

"Be not harsh and angry, O most profound of philosophers; consider the double distress of a monarch and a lover, and devise some means of protecting me from the evils by which I am menaced. I care not for grandeur, I care not for power, I languish only for repose; would that I had some quiet retreat where I might take refuge from the world, and all its cares, and pomps, and troubles, and devote the remainder of my days to tranquillity and love."

The astrologer regarded him for a moment from under his bushy eyebrows.

"And what wouldst thou give, if I could provide thee such a retreat?"

"Thou shouldst name thy own reward; and whatever it might be, if within the scope of my power, as my soul liveth, it should be thine."

"Thou hast heard, O king, of the garden of Irem, one of the prodigies of Arabia the happy."

"I have heard of that garden; it is recorded in the Koran, even in the chapter entitled 'The Dawn of Day.' I have, moreover, heard marvelous things related of it by pilgrims who had been to Mecca; but I considered them wild fables, such as travelers are wont to tell who have visited remote countries."

"Discredit not, O king, the tales of travelers," rejoined the astrologer, gravely, "for they contain precious rarities of knowledge brought from the ends of the earth. As to the palace and garden of Irem, what is generally told of them is true; I have seen them with mine own eyes;—listen to my adventure, for it has a bearing upon the object of your request.

"In my younger days, when a mere Arab of the desert, I tended my father's camels. In traversing the desert of Aden, one of them strayed from the rest and was lost. I searched after it for several days, but in vain, until, wearied and faint, I laid myself down at noontide, and slept under a palm-tree by the side of a scanty well. When I awoke I found myself at the gate of a city. I entered, and beheld noble streets, and squares, and market-places; but all were silent and without an inhabitant. I wandered on until I came to a sumptuous palace, with a garden adorned with fountains and fish-ponds, and groves and flowers, and orchards laden with delicious fruit; but still no one was to be seen. Upon which, appalled at this loneliness, I hastened to depart; and, after issuing forth at the gate of the city, I turned to look upon the place, but it was no longer to be seen; nothing but the silent desert extended before my eyes.

"In the neighborhood I met with an aged dervise, learned in the traditions and secrets of the land, and related to him what had befallen me. 'This,' said he, 'is the far-famed garden of Irem, one of the wonders of the desert. It only appears at times to some wanderer like thyself, gladdening him with the sight of towers and palaces and garden-walls overhung with richly-laden fruit trees, and then vanishes, leaving nothing but a lonely desert. And this is the story of it. In old times, when this country was inhabited by the Addites, King Sheddad, the son of Ad, the great-grandson of Noah, founded here a splendid city. When it was finished,

and he saw its grandeur, his heart was puffed up with pride and arrogance, and he determined to build a royal palace, with gardens which should rival all related in the Koran of the celestial paradise. But the curse of heaven fell upon him for his presumption. He and his subjects were swept from the earth, and his splendid city and palace, and gardens, were laid under a perpetual spell, which hides them from human sight, excepting that they are seen at intervals, by way of keeping his sin in perpetual remembrance.'

"This story, O king, and the wonders I had seen, ever dwelt in my mind; and in after-years, when I had been in Egypt, and was possessed of the book of knowledge of Solomon the Wise, I determined to return and revisit the garden of Irem. I did so, and found it revealed to my instructed sight. I took possession of the palace of Sheddad, and passed several days in his mock paradise. The genii who watch over the place were obedient to my magic power, and revealed to me the spells by which the whole garden had been, as it were, conjured into existence, and by which it was rendered invisible. Such a palace and garden, O king, can I make for thee, even here, on the mountain above thy city. Do I not know all the secret spells? And am I not in possession of the book of knowledge of Solomon the Wise?"

"O wise son of Abu Ayub!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, trembling with eagerness, "thou art a traveler indeed, and hast seen and learned marvelous things! Contrive me such a paradise, and ask any reward, even to the half of my kingdom."

"Alas!" replied the other, "thou knowest I am an old man, and a philosopher, and easily satisfied; all the reward I ask is the first beast of burden, with its load, which shall enter the magic portal of the palace."

The monarch gladly agreed to so moderate a stipulation, and the astrologer began his work. On the summit of the hill, immediately above his subterranean hermitage, he caused a great gateway or barbican to be erected, opening through the center of a strong tower.

There was an outer vestibule or porch, with a lofty arch, and within it a portal secured by massive gates. On the keystone

of the portal the astrologer, with his own hand, wrought the figure of a huge key; and on the keystone of the outer arch of the vestibule, which was loftier than that of the portal, he carved a gigantic hand. These were potent talismans, over which he repeated many sentences in an unknown tongue.

When this gateway was finished, he shut himself up for two days in his astrological hall, engaged in secret incantations; on the third he ascended the hill, and passed the whole day on its summit. At a late hour of the night he came down, and presented himself before Aben Habuz. "At length, O king," said he, "my labor is accomplished. On the summit of the hill stands one of the most delectable palaces that ever the head of man devised, or the heart of man desired. It contains sumptuous halls and galleries, delicious gardens, cool fountains, and fragrant baths; in a word, the whole mountain is converted into a paradise. Like the garden of Irem, it is protected by a mighty charm, which hides it from the view and search of mortals, excepting such as possess the secret of its talismans."

"Enough!" cried Aben Habuz, joyfully, "to-morrow morning with the first light we will ascend and take possession." The happy monarch slept but little that night. Scarcely had the rays of the sun begun to play about the snowy summit of the Sierra Nevada, when he mounted his steed, and, accompanied only by a few chosen attendants, ascended a steep and narrow road leading up the hill. Beside him, on a white palfrey, rode the Gothic princess, her whole dress sparkling with jewels, while round her neck was suspended her silver lyre. The astrologer walked on the other side of the king, assisting his steps with his hieroglyphic staff, for he never mounted steed of any kind.

Aben Habuz looked to see the towers of the palace brightening above him, and the embowered terraces of its gardens stretching along the heights; but as yet nothing of the kind was to be descried. "That is the mystery and safeguard of the place," said the astrologer, "nothing can be discerned until you have passed the spell-bound gateway, and been put in possession of the place."

As they approached the gateway, the astrologer paused, and pointed out to the king

the mystic hand and key carved upon the portal of the arch. "These," said he, "are the talismans which guard the entrance to this paradise. Until yonder hand shall reach down and seize that key, neither mortal power nor magic artifice can prevail against the lord of this mountain."

While Aben Habuz was gazing, with open mouth and silent wonder, at these mystic talismans, the palfrey of the princess proceeded, and bore her in at the portal, to the very center of the barbican.

"Behold," cried the astrologer, "my promised reward; the first animal with its burden which should enter the magic gateway."

Aben Habuz smiled at what he considered a pleasantry of the ancient man; but when he found him to be in earnest, his gray beard trembled with indignation.

"Son of Abu Ayub," said he, sternly, "what equivocation is this? Thou knowest the meaning of my promise: the first beast of burden with its load, that should enter this portal. Take the strongest mule in my stables, load it with the most precious things of my treasury, and it is thine; but dare not raise thy thoughts to her who is the delight of my heart."

"What need I of wealth?" cried the astrologer, scornfully; "have I not the book of knowledge of Solomon the Wise, and through it the command of the secret treasures of the earth? The princess is mine by right; thy royal word is pledged; I claim her as my own."

The princess looked down haughtily from her palfrey, and a light smile of scorn curled her rosy lip at this dispute between two gray-beards for the possession of youth and beauty. The wrath of the monarch got the better of his discretion. "Base son of the desert," cried he, "thou mayst be master of many arts, but know me for thy master, and presume not to juggle with thy king."

"My master! my king!" echoed the astrologer,— "the monarch of a mole-hill to claim sway over him who possesses the talismans of Solomon! Farewell, Aben Habuz, reign over thy petty kingdom, and revel in thy paradise of fools; for me, I will laugh at thee in my philosophic retirement."

So saying, he seized the bridle of the palfrey, smote the earth with his staff, and sank

with the Gothic princess through the center of the barbican. The earth closed over them, and no trace remained of the opening by which they had descended.

Aben Habuz was struck dumb for a time with astonishment. Recovering himself, he ordered a thousand workmen to dig, with pickax and spade, into the ground where the astrologer had disappeared. They digged and digged, but in vain; the flinty bosom of the hill resisted their implements; or if they did penetrate a little way, the earth filled in again as fast as they threw it out. Aben Habuz sought the mouth of the cavern at the foot of the hill, leading to the subterranean palace of the astrologer; but it was nowhere to be found. Where once had been an entrance, was a solid surface of primeval rock. With the disappearance of Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub ceased the benefit of his talismans. The bronze horseman remained fixed, with his face turned towards the hill, and his spear pointed to the spot where the astrologer had descended, as if there still lurked the deadliest foe of Aben Habuz.

From time to time the sound of music, and the tones of a female voice, could be faintly heard from the bosom of the hill; and a peasant one day brought word to the king, that in the preceding night he had found a fissure in the rock, by which he had crept in, until he looked down into a subterranean hall, in which sat the astrologer, on a magnificent divan, slumbering and nodding to the silver lyre of the princess, which seemed to hold a magic sway over his senses.

Aben Habuz sought the fissure in the rock, but it was again closed. He renewed the attempt to unearth his rival, but all in vain. The spell of the hand and key was too potent to be counteracted by human power. As to the summit of the mountain, the site of the promised palace and garden, it remained a naked waste; either the boasted elysium was hidden from sight by enchantment, or was a mere fable of the astrologer. The world charitably supposed the latter, and some used to call the place "The King's Folly"; while others named it "The Fool's Paradise."

To add to the chagrin of Aben Habuz, the neighbors whom he had defied and taunted, and cut up at his leisure while master of the talismanic horseman, finding him no longer

protected by magic spell, made inroads into his territories from all sides, and the remainder of the life of the most pacific of monarchs was a series of turmoils.

At length Aben Habuz died, and was buried. Ages have since rolled away. The Alhambra has been built on the eventful mountain, and in some measure realizes the fabled delights of the garden of Irem. The spell-bound gateway still exists entire, protected no doubt by the mystic hand and key, and now forms the Gate of Justice, the grand entrance to the fortress. Under that gateway, it is said, the old astrologer remains in his subterranean hall, nodding on his divan, lulled by the silver lyre of the princess.

The old invalid sentinels who mount guard at the gate hear the strains occasionally in the summer nights; and, yielding to their soporific power, doze quietly at their posts. Nay, so drowsy an influence pervades the place, that even those who watch by day may generally be seen nodding on the stone benches of the barbican, or sleeping under the neighboring trees; so that in fact it is the drowsiest military post in all Christendom. All this, say the ancient legends, will endure from age to age. The princess will remain captive to the astrologer, and the astrologer bound up in magic slumber by the princess, until the last day, unless the mystic hand shall grasp the fated key, and dispel the whole charm of this enchanted mountain.

LEGEND OF THE TWO DISCREET STATUES

THERE lived once in a waste apartment of the Alhambra a merry little fellow, named Lope Sanchez, who worked in the gardens, and was as brisk and as blithe as a grasshopper, singing all day long. He was the life and soul of the fortress; when his work was over, he would sit on one of the stone benches of the esplanade, strum his guitar, and sing long ditties about the Cid, and Barnardo del Carpio, and Fernando del Pulgar, and other Spanish heroes, for the amusement of the old soldiers of the fortress; or would strike up a merrier tune, and set the girls dancing *boleros* and *fandangos*.

Like most little men, Lope Sanchez had a strapping buxom dame for a wife, who

could almost have put him in her pocket; but he lacked the usual poor man's lot—instead of ten children he had but one. This was a little black-eyed girl about twelve years of age, named Sanchica, who was as merry as himself, and the delight of his heart. She played about him as he worked in the gardens, danced to his guitar as he sat in the shade, and ran as wild as a young fawn about the groves and alleys and ruined halls of the Alhambra.

It was now the eve of the blessed St. John, and the holiday-loving gossips of the Alhambra, men, women, and children, went up at night to the Mountain of the Sun, which rises above the Generalife,¹ to keep their midsummer vigil on its level summit. It was a bright moonlight night, and all the mountains were gray and silvery, and the city, with its domes and spires, lay in shadows below, and the Vega was like a fairy land, with haunted streams gleaming among its dusky groves. On the highest part of the mountain they lit up a bonfire, according to an old custom of the country handed down from the Moors. The inhabitants of the surrounding country were keeping a similar vigil, and bonfires, here and there in the Vega, and along the folds of the mountains, blazed up palely in the moonlight.

The evening was gayly passed in dancing to the guitar of Lope Sanchez, who was never so joyous as when on a holiday revel of the kind. While the dance was going on, the little Sanchica with some of her playmates sported among the ruins of an old Moorish fort that crowns the mountain, when, in gathering pebbles in the fosse, she found a small hand curiously carved of jet, the fingers closed, and the thumb firmly clasped upon them. Overjoyed at her good fortune, she ran to her mother with her prize. It immediately became a subject of sage speculation, and was eyed by some with superstitious distrust. "Throw it away," said one; "it's Moorish,—depend upon it, there's mischief and witchcraft in it." "By no means," said another; "you may sell it for something to the jewelers of the Zacatin." In the midst of this discussion an old tawny soldier drew near, who had served in

Africa, and was as swarthy as a Moor. He examined the hand with a knowing look. "I have seen things of this kind," said he, "among the Moors of Barbary. It is a great virtue to guard against the evil eye, and all kinds of spells and enchantments. I give you joy, friend Lope, this bodes good luck to your child."

Upon hearing this, the wife of Lope Sanchez tied the little hand of jet to a ribbon, and hung it round the neck of her daughter.

The sight of this talisman called up all the favorite superstitions about the Moors. The dance was neglected, and they sat in groups on the ground, telling old legendary tales handed down from their ancestors. Some of their stories turned upon the wonders of the very mountain upon which they were seated, which is a famous hobgoblin region. One ancient crone gave a long account of the subterranean palace in the bowels of that mountain where Boabdil and all his Moslem court are said to remain enchanted. "Among yonder ruins," said she, pointing to some crumbling walls and mounds of earth on a distant part of the mountain, "there is a deep black pit that goes down, down, into the very heart of the mountain. For all the money in Granada I would not look down into it. Once upon a time a poor man of the Alhambra, who tended goats upon this mountain, scrambled down into that pit after a kid that had fallen in. He came out again all wild and staring, and told such things of what he had seen that every one thought his brain was turned. He raved for a day or two about the hobgoblin Moors that had pursued him in the cavern, and could hardly be persuaded to drive his goats up again to the mountain. He did so at last, but, poor man, he never came down again. The neighbors found his goats browsing about the Moorish ruins, and his hat and mantle lying near the mouth of the pit, but he was never more heard of."

The little Sanchica listened with breathless attention to this story. She was of a curious nature, and felt immediately a great hankering to peep into this dangerous pit. Stealing away from her companions, she sought the distant ruins, and, after groping for some time among them, came to a small hollow, or basin, near the brow of the mountain, where it swept steeply down into the

¹ A Moorish palace not far from the Alhambra.

valley of the Darro. In the center of this basin yawned the mouth of the pit. Sanchica ventured to the verge, and peeped in. All was as black as pitch, and gave an idea of immeasurable depth. Her blood ran cold; she drew back, then peeped in again, then would have run away, then took another peep,—the very horror of the thing was delightful to her. At length she rolled a large stone, and pushed it over the brink. For some time it fell in silence; then struck some rocky projection with a violent crash; then rebounded from side to side, rumbling and tumbling, with a noise like thunder; then made a final splash into water, far, far below,—and all was again silent.

The silence, however, did not long continue. It seemed as if something had been awakened within this dreary abyss. A murmuring sound gradually rose out of the pit like the hum and buzz of a beehive. It grew louder and louder, there was the confusion of voices as of a distant multitude, together with the faint din of arms, clash of cymbals and clangor of trumpets, as if some army were marshaling for battle in the very bowels of the mountain.

The child drew off with silent awe, and hastened back to the place where she had left her parents and their companions. All were gone. The bonfire was expiring, and its last wreath of smoke curling up in the moonshine. The distant fires that had blazed along the mountains and in the Vega were all extinguished, and everything seemed to have sunk to repose. Sanchica called her parents and some of her companions by name, but received no reply. She ran down the side of the mountain, and by the gardens of the Generalife, until she arrived in the alley of trees leading to the Alhambra, when she seated herself on a bench of a woody recess, to recover breath. The bell from the watch-tower of the Alhambra tolled midnight. There was a deep tranquillity as if all nature slept; excepting the low tinkling sound of an unseen stream that ran under the covert of the bushes. The breathing sweetness of the atmosphere was lulling her to sleep, when her eye was caught by something glittering at a distance, and to her surprise she beheld a long cavalcade of Moorish warriors pouring down the mountain side and along the leafy avenues. Some

were armed with lances and shields; others, with scimitars and battle-axes, and with polished cuirasses that flashed in the moonbeams. Their horses pranced proudly and champed upon their bits, but their tramp caused no more sound than if they had been shod with felt, and the riders were all as pale as death. Among them rode a beautiful lady, with a crowned head and long golden locks entwined with pearls. The housings of her palfrey were of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, and swept the earth; but she rode all disconsolate, with eyes ever fixed upon the ground.

Then succeeded a train of courtiers magnificently arrayed in robes and turbans of divers colors, and amidst them, on a cream-colored charger, rode King Boabdil el Chico, in a royal mantle covered with jewels, and a crown sparkling with diamonds. The little Sanchica knew him by his yellow beard, and his resemblance to his portrait, which she had often seen in the picture-gallery of the Generalife. She gazed in wonder and admiration at this royal pageant, as it passed glistening among the trees; but though she knew these monarchs and courtiers and warriors, so pale and silent, were out of the common course of nature, and things of magic and enchantment, yet she looked on with a bold heart, such courage did she derive from the mystic talisman of the hand, which was suspended about her neck.

The cavalcade having passed by, she rose and followed. It continued on to the great Gate of Justice, which stood wide open; the old invalid sentinels on duty lay on the stone benches of the barbican, buried in profound and apparently charmed sleep, and the phantom pageant swept noiselessly by them with flaunting banner and triumphant state. Sanchica would have followed; but to her surprise she beheld an opening in the earth, within the barbican, leading down beneath the foundations of the tower. She entered for a little distance, and was encouraged to proceed by finding steps rudely hewn in the rock, and a vaulted passage here and there lit up by a silver lamp, which, while it gave light, diffused likewise a grateful fragrance. Venturing on, she came at last to a great hall, wrought out of the heart of the mountain, magnificently furnished in the Moorish style, and lighted up by silver and crystal

lamps. Here, on an ottoman, sat an old man in Moorish dress, with a long white beard, nodding and dozing, with a staff in his hand, which seemed ever to be slipping from his grasp; while at a little distance sat a beautiful lady, in ancient Spanish dress, with a coronet all sparkling with diamonds, and her hair entwined with pearls, who was softly playing on a silver lyre. The little Sanchica now recollected a story she had heard among the old people of the Alhambra, concerning a Gothic princess confined in the center of the mountain by an old Arabian magician, whom she kept bound up in magic sleep by the power of music.

The lady paused with surprise at seeing a mortal in that enchanted hall. "Is it the eve of the blessed St. John?" said she.

"It is," replied Sanchica.

"Then for one night the magic charm is suspended. Come hither, child, and fear not. I am a Christian like thyself, though bound here by enchantment. Touch my fetters with the talisman that hangs about thy neck, and for this night I shall be free."

So saying, she opened her robes and displayed a broad golden band round her waist, and a golden chain that fastened her to the ground. The child hesitated not to apply the little hand of jet to the golden band, and immediately the chain fell to the earth. At the sound the old man woke and began to rub his eyes; but the lady ran her fingers over the chords of the lyre, and again he fell into a slumber and began to nod, and his staff to falter in his hand. "Now," said the lady, "touch his staff with the talismanic hand of jet." The child did so, and it fell from his grasp, and he sank in a deep sleep on the ottoman. The lady gently laid the silver lyre on the ottoman, leaning it against the head of the sleeping magician; then touching the chords until they vibrated in his ear,—“O potent spirit of harmony,” said she, “continue thus to hold his senses in thrall till the return of day. Now follow me, my child,” continued she, “and thou shalt behold the Alhambra as it was in the days of its glory, for thou hast a magic talisman that reveals all enchantments.” Sanchica followed the lady in silence. They passed up through the entrance of the cavern into the barbican of the Gate of

Justice, and thence to the Plaza de los Algibes, or esplanade within the fortress.

This was all filled with Moorish soldiery, horse and foot, marshaled in squadrons, with banners displayed. There were royal guards also at the portal, and rows of African blacks, with drawn scimitars. No one spoke a word, and Sanchica passed on fearlessly after her conductor. Her astonishment increased on entering the royal palace, in which she had been reared. The broad moonshine lit up all the halls and courts and gardens almost as brightly as if it were day, but revealed a far different scene from that to which she was accustomed. The walls of the apartments were no longer stained and rent by time. Instead of cobwebs, they were now hung with rich silks of Damascus, and the gildings and arabesque paintings were restored to their original brilliancy and freshness. The halls, no longer naked and unfurnished, were set out with divans and ottomans of the rarest stuffs, embroidered with pearls and studded with precious gems, and all the fountains in the courts and gardens were playing.

The kitchens were again in full operation. Cooks were busy preparing shadowy dishes, and roasting and boiling the phantoms of pullets and partridges; servants were hurrying to and fro with silver dishes heaped up with dainties, and arranging a delicious banquet. The Court of Lions was thronged with guards, and courtiers, and *alfaquis*, as in the old times of the Moors; and at the upper end, in the saloon of judgment, sat Boabdil on his throne, surrounded by his court, and swaying a shadowy scepter for the night. Notwithstanding all this throng and seeming bustle, not a voice nor a footstep was to be heard; nothing interrupted the midnight silence but the splashing of the fountains. The little Sanchica followed her conductress in mute amazement about the palace, until they came to a portal opening to the vaulted passages beneath the great Tower of Comares. On each side of the portal sat the figure of a nymph, wrought out of alabaster. Their heads were turned aside, and their regards fixed upon the same spot within the vault. The enchanted lady paused, and beckoned the child to her. “Here,” said she, “is a great secret, which I will reveal to thee in reward for thy faith and courage. These

discreet statues watch over a treasure, hidden in old times by a Moorish king. Tell thy father to search the spot on which their eyes are fixed, and he will find what will make him richer than any man in Granada. Thy innocent hands alone, however, gifted as thou art also with the talisman, can remove the treasure. Bid thy father use it discreetly, and devote a part of it to the performance of daily masses for my deliverance from this unholy enchantment."

When the lady had spoken these words, she led the child onward to the little garden of Lindaraxa, which is hard by the vault of the statues. The moon trembled upon the waters of the solitary fountain in the center of the garden, and shed a tender light upon the orange and citron trees. The beautiful lady plucked a branch of myrtle and wreathed it round the head of the child. "Let this be a memento," said she, "of what I have revealed to thee, and a testimonial of its truth. My hour is come; I must return to the enchanted hall. Follow me not, lest evil befall thee. Farewell. Remember what I have said, and have masses performed for my deliverance." So saying, the lady entered a dark passage leading beneath the Tower of Comares, and was no longer seen.

The faint crowing of a cock was now heard from the cottages below the Alhambra, in the valley of the Darro, and a pale streak of light began to appear above the eastern mountains. A slight wind arose, there was a sound like the rustling of dry leaves through the courts and corridors, and door after door shut to with a jarring sound.

Sanchica returned to the scenes she had so lately beheld thronged with the shadowy multitude, but Boabdil and his phantom court were gone. The moon shone into empty halls and galleries stripped of their transient splendor, stained and dilapidated by time, and hung with cobwebs. The bat flitted about in the uncertain light, and the frog croaked from the fish-pond.

Sanchica now made the best of her way to a remote staircase that led up to the humble apartment occupied by her family. The door, as usual, was open, for Lope Sanchez was too poor to need bolt or bar. She crept quietly to her pallet, and, putting the myrtle wreath beneath her pillow, soon fell asleep.

In the morning she related all that had befallen her to her father. Lope Sanchez, however, treated the whole as a mere dream, and laughed at the child for her credulity. He went forth to his customary labors in the garden, but had not been there long when his little daughter came running to him, almost breathless. "Father! father!" cried she, "behold the myrtle wreath which the Moorish lady bound round my head!"

Lope Sanchez gazed with astonishment, for the stalk of the myrtle was of pure gold, and every leaf was a sparkling emerald! Being not much accustomed to precious stones, he was ignorant of the real value of the wreath, but he saw enough to convince him that it was something more substantial than the stuff of which dreams are generally made, and that at any rate the child had dreamed to some purpose. His first care was to enjoin the most absolute secrecy upon his daughter. In this respect, however, he was secure, for she had discretion far beyond her years or sex. He then repaired to the vault, where stood the statues of the two alabaster nymphs. He remarked that their heads were turned from the portal, and that the regards of each were fixed upon the same point in the interior of the building. Lope Sanchez could not but admire this most discreet contrivance for guarding a secret. He drew a line from the eyes of the statues to the point of regard, made a private mark on the wall, and then retired.

All day, however, the mind of Lope Sanchez was distracted with a thousand cares. He could not help hovering within distant view of the two statues, and became nervous from the dread that the golden secret might be discovered. Every footstep that approached the place made him tremble. He would have given anything could he but have turned the heads of the statues, forgetting that they had looked precisely in the same direction for some hundreds of years, without any person being the wiser.

"A plague upon them," he would say to himself, "they'll betray all; did ever mortal hear of such a mode of guarding a secret?" Then on hearing any one advance, he would steal off, as though his very lurking near the place would awaken suspicion. Then he would return cautiously, and peep from a distance to see if everything was secure, but

the sight of the statues would again call forth his indignation. "Ay, there they stand," would he say, "always looking, and looking, and looking, just where they should not. Confound them! they are just like all their sex; if they have not tongues to tattle with, they'll be sure to do it with their eyes."

At length, to his relief, the long anxious day drew to a close. The sound of footsteps was no longer heard in the echoing halls of the Alhambra; the last stranger passed the threshold, the great portal was barred and bolted, and the bat and the frog and the hooting owl gradually resumed their nightly vocations in the deserted palace.

Lope Sanchez waited, however, until the night was far advanced before he ventured with his little daughter to the hall of the two nymphs. He found them looking as knowingly and mysteriously as ever at the secret place of deposit. "By your leaves, gentle ladies," thought Lope Sanchez, as he passed between them, "I will relieve you from this charge that must have set so heavy in your minds for the last two or three centuries." He accordingly went to work at the part of the wall which he had marked, and in a little while laid open a concealed recess, in which stood two great jars of porcelain. He attempted to draw them forth, but they were immovable, until touched by the innocent hand of his little daughter. With her aid he dislodged them from their niche, and found, to his great joy, that they were filled with pieces of Moorish gold, mingled with jewels and precious stones. Before daylight he managed to convey them to his chamber, and left the two guardian statues with their eyes still fixed on the vacant wall.

Lope Sanchez had thus on a sudden become a rich man; but riches, as usual, brought a world of cares to which he had hitherto been a stranger. How was he to convey away his wealth with safety? How was he even to enter upon the enjoyment of it without awakening suspicion? Now, too, for the first time in his life the dread of robbers entered into his mind. He looked with terror at the insecurity of his habitation, and went to work to barricade the doors and windows; yet after all his precautions he could not sleep soundly. His usual gayety was at an end, he had no longer a joke or a song for his neighbors, and, in short, became the most

miserable animal in the Alhambra. His old comrades remarked this alteration, pitied him heartily, and began to desert him; thinking he must be falling into want, and in danger of looking to them for assistance. Little did they suspect that his only calamity was riches.

The wife of Lope Sanchez shared his anxiety, but then she had ghostly comfort. We ought before this to have mentioned that Lope, being rather a light, inconsiderate little man, his wife was accustomed, in all grave matters, to seek the counsel and ministry of her confessor Fray Simon, a sturdy, broad-shouldered, blue-bearded, bullet-headed friar of the neighboring convent of San Francisco, who was in fact the spiritual comforter of half the good wives of the neighborhood. He was, moreover, in great esteem among divers sisterhoods of nuns; who requited him for his ghostly services by frequent presents of those little dainties and knickknacks manufactured in convents, such as delicate confections, sweet biscuits, and bottles of spiced cordials, found to be marvelous restoratives after fasts and vigils.

Fray Simon thrived in the exercise of his functions. His oily skin glistened in the sunshine as he toiled up the hill of the Alhambra on a sultry day. Yet notwithstanding his sleek condition, the knotted rope round his waist showed the austerity of his self-discipline; the multitude doffed their caps to him as a mirror of piety, and even the dogs scented the odor of sanctity that exhaled from his garments, and howled from their kennels as he passed.

Such was Fray Simon, the spiritual counselor of the comely wife of Lope Sanchez; and as the father confessor is the domestic confidant of women in humble life in Spain, he was soon acquainted, in great secrecy, with the story of the hidden treasure.

The friar opened his eyes and mouth, and crossed himself a dozen times at the news. After a moment's pause, "Daughter of my soul!" said he, "know that thy husband has committed a double sin—a sin against both state and church! The treasure he hath thus seized upon for himself, being found in the royal domains, belongs of course to the crown; but being infidel wealth, rescued as it were from the very fangs of Satan, should be devoted to the church. Still, however, the

matter may be accommodated. Bring hither thy myrtle wreath."

When the good father beheld it, his eyes twinkled more than ever with admiration of the size and beauty of the emeralds. "This," said he, "being the first-fruits of this discovery, should be dedicated to pious purposes. I will hang it up as a votive offering before the image of San Francisco in our chapel, and will earnestly pray to him, this very night, that your husband be permitted to remain in quiet possession of your wealth."

The good dame was delighted to make her peace with heaven at so cheap a rate, and the friar, putting the wreath under his mantle, departed with saintly steps towards his convent.

When Lope Sanchez came home, his wife told him what had passed. He was excessively provoked, for he lacked his wife's devotion, and had for some time groaned in secret at the domestic visitations of the friar. "Woman," said he, "what hast thou done? thou hast put everything at hazard by thy tattling."

"What!" cried the good woman, "would you forbid my disburdening my conscience to my confessor?"

"No, wife! confess as many of your own sins as you please; but as to this money-digging, it is a sin of my own, and my conscience is very easy under the weight of it."

There was no use, however, in complaining; the secret was told, and, like water spilled on the sand, was not again to be gathered. Their only chance was that the friar would be discreet.

The next day, while Lope Sanchez was abroad, there was an humble knocking at the door, and Fray Simon entered with meek and demure countenance.

"Daughter," said he, "I have earnestly prayed to San Francisco, and he has heard my prayer. In the dead of the night the saint appeared to me in a dream, but with a frowning aspect. 'Why,' said he, 'dost thou pray to me to dispense with this treasure of the Gentiles, when thou seest the poverty of my chapel? Go to the house of Lope Sanchez, crave in my name a portion of the Moorish gold, to furnish two candlesticks for the main altar, and let him possess the residue in peace.'"

When the good woman heard of this vision, she crossed herself with awe, and going to the secret place where Lope had hid the treasure, she filled the great leathern purse with pieces of Moorish gold, and gave it to the friar. The pious monk bestowed upon her, in return, benedictions enough, if paid by heaven, to enrich her race to the latest posterity; then slipping the purse in the sleeve of his habit, he folded his hands upon his breast, and departed with an air of humble thankfulness.

When Lope Sanchez heard of this second donation to the church, he had wellnigh lost his senses. "Unfortunate man," cried he, "what will become of me? I shall be robbed by piecemeal; I shall be ruined and brought to beggary!"

It was with the utmost difficulty that his wife could pacify him, by reminding him of the countless wealth that yet remained, and how considerate it was for San Francisco to rest contented with so small a portion.

Unluckily Fray Simon had a number of poor relations to be provided for, not to mention some half-dozen sturdy bullet-headed orphan children and destitute foundlings that he had taken under his care. He repeated his visits, therefore, from day to day, with solicitations on behalf of Saint Dominick, Saint Andrew, Saint James, until poor Lope was driven to despair, and found that unless he got out of the reach of this holy friar he should have to make peace-offerings to every saint in the calendar. He determined, therefore, to pack up his remaining wealth, beat a secret retreat in the night, and make off to another part of the kingdom.

Full of his project he bought a stout mule for the purpose, and tethered it in a gloomy vault underneath the tower of the seven floors; the very place whence the Belludo, or goblin horse, is said to issue forth at midnight, and scour the streets of Granada, pursued by a pack of hell-hounds. Lope Sanchez had little faith in the story, but availed himself of the dread occasioned by it, knowing that no one would be likely to pry into the subterranean stable of the phantom steed. He sent off his family in the course of the day, with orders to wait for him at a distant village of the Vega. As the night advanced he conveyed his treasure to the vault under

the tower, and having loaded his mule, he led it forth and cautiously descended the dusky avenue.

Honest Lope had taken his measures with the utmost secrecy, imparting them to no one but the faithful wife of his bosom. By some miraculous revelation, however, they became known to Fray Simon. The zealous friar beheld these infidel treasures on the point of slipping for ever out of his grasp, and determined to have one more dash at them for the benefit of the church and San Francisco. Accordingly, when the bells had rung for animas and all the Alhambra was quiet, he stole out of his convent, and descending through the Gate of Justice, concealed himself among the thickets of roses and laurels that border the great avenue. Here he remained, counting the quarters of hours as they were sounded on the bell of the watch-tower, and listening to the dreary hooting of owls, and the distant barking of dogs from the gypsy caverns.

At length he heard the tramp of hoofs, and, through the gloom of the overshadowing trees, imperfectly beheld a steed descending the avenue. The sturdy friar chuckled at the idea of the knowing turn he was about to serve honest Lope.

Tucking up the skirts of his habit, and wriggling like a cat watching a mouse, he waited until his prey was directly before him, when darting forth from his leafy covert, and putting one hand on the shoulder and the other on the crupper, he made a vault that would not have disgraced the most experienced master of equitation, and alighted well-forked astride the steed. "Ah ha!" said the sturdy friar, "we shall now see who best understands the game." He had scarce uttered the words when the mule began to kick and rear, and plunge, and then set off full speed down the hill. The friar attempted to check him, but in vain. He bounded from rock to rock, and bush to bush; the friar's habit was torn to ribbons and fluttered in the wind, his shaven poll received many a hard knock from the branches of the trees, and many a scratch from the brambles. To add to his terror and distress, he found a pack of seven hounds in full cry at his heels, and perceived, too late, that he was actually mounted upon the terrible Belludo!

Away then they went, according to the

ancient phrase, "pull devil, pull friar," down the great avenue, across the Plaza Nueva, along the Zacatin, around the Vivarrambla—never did huntsman and hound make a more furious run, or more infernal uproar. In vain did the friar invoke every saint in the calendar, and the holy Virgin into the bargain; every time he mentioned a name of the kind it was like a fresh application of the spur, and made the Belludo bound as high as a house. Through the remainder of the night was the unlucky Fray Simon carried hither and thither, and whither he would not, until every bone in his body ached, and he suffered a loss of leather too grievous to be mentioned. At length the crowing of a cock gave the signal of returning day. At the sound the goblin steed wheeled about, and galloped back for his tower. Again he scoured the Vivarrambla, the Zacatin, the Plaza Nueva, and the Avenue of Fountains, the seven dogs yelling and barking and leaping up, and snapping at the heels of the terrified friar. The first streak of day had just appeared as they reached the tower; here the goblin steed kicked up his heels, sent the friar a summerset through the air, plunged into the dark vault followed by the infernal pack, and a profound silence succeeded to the late deafening clamor.

Was ever so diabolical a trick played off upon a holy friar? A peasant going to his labors at early dawn found the unfortunate Fray Simon lying under a fig-tree at the foot of the tower, but so bruised and bedeviled that he could neither speak nor move. He was conveyed with all care and tenderness to his cell, and the story went that he had been waylaid and maltreated by robbers. A day or two elapsed before he recovered the use of his limbs; he consoled himself, in the meantime, with the thoughts that though the mule with the treasure had escaped him, he had previously had some rare pickings at the infidel spoils. His first care on being able to use his limbs was to search beneath his pallet, where he had secreted the myrtle wreath and the leathern pouches of gold extracted from the piety of Dame Sanchez. What was his dismay at finding the wreath, in effect, but a withered branch of myrtle, and the leathern pouches filled with sand and gravel!

Fray Simon, with all his chagrin, had the

discretion to hold his tongue, for to betray the secret might draw on him the ridicule of the public and the punishment of his superior. It was not until many years afterward, on his death-bed, that he revealed to his confessor his nocturnal ride on the Belludo.

Nothing was heard of Lope Sanchez for a long time after his disappearance from the Alhambra. His memory was always cherished as that of a merry companion, though it was feared, from the care and melancholy observed in his conduct shortly before his mysterious departure, that poverty and distress had driven him to some extremity. Some years afterward one of his old companions, an invalid soldier, being at Malaga, was knocked down and nearly run over by a coach and six. The carriage stopped; an old gentleman, magnificently dressed, with a bag-wig and sword, stepped out to assist the poor invalid. What was the astonishment of the latter to behold in this grand cavalier his old friend Lope Sanchez, who was actually celebrating the marriage of his daughter Sanchica with one of the first grandees in the land.

The carriage contained the bridal party. There was Dame Sanchez, now grown as round as a barrel, and dressed out with feathers and jewels, and necklaces of pearls, and necklaces of diamonds, and rings on every finger, altogether a finery of apparel that had not been seen since the days of Queen Sheba. The little Sanchica had now grown to be a

woman, and for grace and beauty might have been mistaken for a duchess, if not a princess outright. The bridegroom sat beside her—rather a withered, spindle-shanked little man, but this only proved him to be of the true blue blood; a legitimate Spanish grandee being rarely above three cubits in stature. The match had been of the mother's making.

Riches had not spoiled the heart of honest Lope. He kept his old comrade with him for several days; feasted him like a king, took him to plays and bull-fights, and at length sent him away rejoicing, with a big bag of money for himself, and another to be distributed among his ancient messmates of the Alhambra.

Lope always gave out that a rich brother had died in America and left him heir to a copper mine; but the shrewd gossips of the Alhambra insist that his wealth was all derived from his having discovered the secret guarded by the two marble nymphs of the Alhambra. It is remarked that these very discreet statues continue, even unto the present day, with their eyes fixed most significantly on the same part of the wall; which leads many to suppose there is still some hidden treasure remaining there well worthy the attention of the enterprising traveler. Though others, and particularly all female visitors, regard them with great complacency as lasting monuments of the fact that women can keep a secret.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT (1794-1878)

Bryant's father was a physician with a taste for poetry, his mother "a person of excellent practical sense, of a quick and sensitive moral judgment," and a descendant of John and Priscilla Alden. They lived in Cummington, Massachusetts, and there William Cullen Bryant was born on 3 November, 1794. The family's income was small, and the boy's surroundings offered meager enough opportunities for development. He, however, though physically weak, was precocious; he absorbed all that could be got from nearby schools, he eagerly read such verse as came his way, and he stored up vivid impressions of natural scenery and simple country life. He later said, concerning his boyhood: "I remember well the delight with which we welcomed the translation of the *Iliad* by Pope, when it was brought into the house. My brother and myself, in emulation of the ancient heroes, made for ourselves wooden shields, swords, and spears, and fashioned old hats in the shape of helmets with plumes of tow, and in the barn, when nobody observed us, we fought the battles of the Greeks and Trojans over again. I was always, from my earliest years, a delighted observer of external nature; the splendors of a winter daybreak over the wide wastes of snow seen from our windows, the glories of the autumnal woods, the gloomy approaches of the thunder-storm and its departure amid sunshine and rainbows, the return of spring with its flowers, and the first snowfall of winter." Such delights were doubtless tempered, but were not interdicted, by the stern influences of Calvinism, which the boy felt to the extent that he "supposed it to be the accepted belief of the religious world." His Calvinism, too, was not incompatible with his constant boyhood prayer that he might "receive the gift of poetic genius and write verses that might endure." And to the writing of verses he addressed himself as early as his ninth year. Some of them, he afterwards confessed, were "utter nonsense," but he kept on, and was encouraged by his father. Bryant's father was a federalist, and shared New England's hostility to Jefferson's embargo of 1807. The boy wrote some satirical lines on Jefferson, which his father asked him to extend. He did so, "until the additions grew into a poem of several pages." It was then published as a pamphlet in Boston (1808) under the title, *The Embargo, or Sketches of the Times—A Satire*. It was well received, and in the following year went to a second edition, to which some other pieces were added. This success apparently had something to do with the decision that Bryant should receive a college education, and preparatory studies were now begun with tutors. In 1810 he entered the sophomore class of Williams College. He withdrew in 1811, hoping to continue his studies at Yale, but his father could not afford such an expense. At this time he was reading the poems of Kirk White, Cowper's *Task*, Southey, Blair's *Grave*, and Bishop Porteous's *Death*, and from such reading conjoined with his forest walks resulted *Thanatopsis*, which was written, probably in the late summer or fall, in 1811. In the same year Bryant began study of the law, which he continued, not without misgivings and reluctance, for several years, until he was admitted to practice in 1815. During this period he continued to write verse, and was deeply impressed by Wordsworth's poems. A friend (R. H. Dana) later wrote: "I shall never forget with what feelings my friend Bryant, some years ago, described to me the effect produced upon him by his meeting for the first time with Wordsworth's ballads. He said that, upon opening the book, a thousand springs seemed to gush up at once in his heart, and the face of Nature, of a sudden, to change into a strange freshness and life."

In 1817 Bryant's father sent *Thanatopsis* and several other poems, with no indication of authorship, to the *North American Review*. The editors feared they were being imposed upon, feeling sure that no one on this side of the Atlantic was capable of writing such verses. They soon, however, obtained satisfactory assurances, and published *Thanatopsis* in the same year. So began Bryant's poetic career before the larger world. In 1821 was published his first volume, with the title *Poems*. It was really a pamphlet, containing eight poems, which filled 44 pages. In the same year, a few months before the publication of *Poems*, Bryant was married to Miss Fanny Fairchild, whom he had met not long after going to Great Barrington to practice law. In the years immediately following he continued to publish verse in periodicals and began to be known as an essayist. In 1825 he eagerly accepted an opportunity of literary employment in New York, which, he hoped, might relieve him of bondage to the law. The periodical which he helped to publish soon died, but in 1826 he was offered a position on the New York *Evening Post*, and he continued to act as assistant editor until 1829, when

he became editor. From this time until his death on 12 June, 1878, he directed the affairs of the *Evening Post*. His flow of poetry, never copious, with the passage of years grew almost imperceptible. Nearly all that insures the permanency of his fame is included in the volumes of 1821 and 1832. His energies were more and more absorbed by the *Post*, which, with constant good sense and unflinching courage, he succeeded in making America's greatest newspaper, and eventually a very profitable one too. His most notable literary work in his later years was his translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (1870-1873), whose excellence has perhaps never been adequately recognized.

Bryant was a severe artist, and for formal excellence he has only two or three rivals among later Americans. His happiest pieces are few in number, but those few retain their interest because they give fine expression to certain of man's graver moods when he faces the elemental, unchanging mysteries of life, and when he feels between himself and surrounding nature a dim harmony which, somehow, fortifies, consoles, and on occasion gladdens him. Despite the pleasure Bryant derived from Wordsworth, the English poet's influence upon him may easily be exaggerated and misunderstood. His language seems rather to be derived from poets of the eighteenth century, and for his chastened use of it his study of Greek must at least share, with Wordsworth, the credit. He has, too, little or nothing of Wordsworth's mystical pantheism. On the contrary, he still looks to the God of his Puritan fathers. But, in his later time, the old creed has lost its narrow severity, without losing its gravity.

THANATOPSIS¹

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she
speaks

A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When
thoughts

Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images 10
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow
house

Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at
heart;—

Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many
tears, 20

Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee,
shall claim

Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,

¹ First published in its present form in 1821. The title, formed from two Greek words, means: A view of death.

This and the following poems are here reprinted from the Roslyn Edition of Bryant's *Poetical Works* with the permission of the publishers, Messrs. D. Appleton and Company.

And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix for ever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude
swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The
oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy
mold. 30

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie
down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with
kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulcher. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the
vales

Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move 40
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured
round all,

Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods 52

Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are
there:

And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them
down

In their last sleep—the dead reign there
alone.

So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that
breathe 60

Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of
care

Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall
leave

Their mirth and their employments, and
shall come

And make their bed with thee. As the long
train

Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who
goes

In the full strength of years, matron and
maid,

The speechless babe, and the gray-headed
man— 70

Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to
join

The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall
take

His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and
soothed

By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his
couch 80

About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

THE YELLOW VIOLET¹

WHEN beechen buds begin to swell,
And woods the blue-bird's warble know,
The yellow violet's modest bell
Peeps from the last year's leaves below.

¹ Written in 1814; published in 1821.

Ere russet fields their green resume,
Sweet flower, I love, in forest bare,
To meet thee, when thy faint perfume
Alone is in the virgin air.

Of all her train, the hands of Spring
First plant thee in the watery mold, 10
And I have seen thee blossoming
Beside the snow-bank's edges cold.

Thy parent sun, who bade thee view
Pale skies, and chilling moisture sip,
Has bathed thee in his own bright hue,
And streaked with jet thy glowing lip.

Yet slight thy form, and low thy seat,
And earthward bent thy gentle eye,
Unapt the passing view to meet,
When loftier flowers are flaunting nigh. 20

Oft, in the sunless April day,
Thy early smile has stayed my walk;
But midst the gorgeous blooms of May,
I passed thee on thy humble stalk.

So they, who climb to wealth, forget
The friends in darker fortunes tried.
I copied them—but I regret
That I should ape the ways of pride.

And when again the genial hour
Awakes the painted tribes of light, 30
I'll not o'erlook the modest flower
That made the woods of April bright.

INSCRIPTION FOR THE ENTRANCE TO A WOOD²

STRANGER, if thou hast learned a truth
which needs
No school of long experience, that the world
Is full of guilt and misery, and hast seen
Enough of all its sorrows, crimes, and cares,
To tire thee of it, enter this wild wood
And view the haunts of Nature. The calm
shade
Shall bring a kindred calm, and the sweet
breeze
That makes the green leaves dance, shall
waft a balm

² A portion (all save last several lines) published in
North American Review in 1817; published in its present
form in 1821.

To thy sick heart. Thou wilt find nothing
here
Of all that pained thee in the haunts of
men, 10
And made thee loathe thy life. The primal
curse
Fell, it is true, upon the unsinching earth,
But not in vengeance. God hath yoked to
guilt
Her pale tormentor, misery. Hence, these
shades
Are still the abodes of gladness; the thick
roof
Of green and stirring branches is alive
And musical with birds, that sing and sport
In wantonness of spirit; while below
The squirrel, with raised paws and form
erect,
Chirps merrily. Throngs of insects in the
shade 20
Try their thin wings and dance in the warm
beam
That waked them into life. Even the green
trees
Partake the deep contentment; as they bend
To the soft winds, the sun from the blue
sky
Looks in and sheds a blessing on the scene.
Scarce less the cleft-born wild-flower seems
to enjoy
Existence, than the wingèd plunderer
That sucks its sweets. The mossy rocks
themselves,
And the old and ponderous trunks of pros-
trate trees
That lead from knoll to knoll a causey
rude 30
Or bridge the sunken brook, and their dark
roots,
With all their earth upon them, twisting high,
Breathe fixed tranquillity. The rivulet
Sends forth glad sounds, and tripping o'er
its bed
Of pebbly sands, or leaping down the rocks,
Seems, with continuous laughter, to rejoice
In its own being. Softly tread the marge,
Lest from her midway perch thou scare the
wren
That dips her bill in water. The cool wind,
That stirs the stream in play, shall come to
thee, 40
Like one that loves thee nor will let thee
pass
Ungreeted, and shall give its light embrace.

TO A WATERFOWL¹

WHITHER, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of
day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pur-
sue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee
wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide, 10
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near. 20

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall
bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my
heart
Deeply has sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

¹ Written in December, 1815; published in *North American Review* in 1818, also in vol. of 1821. On 15 December Bryant walked from Cummington to Plainfield; he felt "very forlorn and desolate indeed, not knowing what was to become of him in the big world which grew bigger as he ascended [the hills] and yet darker with the coming on of night. The sun had already set, leaving behind it one of those brilliant seas of chrysolite and opal which often flood the New England skies. While he was looking upon the rosy splendor with rapt admiration, a solitary bird made wing along the illuminated horizon. He watched the lone wanderer until it was lost in the distance, asking himself whither it had come and to what far home it was flying. When he went to the house where he was to stop for the night, his mind was still full of what he had seen and felt, and he wrote" *To a Waterfowl*. (P. Godwin.)

He who, from zone to zone,
 Guides through the boundless sky thy cer-
 tain flight, 30
 In the long way that I must tread alone,
 Will lead my steps aright.

A FOREST HYMN¹

THE groves were God's first temples. Ere
 man learned
 To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
 And spread the roof above them—ere he
 framed
 The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
 The sound of anthems; in the darkling wood,
 Amid the cool and silence, he knelt down,
 And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks
 And supplication. For his simple heart
 Might not resist the sacred influences
 Which, from the stilly twilight of the
 place, 10
 And from the gray old trunks that high in
 heaven
 Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the
 sound
 Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
 All their green tops, stole over him, and
 bowed
 His spirit with the thought of boundless
 power
 And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
 Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect
 God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore
 Only among the crowd, and under roofs
 That our frail hands have raised? Let me,
 at least, 20
 Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,
 Offer one hymn—thrice happy, if it find
 Acceptance in His ear.

 Father, thy hand
 Hath reared these venerable columns, thou
 Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst
 look down
 Upon the naked earth, and, forthwith, rose
 All these fair ranks of trees. They, in thy sun,
 Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy
 breeze,
 And shot toward heaven. The century-liv-
 ing crow
 Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and
 died 30

Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,
 As now they stand, massy, and tall, and dark,
 Fit shrine for humble worshiper to hold
 Communion with his Maker. These dim
 vaults,

These winding aisles, of human pomp or
 pride

Report not. No fantastic carvings show
 The boast of our vain race to change the form
 Of thy fair works. But thou art here—thou
 fill'st

The solitude. Thou art in the soft winds
 That run along the summit of these trees 40
 In music; thou art in the cooler breath
 That from the inmost darkness of the place
 Comes, scarcely felt; the barky trunks, the
 ground,

The fresh moist ground, are all instinct with
 thee.

Here is continual worship;—Nature, here,
 In the tranquillity that thou dost love,
 Enjoys thy presence. Noiselessly, around,
 From perch to perch, the solitary bird
 Passes; and yon clear spring, that, midst its
 herbs,

Wells softly forth and wandering steeps the
 roots 50

Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale
 Of all the good it does. Thou hast not left
 Thyself without a witness, in the shades,
 Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength, and
 grace

Are here to speak of thee. This mighty oak—
 By whose immovable stem I stand and seem
 Almost annihilated—not a prince,
 In all that proud old world beyond the deep,
 E'er wore his crown as loftily as he
 Wears the green coronal of leaves with
 which 60

Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his root
 Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
 Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower,
 With scented breath and look so like a smile,
 Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mold,
 An emanation of the indwelling Life,
 A visible token of the upholding Love,
 That are the soul of this great universe.

My heart is awed within me when I think
 Of the great miracle that still goes on, 70
 In silence, round me—the perpetual work
 Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
 For ever. Written on thy works I read
 The lesson of thy own eternity.

¹ Published in *United States Literary Gazette*, 1825,
 and in vol. of 1832.

Lo! all grow old and die—but see again,
 How on the faltering footsteps of decay
 Youth presses—ever gay and beautiful youth
 In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees
 Wave not less proudly that their ancestors
 Molder beneath them. Oh, there is not
 lost 80

One of earth's charms: upon her bosom yet,
 After the flight of untold centuries,
 The freshness of her far beginning lies
 And yet shall lie. Life mocks the idle hate
 Of his arch-enemy Death—yea, seats him-
 self

Upon the tyrant's throne—the sepulcher,
 And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
 Makes his own nourishment. For he came
 forth

From thine own bosom, and shall have no
 end.

There have been holy men who hid them-
 selves 90

Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave
 Their lives to thought and prayer, till they
 outlived

The generation born with them, nor seemed
 Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks
 Around them;—and there have been holy
 men

Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus.
 But let me often to these solitudes
 Retire, and in thy presence reassure
 My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
 The passions, at thy plainer footsteps
 shrink 100

And tremble and are still. O God! when thou
 Dost scare the world with tempests, set on fire
 The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill,
 With all the waters of the firmament,
 The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the
 woods

And drowns the villages; when, at thy call,
 Uprises the great deep and throws himself
 Upon the continent, and overwhelms
 Its cities—who forgets not, at the sight
 Of these tremendous tokens of thy power, 110
 His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by?
 Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face
 Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath
 Of the mad unchained elements to teach
 Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate,
 In these calm shades, thy milder majesty,
 And to the beautiful order of thy works
 Learn to conform the order of our lives.

I BROKE THE SPELL¹

I BROKE the spell that held me long,
 The dear, dear witchery of song.
 I said, the poet's idle lore
 Shall waste my prime of years no more,
 For Poetry, though heavenly born,
 Consorts with poverty and scorn.

I broke the spell—nor deemed its power
 Could fetter me another hour.
 Ah, thoughtless! how could I forget
 Its causes were around me yet? 10
 For wheresoe'er I looked, the while,
 Was Nature's everlasting smile.

Still came and lingered on my sight
 Of flowers and streams the bloom and light,
 And glory of the stars and sun;—
 And these and poetry are one.
 They, ere the world had held me long,
 Recalled me to the love of song.

I CANNOT FORGET²

I CANNOT forget with what fervid devotion
 I worshiped the visions of verse and of
 fame;
 Each gaze at the glories of earth, sky, and
 ocean,
 To my kindled emotions, was wind over
 flame.

And deep were my musings in life's early
 blossom,
 Mid the twilight of mountain-groves wan-
 dering long;
 How thrilled my young veins, and how
 throbb'd my full bosom,
 When o'er me descended the spirit of song!

'Mong the deep-cloven fells that for ages
 have listened
 To the rush of the pebble-paved river
 between, 10
 Where the kingfisher screamed and gray pre-
 cipice glistened,
 All breathless with awe have I gazed on the
 scene;

¹ Published in *Atlantic Souvenir*, 1825, also in vol. of 1832.

² Published in *New York Review*, 1826, also in vol. of 1832.

Till I felt the dark power o'er my reveries
stealing,
From the gloom of the thicket that over
me hung,
And the thoughts that awoke, in that rapture
of feeling,
Were formed into verse as they rose to
my tongue.

Bright visions! I mixed with the world, and
ye faded,
No longer your pure rural worshiper now;
In the haunts your continual presence per-
vaded,
Ye shrink from the signet of care on my
brow. 20

In the old mossy groves on the breast of the
mountains,
In deep lonely glens where the waters com-
plain,
By the shade of the rock, by the gush of the
fountain,
I seek your loved footsteps, but seek them
in vain.

Oh, leave not forlorn and for ever forsaken,
Your pupil and victim to life and its tears!
But sometimes return, and in mercy awaken
The glories ye showed to his earlier years.

THE CONJUNCTION OF JUPITER AND VENUS¹

I WOULD not always reason. The straight
path
Wearies us with the never-varying lines,
And we grow melancholy. I would make
Reason my guide, but she should sometimes
sit

Patiently by the way-side, while I traced
The mazes of the pleasant wilderness
Around me. She should be my counselor,
But not my tyrant. For the spirit needs
Impulses from a deeper source than hers,
And there are motions, in the mind of
man 10

That she must look upon with awe. I bow
Reverently to her dictates, but not less
Hold to the fair illusions of old time—
Illusions that shed brightness over life,
And glory over Nature. Look, even now,

Where two bright planets in the twilight
meet,

Upon the saffron heaven,—the imperial star
Of Jove, and she that from her radiant urn
Pours forth the light of love. Let me believe,
Awhile, that they are met for ends of good, 20
Amid the evening glory, to confer
Of men and their affairs, and to shed down
Kind influence. Lo! they brighten as we
gaze,

And shake out softer fires! The great earth
feels

The gladness and the quiet of the time.
Meekly the mighty river, that infolds
This mighty city, smooths his front, and far
Glitters and burns even the rocky base
Of the dark heights that bound him to the
west;

And a deep murmur, from the many streets, 30
Rises like a thanksgiving. Put we hence
Dark and sad thoughts awhile—there's time
for them

Hereafter—on the morrow we will meet,
With melancholy looks, to tell our griefs,
And make each other wretched; this calm
hour,

This balmy, blessed evening, we will give
To cheerful hopes and dreams of happy days.
Born of the meeting of those glorious stars.

Enough of drought has parched the year,
and scared
The land with dread of famine. Autumn,
yet, 40

Shall make men glad with unexpected fruits.
The dog-star shall shine harmless: genial days
Shall softly glide away into the keen
And wholesome cold of winter; he that fears
The pestilence, shall gaze on those pure
beams,
And breathe, with confidence, the quiet air.

Emblems of power and beauty! well may
they

Shine brightest on our borders, and withdraw
Toward the great Pacific, marking out
The path of empire. Thus in our own land, 50
Ere long, the better Genius of our race,
Having encompassed earth, and tamed its
tribes,

Shall sit him down beneath the farthest west,
By the shore of that calm ocean, and look
back

On realms made happy.

¹ Published in *United States Literary Gazette*, 1826,
also in vol. of 1832.

Light the nuptial torch,
 And say the glad, yet solemn rite, that
 knits
 The youth and maiden. Happy days to them
 That wed this evening!—a long life of love,
 And blooming sons and daughters! Happy
 they
 Born at this hour, for they shall see an age 60
 Whiter and holier than the past, and go
 Late to their graves. Men shall wear softer
 hearts,
 And shudder at the butcheries of war,
 As now at other murders.

Hapless Greece!¹
 Enough of blood has wet thy rocks, and
 stained
 Thy rivers; deep enough thy chains have
 worn
 Their links into thy flesh; the sacrifice
 Of thy pure maidens, and thy innocent babes,
 And reverend priests, has expiated all
 Thy crimes of old. In yonder mingling
 lights 70
 There is an omen of good days for thee.
 Thou shalt arise from midst the dust and sit
 Again among the nations. Thine own arm
 Shall yet redeem thee. Not in wars like
 thine
 The world takes part. Be it a strife of
 kings,—
 Despot with despot battling for a throne,—
 And Europe shall be stirred throughout her
 realms,
 Nations shall put on harness, and shall fall
 Upon each other, and in all their bounds
 The wailing of the childless shall not cease. 80
 Thine is a war for liberty, and thou
 Must fight it single-handed. The old world
 Looks coldly on the murderers of thy race,
 And leaves thee to the struggle; and the
 new,—
 I fear me thou couldst tell a shameful tale
 Of fraud and lust of gain;—thy treasury
 drained,
 And Missolonghi fallen. Yet thy wrongs
 Shall put new strength into thy heart and
 hand,
 And God and thy good sword shall yet work
 out,
 For thee, a terrible deliverance. 90

¹ The Greeks at this time were fighting the Turks for independence, which was not gained until 1829.

TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN²

Thou blossom bright with autumn dew,
 And colored with the heaven's own blue,
 That openest when the quiet light
 Succeeds the keen and frosty night;

Thou comest not when violets lean
 O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
 Or columbines, in purple dressed,
 Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late and com'st alone, 9
 When woods are bare and birds are flown,
 And frosts and shortening days portend
 The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
 Look through its fringes to the sky,
 Blue—blue—as if that sky let fall
 A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see
 The hour of death draw near to me,
 Hope, blossoming within my heart,
 May look to heaven as I depart. 20

THE PRAIRIES³

THESE are the gardens of the Desert, these
 The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
 For which the speech of England has no
 name—

The Prairies. I behold them for the first,
 And my heart swells, while the dilated sight
 Takes in the encircling vastness. Lo! they
 stretch,

In airy undulations, far away,
 As if the ocean, in his gentlest swell,
 Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed,
 And motionless for ever.—Motionless?— 10
 No—they are all unchained again. The
 clouds

Sweep over with their shadows, and, beneath,
 The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye;
 Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase
 The sunny ridges. Breezes of the South!
 Who toss the golden and the flame-like
 flowers,

² Written in 1829; published in the vol. of 1832.

³ Written in Illinois, while Bryant was visiting brothers there, in 1832; published in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, 1833, and in *Poems*, 1834.

And pass the prairie-hawk that, poised on
high,
Flaps his broad wings, yet moves not—ye
have played
Among the palms of Mexico and vines
Of Texas, and have crisped the limpid
brooks 20
That from the fountains of Sonora glide
Into the calm Pacific—have ye fanned
A nobler or a lovelier scene than this?
Man hath no power in all this glorious work:
The hand that built the firmament hath
heaved
And smoothed these verdant swells, and
sown their slopes
With herbage, planted them with island
groves,
And hedged them round with forests. Fit-
ting floor
For this magnificent temple of the sky—
With flowers whose glory and whose multi-
tude 30
Rival the constellations! The great heavens
Seem to stoop down upon the scene in love,—
A nearer vault, and of a tenderer blue,
Than that which bends above our eastern
hills.

As o'er the verdant waste I guide my steed,
Among the high rank grass that sweeps his
sides
The hollow beating of his footstep seems
A sacrilegious sound. I think of those
Upon whose rest he tramples. Are they
here— 39
The dead of other days?—and did the dust
Of these fair solitudes once stir with life
And burn with passion? Let the mighty
mounds
That overlook the rivers, or that rise
In the dim forest crowded with old oaks,
Answer. A race, that long has passed away,
Built them;—a disciplined and populous
race
Heaped, with long toil, the earth, while yet
the Greek
Was hewing the Pentelicus to forms
Of symmetry, and rearing on its rock
The glittering Parthenon. These ample
fields 50
Nourished their harvests, here their herds
were fed,
When haply by their stalls the bison lowed,
And bowed his manèd shoulder to the yoke.

All day this desert murmured with their
toils,
Till twilight blushed, and lovers walked,
and wooed
In a forgotten language, and old tunes,
From instruments of unremembered form,
Gave the soft winds a voice. The red man
came—
The roaming hunter tribes, warlike and
fierce,
And the mound-builders vanished from the
earth. 60
The solitude of centuries untold
Has settled where they dwelt. The prairie-
wolf
Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh-dug
den
Yawns by my path. The gopher mines the
ground
Where stood their swarming cities. All is
gone;
All—save the piles of earth that hold their
bones,
The platforms where they worshiped un-
known gods,
The barriers which they builded from the soil
To keep the foe at bay—till o'er the walls
The wild beleaguers broke, and, one by
one, 70
The strongholds of the plain were forced,
and heaped
With corpses. The brown vultures of the
wood
Flocked to those vast uncovered sepulchers,
And sat unscared and silent at their feast.
Haply some solitary fugitive,
Lurking in marsh and forest, till the sense
Of desolation and of fear became
Bitterer than death, yielded himself to die.
Man's better nature triumphed then. Kind
words
Welcomed and soothed him; the rude con-
querors 80
Seated the captive with their chiefs; he chose
A bride among their maidens, and at length
Seemed to forget—yet ne'er forgot—the
wife
Of his first love, and her sweet little ones,
Butchered, amid their shrieks, with all his
race.

Thus change the forms of being. Thus
arise
Races of living things, glorious in strength,

And perish, as the quickening breath of
 God
 Fills them, or is withdrawn. The red man,
 too,
 Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so
 long, 90
 And, nearer to the Rocky Mountains, sought
 A wilder hunting-ground. The beaver builds
 No longer by these streams, but far away,
 On waters whose blue surface ne'er gave
 back
 The white man's face—among Missouri's
 springs,
 And pools whose issues swell the Oregon—
 He rears his little Venice. In these plains
 The bison feeds no more. Twice twenty
 leagues
 Beyond remotest smoke of hunter's camp,
 Roams the majestic brute, in herds that
 shake 100
 The earth with thundering steps—yet here
 I meet
 His ancient footprints stamped beside the
 pool.

Still this great solitude is quick with life.
 Myriads of insects, gaudy as the flowers
 They flutter over, gentle quadrupeds,
 And birds, that scarce have learned the fear
 of man,
 Are here, and sliding reptiles of the ground,
 Startlingly beautiful. The graceful deer
 Bounds to the wood at my approach. The
 bee,
 A more adventurous colonist than man, 110
 With whom he came across the eastern deep,
 Fills the savannas with his murmurings,
 And hides his sweets, as in the golden age,
 Within the hollow oak. I listen long
 To his domestic hum, and think I hear
 The sound of that advancing multitude
 Which soon shall fill these deserts. From
 the ground
 Comes up the laugh of children, the soft
 voice
 Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn
 hymn
 Of Sabbath worshipers. The low of
 herds 120
 Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain
 Over the dark brown furrows. All at once
 A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my
 dream,
 And I am in the wilderness alone.

THE POET¹

THOU, who wouldst wear the name
 Of poet mid thy brethren of mankind,
 And clothe in words of flame
 Thoughts that shall live within the general
 mind!
 Deem not the framing of a deathless lay
 The pastime of a drowsy summer day.
 But gather all thy powers,
 And wreak them on the verse that thou
 dost weave,
 And in thy lonely hours,
 At silent morning or at wakeful eve, 10
 While the warm current tingles through thy
 veins,
 Set forth the burning words in fluent strains.
 No smooth array of phrase,
 Artfully sought and ordered though it be,
 Which the cold rhymers lays
 Upon his page with languid industry,
 Can wake the listless pulse to livelier speed,
 Or fill with sudden tears the eyes that read.
 The secret wouldst thou know
 To touch the heart or fire the blood at
 will? 20
 Let thine own eyes o'erflow;
 Let thy lips quiver with the passionate
 thrill;
 Seize the great thought, ere yet its power be
 past,
 And bind, in words, the fleet emotion fast.
 Then, should thy verse appear
 Halting and harsh, and all unaptly
 wrought,
 Touch the crude line with fear,
 Save in the moment of impassioned
 thought;
 Then summon back the original glow, and
 mend
 The strain with rapture that with fire was
 penned. 30
 Yet let no empty gust
 Of passion find an utterance in thy lay,
 A blast that whirls the dust
 Along the howling street and dies away;
 But feelings of calm power and mighty
 sweep,
 Like currents journeying through the wind-
 less deep.

¹ Written in 1863; published in 1864.

Seek'st thou, in living lays,
To limn the beauty of the earth and sky?
Before thine inner gaze
Let all that beauty in clear vision lie; 40
Look on it with exceeding love, and write
The words inspired by wonder and delight.

Of tempests wouldst thou sing,
Or tell of battles—make thyself a part
Of the great tumult; cling
To the tossed wreck with terror in thy
heart;

Scale, with the assaulting host, the rampart's
height,
And strike and struggle in the thickest fight.

So shalt thou frame a lay
That haply may endure from age to age, 50
And they who read shall say:
“What witchery hangs upon this poet's
page!
What art is his the written spells to find
That sway from mood to mood the willing
mind!”

WILLIAM HICKLING PRESCOTT (1796-1859)

Prescott's father was an eminent lawyer who practiced in Salem and Boston and who had, for the times, ample means, which relieved his son of the need of ever considering money in planning his course of life. This turned out to be a circumstance of capital importance. His mother was a woman of character and unusual energy, who exerted a strong influence upon her son, encouraging him to master the difficulties in his way and to carry his work through to accomplishment. The historian was born on 4 May, 1796, at Salem, and lived there until the family's removal to Boston in 1808. He entered the sophomore class of Harvard in 1811. He was not a distinguished student, on the contrary was distinguished rather for his love of pleasure, until the occurrence of the accident which befell him in his junior year. A fellow-student, in fun, threw at him a crust of bread; by a sudden turn of his head Prescott happened to catch the crust full in his left eye. The result, when he had recovered from the pain and the nervous shock, was found to be that the eye was practically blind. During the remainder of his life he had not only to depend on one eye, but to use that with the utmost caution lest he should lose it also. And frequently for long periods he did lose it, and had to live and work in darkness, because of extremely painful attacks of acute rheumatism centering in his eye. When he returned to his studies after the accident he applied himself to them with sobered temper, and was graduated in 1814 with honors. He was also elected to Phi Beta Kappa. It was his intention to follow his father in the practice of the law, and he now undertook studies to this end. But early in 1815 inflammation in his eye which completely incapacitated him for several months caused him to abandon the law. In the fall he sailed for the Azores, where his maternal grandfather lived as American consul, and thence he went to Europe, traveling there extensively and returning to Boston in 1817. In 1820 he married Susan Amory, of Boston. What occupation he should now follow was a question not quickly answered, but by 1820 he had determined to become a man of letters. He proceeded to undertake a long course of preliminary study, which included rhetoric, Latin, and the history and literature of England, France, Italy, and Spain. Following Italian letters he had intended to study German, but had found it impracticable. As a consequence, late in 1824, he began the study of Spanish, prompted thereto by his friend George Ticknor. It was not, however, until two years later that he determined to make Spanish history the field of his life's work. He then settled, for his first subject, upon the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, and devoted three years to preparation for writing. This he began in the fall of 1829, to finish his task almost seven years later, in the summer of 1836. Even then he was hesitant about publishing, fearing that his work might be judged valueless, but he was urged on by his family and others, and the book finally appeared on Christmas day in 1837. It was immediately successful, and Prescott went on more confidently to prepare *The Conquest of Mexico*, which was published in December, 1843. This was even more successful than *Ferdinand and Isabella*, and won a heartier reception in England and Europe. *The Conquest of Peru* was a natural, practically inevitable, sequel to the *Mexico*. Much of the necessary preparation served as well for the one as for the other, and Prescott did not hesitate to go on immediately with the *Peru*, though he was already planning to write the *History of Philip II* and had this subject much on his mind. *Peru* was published in 1847, and Prescott immediately began work upon what he hoped would be his greatest book. Progress was interrupted by a visit to England in 1850, where the historian was heartily received and showered with honors, which included a D.C.L. from Oxford, but his only other interruptions were caused by failing health. The first volume of *Philip II* was finished in 1852 and the second two years later, and both were published in 1855. The third volume was also finished (published 1858), and Prescott was at work on the fourth (there were to be five) when he suddenly died from an attack of apoplexy on 28 January, 1859.

There is abundant testimony to Prescott's personal charm and to his patience under an affliction which would have condemned most men in his circumstances to stolid inactivity. And his heroic work—it was no less, for a man almost blind and frequently incapacitated by pain—gave a new standard in history to America. Irving (who had graciously given up his own plan for a work on Mexico when he heard of Prescott's undertaking) had written history that was literature, but it was more notable for its charm than for thoroughness or scholarship. Prescott has recorded that the *Memoirs* of Gibbon had something to do with his becoming a historian, and that his resolve was to make him-

self one "in the best sense of the term." By this he did not mean that he proposed to write in terms of a philosophy of history, nor even that he proposed to write reflectively, for he was not in any serious sense of the word a thinker at all, and his work is akin in spirit to that of the simple chronicler. He meant only that he proposed to write from a background of thorough culture and from a knowledge as complete as he could make it of his primary sources. This he did, and he worked so well that—though additional information since turned up has invalidated many details in his narratives—still, his histories remain on the whole sound and valuable for the general student and reader. By present-day standards his style is over-elaborate; but, on the other hand, he brought such a talent for vividness and such an instinct for the picturesque to his writing that his books retain their fascination and are long likely to be widely read.

HISTORY OF THE CONQUEST OF PERU

BOOK III

CHAPTER III¹

THE SPANIARDS LAND AT TUMBEZ—PIZARRO RECONNOITERS THE COUNTRY—FOUNDATION OF SAN MIGUEL—MARCH INTO THE INTERIOR—EMBASSY FROM THE INCA—ADVENTURES ON THE MARCH—REACH THE FOOT OF THE ANDES

1532

WE left the Spaniards at the island of Puná, preparing to make their descent on the neighboring continent at Tumbez. This port was but a few leagues distant, and Pizarro, with the greater part of his followers, passed over in the ships, while a few others were to transport the commander's baggage and the military stores on some of the Indian balsas. One of the latter vessels which first touched the shore was surrounded, and three persons who were on the raft were carried off by the natives to the adjacent woods and there massacred. The Indians then got possession of another of the balsas, containing Pizarro's wardrobe: but, as the men who defended it raised loud cries for help, they reached the ears of Hernando Pizarro, who, with a small body of horse, had effected a landing some way farther down the shore. A broad tract of miry ground, overflowed at high water, lay between him and the party thus rudely assailed by the natives. The tide was out, and the bottom was soft and dangerous. With little regard to the danger, however, the bold cavalier spurred his horse

into the slimy depths, and followed by his men, with the mud up to their saddle-girths, they plunged forward until they came into the midst of the marauders, who, terrified by the strange apparition of the horsemen, fled precipitately, without show of fight, to the neighboring forests.

This conduct of the natives of Tumbez is not easy to be explained; considering the friendly relations maintained with the Spaniards on their preceding visit, and lately renewed in the island of Puná. But Pizarro was still more astonished, on entering their town, to find it not only deserted, but, with the exception of a few buildings, entirely demolished. Four or five of the most substantial private dwellings, the great temple, and the fortress—and these greatly damaged, and wholly despoiled of their interior decorations—alone survived to mark the site of the city, and attest its former splendor. The scene of desolation filled the Conquerors with dismay; for even the raw recruits, who had never visited the coast before, had heard the marvelous stories of the golden treasures of Tumbez, and they had confidently looked forward to them as an easy spoil after all their fatigues. But the gold of Peru seemed only like a deceitful phantom, which, after beckoning them on through toil and danger, vanished the moment they attempted to grasp it.

Pizarro dispatched a small body of troops in pursuit of the fugitives; and, after some slight skirmishing, they got possession of several of the natives, and among them, as it chanced, the curaca of the place. When brought before the Spanish commander, he exonerated himself from any share in the violence offered to the white men, saying that it was done by a lawless party of his people, without his knowledge at the time; and he expressed his willingness to deliver them up to punishment, if they could be detected.

¹ Notes on following pages are Prescott's. The greater number of his notes, however, have been omitted, consisting, as they do, largely of quotations from the Spanish sources.

He explained the dilapidated condition of the town by the long wars carried on with the fierce tribes of Puná, who had at length succeeded in getting possession of the place, and driving the inhabitants into the neighboring woods and mountains. The Inca, to whose cause they were attached, was too much occupied with his own feuds to protect them against their enemies.

Whether Pizarro gave any credit to the cacique's exculpation of himself may be doubted. He dissembled his suspicions, however, and, as the Indian lord promised obedience in his own name and that of his vassals, the Spanish general consented to take no further notice of the affair. He seems now to have felt for the first time, in its full force, that it was his policy to gain the good-will of the people among whom he had thrown himself in the face of such tremendous odds. It was, perhaps, the excesses of which his men had been guilty in the earlier stages of the expedition that had shaken the confidence of the people of Tumbes, and incited them to this treacherous retaliation.

Pizarro inquired of the natives who now, under promise of impunity, came into the camp, what had become of his two followers that remained with them in the former expedition. The answers they gave were obscure and contradictory. Some said they had died of an epidemic; others, that they had perished in the war with Puná; and others intimated that they had lost their lives in consequence of some outrage attempted on the Indian women. It was impossible to arrive at the truth. The last account was not the least probable. But, whatever might be the cause, there was no doubt they had both perished.

This intelligence spread an additional gloom over the Spaniards; which was not dispelled by the flaming pictures now given by the natives of the riches of the land, and of the state and magnificence of the monarch in his distant capital among the mountains. Nor did they credit the authenticity of a scroll of paper, which Pizarro had obtained from an Indian, to whom it had been delivered by one of the white men left in the country. "Know, whoever you may be," said the writing, "that may chance to set foot in this country, that it contains more

gold and silver than there is iron in Biscay." This paper, when shown to the soldiers, excited only their ridicule, as a device of their captain to keep alive their chimerical hopes.

Pizarro now saw that it was not politic to protract his stay in his present quarters, where a spirit of disaffection would soon creep into the ranks of his followers, unless their spirits were stimulated by novelty or a life of incessant action. Yet he felt deeply anxious to obtain more particulars than he had hitherto gathered of the actual condition of the Peruvian empire, of its strength and resources, of the monarch who ruled over it, and of his present situation. He was also desirous, before taking any decisive step for penetrating the country, to seek out some commodious place for a settlement, which might afford him the means of a regular communication with the colonies, and a place of strength, on which he himself might retreat in case of disaster.

He decided, therefore, to leave part of his company at Tumbes, including those who, from the state of their health, were least able to take the field, and with the remainder to make an excursion into the interior, and reconnoiter the land, before deciding on any plan of operations. He set out early in May, 1532; and, keeping along the more level regions himself, sent a small detachment under the command of Hernando de Soto to explore the skirts of the vast sierra.

He maintained a rigid discipline on the march, commanding his soldiers to abstain from all acts of violence, and punishing disobedience in the most prompt and resolute manner. The natives rarely offered resistance. When they did so, they were soon reduced, and Pizarro, far from vindictive measures, was open to the first demonstrations of submission. By this lenient and liberal policy, he soon acquired a name among the inhabitants which effaced the unfavorable impressions made of him in the earlier part of the campaign. The natives, as he marched through the thick-settled hamlets which sprinkled the level region between the Cordilleras and the ocean, welcomed him with rustic hospitality, providing good quarters for his troops, and abundant supplies, which cost but little in

the prolific soil of the *tierra caliente*. Everywhere Pizarro made proclamation that he came in the name of the Holy Vicar of God and of the sovereign of Spain, requiring the obedience of the inhabitants as true children of the Church, and vassals of his lord and master. And as the simple people made no opposition to a formula, of which they could not comprehend a syllable, they were admitted as good subjects of the crown of Castile, and their act of homage—or what was readily interpreted as such—was duly recorded and attested by the notary.

At the expiration of some three or four weeks spent in reconnoitering the country, Pizarro came to the conclusion that the most eligible site for his new settlement was in the rich valley of Tangarala, thirty leagues south of Tumbez, traversed by more than one stream that opens a communication with the ocean. To this spot, accordingly, he ordered the men left at Tumbez to repair at once in their vessels; and no sooner had they arrived, than busy preparations were made for building up the town in a manner suited to the wants of the colony. Timber was procured from the neighboring woods. Stones were dragged from their quarries, and edifices gradually rose, some of which made pretensions to strength, if not to elegance. Among them were a church, a magazine for public stores, a hall of justice, and a fortress. A municipal government was organized, consisting of regidores, alcaldes, and the usual civic functionaries. The adjacent territory was parceled out among the residents, and each colonist had a certain number of the natives allotted to assist him in his labors; for, as Pizarro's secretary remarks, "it being evident that the colonists could not support themselves without the services of the Indians, the ecclesiastics and the leaders of the expedition all agreed that a *repartimiento* of the natives would serve the cause of religion, and tend greatly to their spiritual welfare, since they would thus have the opportunity of being initiated in the true faith."

Having made these arrangements with such conscientious regard to the welfare of the benighted heathen, Pizarro gave his infant city the name of San Miguel, in acknowledgment of the service rendered him by that saint in his battles with the

Indians of Puná. The site originally occupied by the settlement was afterward found to be so unhealthy, that it was abandoned for another on the banks of the beautiful Piura. The town is still of some note for its manufactures, though dwindled from its ancient importance; but the name of San Miguel de Piura, which it bears, still commemorates the foundation of the first European colony in the empire of the Incas.

Before quitting the new settlement, Pizarro caused the gold and silver ornaments, which he had obtained in different parts of the country, to be melted down into one mass, and a fifth to be deducted for the Crown. The remainder, which belonged to the troops, he persuaded them to relinquish for the present, under the assurance of being repaid from the first spoils that fell into their hands. With these funds, and other articles collected in the course of the campaign, he sent back the vessels to Panamá. The gold was applied to paying off the ship-owners and those who had furnished the stores for the expedition. That he should so easily have persuaded his men to resign present possession for a future contingency, is proof that the spirit of enterprise was renewed in their bosoms in all its former vigor, and that they looked forward with the same buoyant confidence to the results.

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CHAPTER IV

SEVERE PASSAGE OF THE ANDES—EMBASSIES FROM ATAHUALLPA—THE SPANIARDS REACH CAXAMALCA—EMBASSY TO THE INCA—INTERVIEW WITH THE INCA—DESPONDENCY OF THE SPANIARDS

1532

THAT night Pizarro held a council of his principal officers, and it was determined that he should lead the advance, consisting of forty horse and sixty foot, and reconnoiter the ground; while the rest of the company, under his brother Hernando, should occupy their present position till they received further orders.

At early dawn the Spanish general and his detachment were under arms, and prepared to breast the difficulties of the sierra. These proved even greater than had been foreseen.

The path had been conducted in the most judicious manner round the rugged and precipitous sides of the mountains, so as best to avoid the natural impediments presented by the ground. But it was necessarily so steep in many places, that the cavalry were obliged to dismount, and, scrambling up as they could, to lead their horses by the bridle. In many places, too, where some huge crag or eminence overhung the road, this was driven to the very verge of the precipice; and the traveler was compelled to wind along the narrow ledge of rock, scarcely wide enough for his single steed, where a mis-step would precipitate him hundreds, nay, thousands, of feet into the dreadful abyss! The wild passes of the sierra, practicable for the half-naked Indian, and even for the sure and circumspect mule,—an animal that seems to have been created for the roads of the Cordilleras,—were formidable to the man-at-arms, encumbered with his panoply of mail. The tremendous fissures, or *quebradas*, so frightful in this mountain chain, yawned open, as if the Andes had been split asunder by some terrible convulsion, showing a broad expanse of the primitive rock on their sides, partially mantled over with the spontaneous vegetation of ages; while their obscure depths furnished a channel for the torrents, that, rising in the hearts of the sierra, worked their way gradually into light, and spread over the savannas and green valleys of the *tierra caliente* on their way to the great ocean.

Many of these passes afforded obvious points of defense; and the Spaniards, as they entered the rocky defiles, looked with apprehension lest they might rouse some foe from his ambush. This apprehension was heightened, as, at the summit of a steep and narrow gorge, in which they were engaged, they beheld a strong work, rising like a fortress, and frowning, as it were, in gloomy defiance on the invaders. As they drew near this building, which was of solid stone, commanding an angle of the road, they almost expected to see the dusky forms of the warriors rise over the battlements, and to receive their tempest of missiles on their bucklers; for it was in so strong a position, that a few resolute men might easily have held there an army at bay. But they had

the satisfaction to find the place untenanted; and their spirits were greatly raised by the conviction that the Indian monarch did not intend to dispute their passage, when it would have been easy to do so with success.

Pizarro now sent orders to his brother to follow without delay; and, after refreshing his men, continued his toilsome ascent, and before nightfall reached an eminence crowned by another fortress, of even greater strength than the preceding. It was built of solid masonry, the lower part excavated from the living rock, and the whole work executed with skill not inferior to that of the European architect.

Here Pizarro took up his quarters for the night. Without waiting for the arrival of the rear, on the following morning he resumed his march, leading still deeper into the intricate gorges of the sierra. The climate had gradually changed, and the men and horses, especially the latter, suffered severely from the cold, so long accustomed as they had been to the sultry climate of the tropics. The vegetation also had changed its character; and the magnificent timber which covered the lower level of the country had gradually given way to the funereal forest of pine, and, as they rose still higher, to the stunted growth of numberless Alpine plants, whose hardy natures found a congenial temperature in the icy atmosphere of the more elevated regions. These dreary solitudes seemed to be nearly abandoned by the brute creation as well as by man. The light-footed vicuña, roaming in its native state, might be sometimes seen looking down from some airy cliff, where the foot of the hunter dare not venture. But instead of the feathered tribes whose gay plumage sparkled in the deep glooms of the tropical forests, the adventurers now beheld only the great bird of the Andes, the loathsome condor, who, sailing high above the clouds, followed with doleful cries in the track of the army, as if guided by instinct in the path of blood and carnage.

At length they reached the crest of the Cordillera, where it spreads out into a bold and bleak expanse with scarce the vestige of vegetation, except what is afforded by the *pajonal*, a dried yellow grass, which, as it is seen from below, encircling the base of the snow-covered peaks, looks, with its brilliant

straw-color lighted up in the rays of an ardent sun, like a setting of gold round pinnacles of burnished silver. The land was sterile, as usual in mining districts, and they were drawing near the once famous gold quarries on the way to Caxamalca:—

Rocks rich in gems, and mountains big with mines,
That on the high equator ridgy rise.

Here Pizarro halted for the coming up of the rear. The air was sharp and frosty; and the soldiers, spreading their tents, lighted fires, and, huddling round them, endeavored to find some repose after their laborious march.

They had not been long in these quarters, when a messenger arrived, one of those who had accompanied the Indian envoy sent by Pizarro, to Atahualpa. He informed the general that the road was free from enemies, and that an embassy from the Inca was on its way to the Castilian camp. Pizarro now sent back to quicken the march of the rear, as he was unwilling that the Peruvian envoy should find him with his present diminished numbers. The rest of the army were not far distant, and not long after reached the encampment.

In a short time the Indian embassy also arrived, which consisted of one of the Inca nobles and several attendants, bringing a welcome present of llamas to the Spanish commander. The Peruvian bore, also, the greetings of his master, who wished to know when the Spaniards would arrive at Caxamalca, that he might provide suitable refreshments for them. Pizarro learned that the Inca had left Guamachucho, and was now lying with a small force in the neighborhood of Caxamalca, at a place celebrated for its natural springs of warm water. The Peruvian was an intelligent person, and the Spanish commander gathered from him many particulars respecting the late contests which had distracted the empire.

As the envoy vaunted in lofty terms the military prowess and resources of his sovereign, Pizarro thought it politic to show that it had no power to overawe him. He expressed his satisfaction at the triumphs of Atahualpa, who, he acknowledged, had raised himself high in the rank of Indian warriors. But he was as inferior, he added, with more policy than politeness, to the

monarch who ruled over the white men, as the petty curacas of the country were inferior to him. This was evident from the ease with which a few Spaniards had overrun this great continent, subduing one nation after another, that had offered resistance to their arms. He had been led by the fame of Atahualpa to visit his dominions, and to offer him his services in his wars; and, if he were received by the Inca in the same friendly spirit with which he came, he was willing, for the aid he could render him, to postpone awhile his passage across the country to the opposite seas. The Indian, according to the Castilian accounts, listened with awe to this strain of glorification from the Spanish commander. Yet it is possible that the envoy was a better diplomatist than they imagined; and that he understood it was only the game of brag at which he was playing with his more civilized antagonist.

On the succeeding morning, at an early hour, the troops were again on their march, and for two days were occupied in threading the airy defiles of the Cordilleras. Soon after beginning their descent on the eastern side, another emissary arrived from the Inca, bearing a message of similar import to the preceding, and a present, in like manner, of Peruvian sheep. This was the same noble that had visited Pizarro in the valley. He now came in more state, quaffing *chicha*—the fermented juice of the maize—from golden goblets borne by his attendants, which sparkled in the eyes of the rapacious adventurers.

While he was in the camp, the Indian messenger, originally sent by Pizarro to the Inca, returned, and no sooner did he behold the Peruvian, and the honorable reception which he met with from the Spaniards, than he was filled with wrath, which would have vented itself in personal violence, but for the interposition of the bystanders. It was hard, he said, that this Peruvian dog should be thus courteously treated, when he himself had nearly lost his life on a similar mission among his countrymen. On reaching the Inca's camp, he had been refused admission to his presence, on the ground that he was keeping a fast, and could not be seen. They had paid no respect to his assertion that he came as an envoy from the white men, and

would, probably, not have suffered him to escape with life, if he had not assured them that any violence offered to him would be retaliated in full measure on the persons of the Peruvian envoys, now in the Spanish quarters. There was no doubt, he continued, of the hostile intentions of Atahualpa; for he was surrounded with a powerful army, strongly encamped about a league from Caxamalca, while that city was entirely evacuated by its inhabitants.

To all this the Inca's envoy coolly replied, that Pizarro's messenger might have reckoned on such a reception as he had found, since he seemed to have taken with him no credentials of his mission. As to the Inca's fast, that was true; and, although he would doubtless have seen the messenger, had he known there was one from the strangers, yet it was not safe to disturb him at these solemn seasons, when engaged in his religious duties. The troops by whom he was surrounded were not numerous, considering that the Inca was at that time carrying on an important war; and as to Caxamalca, it was abandoned by the inhabitants in order to make room for the white men, who were so soon to occupy it.

This explanation, however plausible, did not altogether satisfy the general, for he had too deep a conviction of the cunning of Atahualpa, whose intentions towards the Spaniards he had long greatly distrusted. As he proposed, however, to keep on friendly relations with the monarch for the present, it was obviously not his cue to manifest suspicion. Affecting, therefore, to give full credit to the explanation of the envoy, he dismissed him with reiterated assurances of speedily presenting himself before the Inca.

The descent of the sierra, though the Andes are less precipitous on their eastern side than towards the west, was attended with difficulties almost equal to those of the upward march; and the Spaniards felt no little satisfaction when, on the seventh day, they arrived in view of the valley of Caxamalca, which, enameled with all the beauties of cultivation, lay unrolled like a rich and variegated carpet of verdure in strong contrast with the dark forms of the Andes that rose up everywhere around it. The valley is of an oval shape, extending about five leagues in length by three in breadth. It

was inhabited by a population of a superior character to any which the Spaniards had met on the other side of the mountains, as was argued by the superior style of their attire and the greater cleanliness and comfort visible both in their persons and dwellings. As far as the eye could reach, the level tract exhibited the show of a diligent and thrifty husbandry. A broad river rolled through the meadows, supplying facilities for copious irrigation by means of the usual canals and subterraneous aqueducts. The land, intersected with verdant hedge-rows, was checkered with patches of various cultivation; for the soil was rich, and the climate, if less stimulating than that of the sultry regions of the coast, was more favorable to the hardy products of the temperate latitudes. Below the adventurers, with its white houses glittering in the sun, lay the little city of Caxamalca, like a sparkling gem on the dark skirts of the sierra. At the distance of about a league farther across the valley might be seen columns of vapor rising up towards the heavens, indicating the place of the famous hot baths, much frequented by the Peruvian princes. And here too was a spectacle less grateful to the eyes of the Spaniards, for along the slope of the hills a white cloud of pavilions was seen covering the ground as thick as snow-flakes, for the space apparently of several miles. "It filled us all with amazement," exclaims one of the Conquerors, "to behold the Indians occupying so proud a position! So many tents so well appointed as were never seen in the Indies till now. The spectacle caused something like confusion and even fear in the stoutest bosom. But it was too late to turn back or to betray the least sign of weakness, since the natives in our own company would in such case have been the first to rise upon us. So with as bold a countenance as we could, after coolly surveying the ground, we prepared for our entrance into Caxamalca."

What were the feelings of the Peruvian monarch we are not informed, when he gazed on the martial cavalcade of the Christians, as with banners streaming and bright panoplies glistening in the rays of the evening sun it emerged from the dark depths of the sierra, and advanced in hostile array over the fair domain which, to this period, had

never been trodden by other foot than that of the red man. It might be, as several of the reports had stated, that the Inca had purposely decoyed the adventurers into the heart of his populous empire that he might envelop them with his legions, and the more easily become master of their property and persons. Or was it from a natural feeling of curiosity, and relying on their professions of friendship, that he had thus allowed them without any attempt at resistance to come into his presence? At all events, he could hardly have felt such confidence in himself as not to look with apprehension mingled with awe on the mysterious strangers, who, coming from an unknown world and possessed of such wonderful gifts, had made their way across mountain and valley in spite of every obstacle which man and nature had opposed to them.

Pizarro, meanwhile, forming his little corps into three divisions, now moved forward at a more measured pace, and in order of battle, down the slopes that led towards the Indian city. As he drew near, no one came out to welcome him; and he rode through the streets without meeting with a living thing or hearing a sound, except the echoes sent back from the deserted dwellings of the tramp of the soldiery.

It was a place of considerable size, containing about ten thousand inhabitants, somewhat more probably than the population assembled at this day within the walls of the modern city of Caxamalca.¹ The houses for the most part were built of clay hardened in the sun, the roofs thatched or of timber. Some of the more ambitious dwellings were of hewn stone; and there was a convent in the place occupied by the Virgins of the Sun, and a temple dedicated to the same tutelary deity, which last was hidden in the deep embowering shades of a grove on the skirts of the city. On the quarter towards the Indian camp was a square—if square it might be called which

was almost triangular in form—of an immense size, surrounded by low buildings. These consisted of capacious halls, with wide doors or openings communicating with the square. They were probably intended as a sort of barracks for the Inca's soldiers. At the end of the *plaza*, looking towards the country, was a fortress of stone, with a stairway leading from the city and a private entrance from the adjoining suburbs. There was still another fortress on the rising ground which commanded the town built of hewn stone, and encompassed by three circular walls, or rather one and the same wall, which wound up spirally around it. It was a place of great strength, and the workmanship showed a better knowledge of masonry, and gave a higher impression of the architectural science of the people, than anything the Spaniards had yet seen.

It was late in the afternoon of the 15th of November, 1532, when the Conquerors entered the city of Caxamalca. The weather, which had been fair during the day, now threatened a storm, and some rain mingled with hail—for it was unusually cold—began to fall.² Pizarro, however, was so anxious to ascertain the dispositions of the Inca, that he determined to send an embassy, at once, to his quarters. He selected for this, Hernando de Soto with fifteen horse, and, after his departure, conceiving that the number was too small, in case of any unfriendly demonstrations by the Indians, he ordered his brother Hernando to follow with twenty additional troopers. This captain and one other of his party have left us an account of the excursion.³

² Caxamalca, in the Indian tongue, signifies "place of frost"; for the temperature, though usually bland and genial, is sometimes affected by frosty winds from the east, very pernicious to vegetation.—Stevenson, *Residence in South America*, vol. ii. p. 129.

³ *Carta de Hern. Pizarro*, MS. The Letter of Hernando Pizarro, addressed to the Royal Audience of St. Domingo, gives a full account of the extraordinary events recorded in this and the ensuing chapter, in which that cavalier took a prominent part. Allowing for the partialities incident to a chief actor in the scenes he describes, no authority can rank higher. The indefatigable Oviedo, who resided in St. Domingo, saw its importance, and fortunately incorporated the document in his great work, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., parte iii. lib. viii. cap. xv.—The anonymous author of the *Relacion del Primer. Descub.*, MS., was also detached on this service.

¹ According to Stevenson, this population, which is of a very mixed character, amounts, or did amount some thirty years ago [*i.e.*, about 1815], to about seven thousand. That sagacious traveler gives an animated description of the city, in which he resided some time, and which he seems to have regarded with peculiar predilection. Yet it does not hold probably the relative rank at the present day that it did in that of the Incas.—*Residence in South America*, vol. ii. p. 131.

Between the city and the imperial camp was a causeway, built in a substantial manner across the meadow land that intervened. Over this the cavalry galloped at a rapid pace, and, before they had gone a league, they came in front of the Peruvian encampment, where it spread along the gentle slope of the mountains. The lances of the warriors were fixed in the ground before their tents, and the Indian soldiers were loitering without, gazing with silent astonishment at the Christian cavalcade, as with clangor of arms and shrill blast of trumpet it swept by, like some fearful apparition, on the wings of the wind.

The party soon came to a broad but shallow stream, which, winding through the meadow, formed a defense for the Inca's position. Across it was a wooden bridge; but the cavaliers, distrusting its strength, preferred to dash through the waters, and without difficulty gained the opposite bank. A battalion of Indian warriors was drawn up under arms on the farther side of the bridge, but they offered no molestation to the Spaniards; and these latter had strict orders from Pizarro—scarcely necessary in their present circumstances—to treat the natives with courtesy. One of the Indians pointed out the quarter occupied by the Inca.

It was an open court-yard, with a light building or pleasure house in the center, having galleries running around it, and opening in the rear on a garden. The walls were covered with a shining plaster, both white and colored, and in the area before the edifice was seen a spacious tank or reservoir of stone, fed by aqueducts that supplied it with both warm and cold water. A basin of hewn stone—it may be of a more recent construction—still bears, on the spot, the name of the "Inca's bath." The court was filled with Indian nobles, dressed in gaily ornamented attire, in attendance on the monarch, and with women of the royal household. Amidst this assembly it was not difficult to distinguish the person of Atahualpa, though his dress was simpler than that of his attendants. But he wore on his head the crimson *borla* or fringe, which, surrounding the forehead, hung down as low as the eyebrow. This was the well-known badge of Peruvian sovereignty, and had been

assumed by the monarch only since the defeat of his brother Huascar. He was seated on a low stool or cushion, somewhat after the Morisco or Turkish fashion, and his nobles and principal officers stood around him, with great ceremony, holding the stations suited to their rank.

The Spaniards gazed with much interest on the prince, of whose cruelty and cunning they had heard so much, and whose valor had secured to him the possession of the empire. But his countenance exhibited neither the fierce passions nor the sagacity which had been ascribed to him; and, though in his bearing he showed a gravity and a calm consciousness of authority well becoming a king, he seemed to discharge all expression from his features, and to discover only the apathy so characteristic of the American races. On the present occasion, this must have been in part, at least, assumed. For it is impossible that the Indian prince should not have contemplated with curious interest a spectacle so strange, and, in some respects, appalling, as that of these mysterious strangers, for which no previous description could have prepared him.

Hernando Pizarro and Soto, with two or three only of their followers, slowly rode up in front of the Inca; and the former, making a respectful obeisance, but without dismounting, informed Atahualpa that he came as an ambassador from his brother, the commander of the white men, to acquaint the monarch with their arrival in his city of Caxamalca. They were the subjects of a mighty prince across the waters, and had come, he said, drawn thither by the report of his great victories, to offer their services, and to impart to him the doctrines of the true faith which they professed; and he brought an invitation from the general to Atahualpa that the latter would be pleased to visit the Spaniards in their present quarters.

To all this the Inca answered not a word; nor did he make even a sign of acknowledgment that he comprehended it; though it was translated for him by Felipillo, one of the interpreters already noticed. He remained silent, with his eyes fastened on the ground; but one of his nobles, standing by his side, answered, "It is well." This

was an embarrassing situation for the Spaniards, who seemed to be as wide from ascertaining the real disposition of the Peruvian monarch towards themselves, as when the mountains were between them.

In a courteous and respectful manner, Hernando Pizarro again broke silence by requesting the Inca to speak to them himself, and to inform them what was his pleasure. To this Atahualpa condescended to reply, while a faint smile passed over his features,—“Tell your captain that I am keeping a fast, which will end to-morrow morning. I will then visit him with my chieftains. In the meantime, let him occupy the public buildings on the square, and no other, till I come, when I will order what shall be done.”

Soto, one of the party present at this interview, as before noticed, was the best mounted and perhaps the best rider in Pizarro's troop. Observing that Atahualpa looked with some interest on the fiery steed that stood before him, champing the bit and pawing the ground with the natural impatience of a war-horse, the Spaniard gave him the rein, and, striking his iron heel into his side, dashed furiously over the plain; then, wheeling him round and round, displayed all the beautiful movements of his charger, and his own excellent horsemanship. Suddenly checking him in full career, he brought the animal almost on his haunches, so near the person of the Inca, that some of the foam that flecked his horse's sides was thrown on the royal garments. But Atahualpa maintained the same marble composure as before, though several of his soldiers, whom De Soto passed in the course, were so much disconcerted by it, that they drew back in manifest terror: an act of timidity for which they paid dearly, *if*, as the Spaniards assert, Atahualpa caused them to be put to death that same evening for betraying such unworthy weakness to the strangers.

Refreshments were now offered by the royal attendants to the Spaniards, which they declined, being unwilling to dismount. They did not refuse, however, to quaff the sparkling chicha from golden vases of extraordinary size, presented to them by the dark-eyed beauties of the harem. Taking then a respectful leave of the Inca, the

cavaliers rode back to Caxamalca, with many moody speculations on what they had seen; on the state and opulence of the Indian monarch; on the strength of his military array, their excellent appointments, and the apparent discipline in their ranks,—all arguing a much higher degree of civilization, and consequently of power, than anything they had witnessed in the lower regions of the country. As they contrasted all this with their own diminutive force, too far advanced, as they now were, for succor to reach them, they felt they had done rashly in throwing themselves into the midst of so formidable an empire, and were filled with gloomy forebodings of the result. Their comrades in the camp soon caught the infectious spirit of despondency, which was not lessened as night came on, and they beheld the watchfires of the Peruvians lighting up the sides of the mountains, and glittering in the darkness, “as thick,” says one who saw them, “as the stars of heaven.”

Yet there was one bosom in that little host which was not touched with the feeling either of fear or dejection. That was Pizarro's, who secretly rejoiced that he had now brought matters to the issue for which he had so long panted. He saw the necessity of kindling a similar feeling in his followers, or all would be lost. Without unfolding his plans, he went round among his men, beseeching them not to show faint hearts at this crisis, when they stood face to face with the foe whom they had been so long seeking. “They were to rely on themselves, and on that Providence which had carried them safe through so many fearful trials. It would not now desert them; and if numbers, however great, were on the side of their enemy, it mattered little when the arm of heaven was on theirs.” The Spanish cavalier acted under the combined influence of chivalrous adventure and religious zeal. The latter was the most effective in the hour of peril; and Pizarro, who understood well the characters he had to deal with, by presenting the enterprise as a crusade, kindled the dying embers of enthusiasm in the bosoms of his followers, and restored their faltering courage.

He then summoned a council of his officers to consider the plan of operations, or rather to propose to them the extraordinary plan

on which he had himself decided. This was to lay an ambuscade for the Inca, and take him prisoner in the face of his whole army! It was a project full of peril, bordering, as it might well seem, on desperation. But the circumstances of the Spaniards were desperate. Whichever way they turned, they were menaced by the most appalling dangers; and better was it bravely to confront the danger, than weakly to shrink from it, when there was no avenue for escape.

To fly was now too late. Whither could they fly? At the first signal of retreat, the whole army of the Inca would be upon them. Their movements would be anticipated by a foe far better acquainted with the intricacies of the sierra than themselves; the passes would be occupied, and they would be hemmed in on all sides; while the mere fact of this retrograde movement would diminish the confidence, and with it the effective strength of his own men, while it doubled that of his enemy.

Yet to remain long inactive in his present position seemed almost equally perilous. Even supposing that Atahualpa should entertain friendly feelings towards the Christians, they could not confide in the continuance of such feelings. Familiarity with the white men would soon destroy the idea of anything supernatural, or even superior, in their natures. He would feel contempt for their diminutive numbers. Their horses, their arms, and showy appointments, would be an attractive bait in the eye of the barbaric monarch, and when conscious that he had the power to crush their possessors, he would not be slow in finding a pretext for it. A sufficient one had already occurred in the high-handed measures of the Conquerors, on their march through his dominions.

But what reason had they to flatter themselves that the Inca cherished such a disposition towards them? He was a crafty and unscrupulous prince, and, if the accounts they had repeatedly received on their march were true, had ever regarded the coming of the Spaniards with an evil eye. It was scarcely possible he should do otherwise. His soft messages had only been intended to decoy them across the mountains, where, with the aid of his warriors, he might overpower them. They were entangled in the

toils which the cunning monarch had spread for them.

Their only remedy, then, was to turn the Inca's arts against himself; to take him, if possible, in his own snare. There was no time to be lost; for any day might bring back the victorious legions who had recently won his battles at the south, and thus make the odds against the Spaniards far greater than now.

Yet to encounter Atahualpa in the open field would be attended with great hazard; and even if victorious, there would be little probability that the person of the Inca, of so much importance, would fall into the hands of the victors. The invitation he had so unsuspectingly accepted, to visit them in their quarters, afforded the best means for securing this desirable prize. Nor was the enterprise so desperate, considering the great advantages afforded by the character and weapons of the invaders, and the unexpectedness of the assault. The mere circumstance of acting on a concerted plan would alone make a small number more than a match for a much larger one. But it was not necessary to admit the whole of the Indian force into the city before the attack; and the person of the Inca once secured, his followers, astounded by so strange an event, were they few or many, would have no heart for further resistance;—and with the Inca once in his power, Pizarro might dictate laws to the empire.

In this daring project of the Spanish chief, it was easy to see that he had the brilliant exploit of Cortés in his mind, when he carried off the Aztec monarch in his capital. But that was not by violence,—at least not by open violence,—and it received the sanction, compulsory though it were, of the monarch himself. It was also true that the results in that case did not altogether justify a repetition of the experiment; since the people rose in a body to sacrifice both the prince and his kidnapers. Yet this was owing, in part, at least, to the indiscretion of the latter. The experiment in the outset was perfectly successful; and could Pizarro once become master of the person of Atahualpa, he trusted to his own discretion for the rest. It would, at least, extricate him from his present critical position, by placing in his power an inestimable guarantee for his

safety; and if he could not make his own terms with the Inca at once, the arrival of reinforcements from home would, in all probability, soon enable him to do so.

Pizarro having concerted his plans for the following day, the council broke up, and the chief occupied himself with providing for the security of the camp during the night. The approaches to the town were defended; sentinels were posted at different points, especially on the summit of the fortress, where they were to observe the position of the enemy, and to report any movement that menaced the tranquillity of the night. After these precautions, the Spanish commander and his followers withdrew to their appointed quarters,—but not to sleep. At least, sleep must have come late to those who were aware of the decisive plan for the morrow; that morrow which was to be the crisis of their fate,—to crown their ambitious schemes with full success, or consign them to irretrievable ruin!

CHAPTER V

DESPERATE PLAN OF PIZARRO—ATAHUALLPA VISITS THE SPANIARDS—HORRIBLE MAS-SACRE—THE INCA A PRISONER—CONDUCT OF THE CONQUERORS—SPLENDID PROMISES OF THE INCA—DEATH OF HUASCAR

1532

THE clouds of the evening had passed away, and the sun rose bright on the following morning, the most memorable epoch in the annals of Peru. It was Saturday, the 16th of November, 1532. The loud cry of the trumpet called the Spaniards to arms with the first streak of dawn; and Pizarro, briefly acquainting them with the plan of the assault, made the necessary dispositions.

The *plaza*, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, was defended on its three sides by low ranges of buildings, consisting of spacious halls with wide doors or vomitories opening into the square. In these halls he stationed his cavalry in two divisions, one under his brother Hernando, the other under De Soto. The infantry he placed in another of the buildings, reserving twenty chosen men to act with himself as occasion might require. Pedro de Candia, with a few soldiers and the

artillery,—comprehending under this imposing name two small pieces of ordnance, called falconets,—he established in the fortress. All received orders to wait at their posts till the arrival of the Inca. After his entrance into the great square, they were still to remain under cover, withdrawn from observation, till the signal was given by the discharge of a gun, when they were to cry their war-cries, to rush out in a body from their covert, and putting the Peruvians to the sword, bear off the person of the Inca. The arrangement of the immense halls, opening on a level with the *plaza*, seemed to be contrived on purpose for a *coup de théâtre*. Pizarro particularly inculcated order and implicit obedience, that in the hurry of the moment there should be no confusion. Everything depended on their acting with concert, coolness, and celerity.

The chief next saw that their arms were in good order; and that the breastplates of their horses were garnished with bells, to add by their noise to the consternation of the Indians. Refreshments were also liberally provided, that the troops should be in condition for the conflict. These arrangements being completed, mass was performed with great solemnity by the ecclesiastics who attended the expedition: the God of battles was invoked to spread his shield over the soldiers who were fighting to extend the empire of the Cross; and all joined with enthusiasm in the chant, "*Exsurge Domine*" ("Rise, O Lord! and judge thine own cause"). One might have supposed them a company of martyrs, about to lay down their lives in defense of their faith, instead of a licentious band of adventurers, meditating one of the most atrocious acts of perfidy on the record of history! Yet, whatever were the vices of the Castilian cavalier, hypocrisy was not among the number. He felt that he was battling for the Cross, and under this conviction, exalted as it was at such a moment as this into predominant impulse, he was blind to the baser motives which mingled with the enterprise. With feelings thus kindled to a flame of religious ardor, the soldiers of Pizarro looked forward with renovated spirits to the coming conflict; and the chieftain saw with satisfaction, that in the hour of trial his men would be true to their leader and themselves.

It was late in the day before any movement was visible in the Peruvian camp, where much preparation was making to approach the Christian quarters with due state and ceremony. A message was received from Atahualpa, informing the Spanish commander that he should come with his warriors fully armed, in the same manner as the Spaniards had come to his quarters the night preceding. This was not an agreeable intimation to Pizarro, though he had no reason, probably, to expect the contrary. But to object might imply distrust, or, perhaps, disclose, in some measure, his own designs. He expressed his satisfaction, therefore, at the intelligence, assuring the Inca, that, come as he would, he would be received by him as a friend and brother.

It was noon before the Indian procession was on its march, when it was seen occupying the great causeway for a long extent. In front came a large body of attendants, whose office seemed to be to sweep away every particle of rubbish from the road. High above the crowd appeared the Inca, borne on the shoulders of his principal nobles, while others of the same rank marched by the sides of his litter, displaying such a dazzling show of ornaments on their persons, that, in the language of one of the Conquerors, "they blazed like the sun." But the greater part of the Inca's forces mustered along the fields that lined the road, and were spread over the broad meadows as far as the eye could reach.

When the royal procession had arrived within half a mile of the city, it came to a halt; and Pizarro saw, with surprise, that Atahualpa was preparing to pitch his tents, as if to encamp there. A messenger soon after arrived, informing the Spaniards that the Inca would occupy his present station the ensuing night, and enter the city on the following morning.

This intelligence greatly disturbed Pizarro, who had shared in the general impatience of his men at the tardy movements of the Peruvians. The troops had been under arms since daylight, the cavalry mounted, and the infantry at their post, waiting in silence the coming of the Inca. A profound stillness reigned throughout the town, broken only at intervals by the cry of the sentinel from the summit of the fortress, as he proclaimed

the movements of the Indian army. Nothing, Pizarro well knew, was so trying to the soldier as prolonged suspense, in a critical situation like the present; and he feared lest his ardor might evaporate, and be succeeded by that nervous feeling natural to the bravest soul at such a crisis, and which, if not fear, is near akin to it.¹ He returned an answer, therefore, to Atahualpa, deprecating his change of purpose; and adding, that he had provided everything for his entertainment, and expected him that night to sup with him.

This message turned the Inca from his purpose; and, striking his tents again, he resumed his march, first advising the general that he should leave the greater part of his warriors behind, and enter the place with only a few of them, and without arms, as he preferred to pass the night at Caxamalca. At the same time he ordered accommodations to be provided for himself and his retinue in one of the large stone buildings, called, from a serpent sculptured on the walls, "the House of the Serpent."—No tidings could have been more grateful to the Spaniards. It seemed as if the Indian monarch was eager to rush into the snare that had been spread for him! The fanatical cavalier could not fail to discern in it the immediate finger of Providence.

It is difficult to account for this wavering conduct of Atahualpa, so different from the bold and decided character which history ascribes to him. There is no doubt that he made his visit to the white men in perfect good faith; though Pizarro was probably right in conjecturing that this amiable disposition stood on a very precarious footing. There is as little reason to suppose that he distrusted the sincerity of the strangers; or he would not thus unnecessarily have proposed to visit them unarmed. His original purpose of coming with all his force was doubtless to display his royal state, and perhaps, also, to show greater respect for the Spaniards; but when he consented to accept their hospitality, and pass the night in their quarters, he was willing to dispense with a

¹ Pedro Pizarro says that an Indian spy reported to Atahualpa, that the white men were all huddled together in the great halls on the square, in much consternation, *llenos de miedo*; which was not far from the truth, adds the cavalier.—*Descub. y Conq.*, MS.

great part of his armed soldiery, and visit them in a manner that implied entire confidence in their good faith. He was too absolute in his own empire easily to suspect; and he probably could not comprehend the audacity with which a few men, like those now assembled in Caxamalca, meditated an assault on a powerful monarch in the midst of his victorious army. He did not know the character of the Spaniard.

It was not long before sunset when the van of the royal procession entered the gates of the city. First came some hundreds of the menials, employed to clear the path from every obstacle, and singing songs of triumph as they came, "which, in our ears," says one of the Conquerors, "sounded like the songs of hell!" Then followed other bodies of different ranks, and dressed in different liveries. Some wore a showy stuff, checkered white and red, like the squares of a chess-board. Others were clad in pure white, bearing hammers or maces of silver or copper; and the guards, together with those in immediate attendance on the prince, were distinguished by a rich azure livery, and a profusion of gay ornaments, while the large pendants attached to the ears indicated the Peruvian noble.

Elevated high above his vassals came the Inca Atahualpa, borne on a sedan or open litter, on which was a sort of throne made of massive gold of inestimable value. The palanquin was lined with the richly-colored plumes of tropical birds, and studded with shining plates of gold and silver. The monarch's attire was much richer than on the preceding evening. Round his neck was suspended a collar of emeralds, of uncommon size and brilliancy. His short hair was decorated with golden ornaments, and the imperial *borla* encircled his temples. The bearing of the Inca was sedate and dignified; and from his lofty station he looked down on the multitudes below with an air of composure, like one accustomed to command.

As the leading files of the procession entered the great square, larger, says an old chronicler, than any square in Spain, they opened to the right and left for the royal retinue to pass. Everything was conducted with admirable order. The monarch was permitted to traverse the *plaza* in silence, and not a Spaniard was to be seen. When some

five or six thousand of his people had entered the place, Atahualpa halted, and, turning round with an inquiring look, demanded, "Where are the strangers?"

At this moment Fray Vicente de Valverde, a Dominican friar, Pizarro's chaplain, and afterwards Bishop of Cuzco, came forward with his breviary, or as other accounts say, a Bible, in one hand, and a crucifix in the other, and, approaching the Inca, told him that he came by order of his commander to expound to him the doctrines of the true faith, for which purpose the Spaniards had come from a great distance to his country. The friar then explained, as clearly as he could, the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity, and, ascending high in his account, began with the creation of man, thence passed to his fall, to his subsequent redemption by Jesus Christ, to the crucifixion, and the ascension, when the Savior left the Apostle Peter as his Vicegerent upon earth. This power had been transmitted to the successors of the Apostle, good and wise men, who, under the title of Popes, held authority over all powers and potentates on earth. One of the last of these Popes had commissioned the Spanish emperor, the most mighty monarch in the world, to conquer and convert the natives in this western hemisphere; and his general, Francisco Pizarro, had now come to execute this important mission. The friar concluded with beseeching the Peruvian monarch to receive him kindly; to abjure the errors of his own faith, and embrace that of the Christians now proffered to him, the only one by which he could hope for salvation; and, furthermore, to acknowledge himself a tributary of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, who, in that event, would aid and protect him as his loyal vassal.

Whether Atahualpa possessed himself of every link in the curious chain of argument by which the monk connected Pizarro with St. Peter, may be doubted. It is certain, however, that he must have had very incorrect notions of the Trinity, if, as Garcilasso states, the interpreter Felipillo explained it by saying, that "the Christians believed in three Gods and one God, and that made four." But there is no doubt he perfectly comprehended that the drift of the discourse was to persuade him to resign his scepter and acknowledge the supremacy of another.

The eyes of the Indian monarch flashed fire, and his dark brow grew darker as he replied, "I will be no man's tributary! I am greater than any prince upon earth. Your emperor may be a great prince; I do not doubt it, when I see that he has sent his subjects so far across the waters; and I am willing to hold him as a brother. As for the Pope of whom you speak, he must be crazy to talk of giving away countries which do not belong to him. For my faith," he continued, "I will not change it. Your own God, as you say, was put to death by the very men whom he created. But mine," he concluded, pointing to his deity,—then alas! sinking in glory behind the mountains,—“my God still lives in the heavens, and looks down on his children.”

He then demanded of Valverde by what authority he had said these things. The friar pointed to the book which he held as his authority. Atahualpa, taking it, turned over the pages a moment, then, as the insult he had received probably flashed across his mind, he threw it down with vehemence, and exclaimed, "Tell your comrades that they shall give me an account of their doings in my land. I will not go from here till they have made me full satisfaction for all the wrongs they have committed."

The friar, greatly scandalized by the indignity offered to the sacred volume, stayed only to pick it up, and, hastening to Pizarro, informed him of what had been done, exclaiming at the same time, "Do you not see, that, while we stand here wasting our breath in talking with this dog, full of pride as he is, the fields are filling with Indians! Set on at once! I absolve you." Pizarro saw that the hour had come. He waved a white scarf in the air, the appointed signal. The fatal gun was fired from the fortress. Then springing into the square, the Spanish captain and his followers shouted the old war-cry of "St. Jago and at them!" It was answered by the battle-cry of every Spaniard in the city, as, rushing from the avenues of the great halls in which they were concealed, they poured into the *plaza*, horse and foot, each in his own dark column, and threw themselves into the midst of the Indian crowd. The latter, taken by surprise, stunned by the report of artillery and muskets, the echoes of which reverberated like thunder from the surrounding build-

ings, and blinded by the smoke which rolled in sulphurous volumes along the square, were seized with a panic. They knew not whither to fly for refuge from the coming ruin. Nobles and commoners—all were trampled down under the fierce charge of the cavalry, who dealt their blows right and left, without sparing; while their swords, flashing through the thick gloom, carried dismay into the hearts of the wretched natives, who now, for the first time, saw the horse and his rider in all their terrors. They made no resistance,—as, indeed, they had no weapons with which to make it. Every avenue to escape was closed, for the entrance to the square was choked up with the dead bodies of men who had perished in vain efforts to fly; and such was the agony of the survivors under the terrible pressure of their assailants, that a large body of Indians, by their convulsive struggles, burst through the wall of stone and dried clay which formed part of the boundary of the *plaza*! It fell, leaving an opening of more than a hundred paces, through which multitudes now found their way into the country, still hotly pursued by the cavalry, who, leaping the fallen rubbish, hung on the rear of the fugitives, striking them down in all directions.

Meanwhile the fight, or rather massacre, continued hot around the Inca, whose person was the great object of the assault. His faithful nobles, rallying about him, threw themselves in the way of the assailants, and strove, by tearing them from their saddles, or, at least, by offering their own bosoms as a mark for their vengeance, to shield their beloved master. It is said by some authorities, that they carried weapons concealed under their clothes. If so, it availed them little, as it is not pretended that they used them. But the most timid animal will defend itself when at bay. That they did not so in the present instance is proof that they had no weapons to use. Yet they still continued to force back the cavaliers, clinging to their horses with dying grasp, and, as one was cut down, another taking the place of his fallen comrade with a loyalty truly affecting.

The Indian monarch, stunned and bewildered, saw his faithful subjects falling round him without fully comprehending his situation. The litter on which he rode heaved to and fro, as the mighty press

swayed backward and forward; and he gazed on the overwhelming ruin like some forlorn mariner, who, tossed about in his bark by the furious elements, sees the lightning's flash and hears the thunder bursting around him, with the consciousness that he can do nothing to avert his fate. At length, weary with the work of destruction, the Spaniards, as the shades of evening grew deeper, felt afraid that the royal prize might, after all, elude them; and some of the cavaliers made a desperate attempt to end the affray at once by taking Atahualpa's life. But Pizarro, who was nearest his person, called out with stentorian voice, "Let no one, who values his life, strike at the Inca"; and, stretching out his arm to shield him, received a wound on the hand from one of his own men,—the only wound received by a Spaniard in the action.

The struggle now became fiercer than ever round the royal litter. It reeled more and more, and at length several of the nobles who supported it having been slain, it was overturned, and the Indian prince would have come with violence to the ground, had not his fall been broken by the efforts of Pizarro and some other of the cavaliers, who caught him in their arms. The imperial *borla* was instantly snatched from his temples by a soldier named Estete, and the unhappy monarch, strongly secured, was removed to a neighboring building, where he was carefully guarded.

All attempt at resistance now ceased. The fate of the Inca soon spread over town and country. The charm which might have held the Peruvians together was dissolved. Every man thought only of his own safety. Even the soldiery encamped on the adjacent fields took the alarm, and, learning the fatal tidings, were seen flying in every direction before their pursuers, who in the heat of triumph showed no touch of mercy. At length night, more pitiful than man, threw her friendly mantle over the fugitives, and the scattered troops of Pizarro rallied once more at the sound of the trumpet in the bloody square of Caxamalca.

The number of slain is reported, as usual, with great discrepancy. Pizarro's secretary says two thousand natives fell. A descendant of the Incas, a safer authority than Garcilasso, swells the number to ten thousand.

Truth is generally found somewhere between the extremes. The slaughter was incessant, for there was nothing to check it. That there should have been no resistance will not appear strange, when we consider the fact that the wretched victims were without arms, and that their senses must have been completely overwhelmed by the strange and appalling spectacle which burst on them so unexpectedly. "What wonder was it," said an ancient Inca to a Spaniard, who repeats it, "what wonder that our countrymen lost their wits, seeing blood run like water, and the Inca, whose person we all of us adore, seized and carried off by a handful of men?"¹ Yet though the massacre was incessant, it was short in duration. The whole time consumed by it, the brief twilight of the tropics, did not exceed half an hour; a short period indeed,—yet long enough to decide the fate of Peru, and to subvert the dynasty of the Incas.

That night Pizarro kept his engagement with the Inca, since he had Atahualpa to sup with him. The banquet was served in one of the halls facing the great square, which a few hours before had been the scene of slaughter, and the pavement of which was still encumbered with the dead bodies of the Inca's subjects. The captive monarch was placed next his conqueror. He seemed like one who did not yet fully comprehend the extent of his calamity. If he did, he showed an amazing fortitude. "It is the fortune of war," he said; and, if we may credit the Spaniards, he expressed his admiration of the adroitness with which they had contrived to entrap him in the midst of his own troops. He added, that he had been made acquainted with the progress of the white men from the hour of their landing; but that he had been led to

¹ Montesinos, *Annales*, MS., año 1532. According to Naharro, the Indians were less astounded by the wild uproar caused by the sudden assault of the Spaniards, though "this was such that it seemed as if the very heavens were falling," than by a terrible apparition which appeared in the air during the onslaught. It consisted of a woman and a child, and, at their side, a horseman, all clothed in white on a milk-white charger—doubtless the valiant St. James—who, with his sword glancing lightning, smote down the infidel host, and rendered them incapable of resistance. This miracle the good father reports on the testimony of three of his order, who were present in the action, and who received it from numberless of the natives.—*Relacion Sumaria*, MS.

undervalue their strength from the insignificance of their numbers. He had no doubt he should be easily able to overpower them on their arrival at Caxamalca, by his superior strength; and, as he wished to see for himself what manner of men they were, he had suffered them to cross the mountains, meaning to select such as he chose for his own service, and getting possession of their wonderful arms and horses, put the rest to death.¹

That such may have been Atahualpa's purpose is not improbable. It explains his conduct in not occupying the mountain passes, which afforded such strong points of defense against invasion. But that a prince so astute, as by the general testimony of the Conquerors he is represented to have been, should have made so impolitic a disclosure of his hidden motives, is not so probable. The intercourse with the Inca was carried on chiefly by means of the interpreter Felipillo, or *little Philip*, as he was called from his assumed Christian name,—a malicious youth, as it appears, who bore no good will to Atahualpa, and whose interpretations were readily admitted by the Conquerors, eager to find some pretext for their bloody reprisals.

Atahualpa, as elsewhere noticed, was, at this time, about thirty years of age. He was well made, and more robust than usual with his countrymen. His head was large, and his countenance might have been called handsome, but that his eyes, which were bloodshot, gave a fierce expression to his features. He was deliberate in speech, grave in manner, and towards his own people stern even to severity; though with the Spaniards he showed himself affable, sometimes even indulging in sallies of mirth.

Pizarro paid every attention to his royal captive, and endeavored to lighten, if he could not dispel, the gloom which, in spite of his assumed equanimity, hung over the monarch's brow. He besought him not to be cast down by his reverses, for his lot had only been that of every prince who had resisted the white men. They had come into the country to proclaim the Gospel, the re-

ligion of Jesus Christ, and it was no wonder they had prevailed, when his shield was over them. Heaven had permitted that Atahualpa's pride should be humbled, because of his hostile intentions towards the Spaniards, and the insults he had offered to the sacred volume. But he bade the Inca take courage and confide in him, for the Spaniards were a generous race, warring only against those who made war on them, and showing grace to all who submitted!—Atahualpa may have thought the massacre of that day an indifferent commentary on this vaunted lenity.

Before retiring for the night, Pizarro briefly addressed his troops on their present situation. When he had ascertained that not a man was wounded, he bade them offer up thanksgivings to Providence for so great a miracle; without its care they could never have prevailed so easily over the host of their enemies; and he trusted their lives had been reserved for still greater things. But if they would succeed, they had much to do for themselves. They were in the heart of a powerful kingdom, encompassed by foes deeply attached to their own sovereign. They must be ever on their guard, therefore, and be prepared at any hour to be roused from their slumbers by the call of the trumpet. Having then posted his sentinels, placed a strong guard over the apartment of Atahualpa, and taken all the precautions of a careful commander, Pizarro withdrew to repose; and, if he could really feel, that, in the bloody scenes of the past day, he had been fighting only the good fight of the Cross, he doubtless slept sounder than on the night preceding the seizure of the Inca.

On the following morning the first commands of the Spanish chief were to have the city cleansed of its impurities: and the prisoners, of whom there were many in the camp, were employed to remove the dead, and give them decent burial. His next care was to dispatch a body of about thirty horse to the quarters lately occupied by Atahualpa at the baths, to take possession of the spoil, and disperse the remnant of the Peruvian forces which still hung about the place.

Before noon, the party which he had detached on this service returned with a large troop of Indians, men and women, among the latter of whom were many of the wives

¹ "And in my opinion," adds the Conqueror, who reports the speech, "he had good grounds for believing he could do this, since nothing but the miraculous interposition of heaven could have saved us."—*Relacion del Primer, Descub.*, MS.

and attendants of the Inca. The Spaniards had met with no resistance, since the Peruvian warriors, though so superior in number, excellent in appointments, and consisting mostly of able-bodied young men,—for the greater part of the veteran forces were with the Inca's generals at the south,—lost all heart from the moment of their sovereign's captivity. There was no leader to take his place; for they recognized no authority but that of the Child of the Sun, and they seemed to be held by a sort of invisible charm near the place of his confinement, while they gazed with superstitious awe on the white men, who could achieve so audacious an enterprise.¹

The number of Indian prisoners was so great, that some of the Conquerors were for putting them all to death, or at least, cutting off their hands, to disable them from acts of violence, and to strike terror into their countrymen. The proposition, doubtless, came from the lowest and most ferocious of the soldiery. But that it should have been made at all, shows what materials entered into the composition of Pizarro's company. The chief rejected it at once, as no less impolitic than inhuman, and dismissed the Indians to their several homes, with the assurance that none should be harmed who did not offer resistance to the white men. A sufficient number, however, was retained to wait on the Conquerors, who were so well provided, in this respect, that the most common soldier was attended by a retinue of menials that would have better suited the establishment of a noble.

The Spaniards had found immense droves of llamas under the care of their shepherds in the neighborhood of the baths, destined for the consumption of the Court. Many of them were now suffered to roam abroad among their native mountains; though Pizarro caused a considerable number to be reserved for the use of the army. And this was

¹ From this time, says Ondegardo, the Spaniards, who hitherto had been designated as the "men with beards," *barbudos*, were called by the natives, from their fair-complexioned deity, *Viracochas*. The people of Cuzco, who bore no good-will to the captive Inca, "looked upon the strangers," says the author, "as sent by Viracocha himself." (*Rel. Prim.*, MS.) It reminds us of a superstition, or rather an amiable fancy, among the ancient Greeks, that "the stranger came from Jupiter."

no small quantity, if, as one of the Conquerors says, a hundred and fifty of the Peruvian sheep were frequently slaughtered in a day. Indeed, the Spaniards were so improvident in their destruction of these animals, that, in a few years, the superb flocks, nurtured with so much care by the Peruvian government, had almost disappeared from the land.

The party sent to pillage the Inca's pleasure house brought back a rich booty in gold and silver, consisting chiefly of plate for the royal table, which greatly astonished the Spaniards by its size and weight. These, as well as some large emeralds obtained there, together with the precious spoils found on the bodies of the Indian nobles who had perished in the massacre, were placed in safe custody, to be hereafter divided. In the city of Caxamalca, the troops also found magazines stored with goods, both cotton and woollen, far superior to any they had seen, for fineness of texture, and the skill with which the various colors were blended. They were piled from the floors to the very roofs of the buildings, and in such quantity, that after every soldier had provided himself with what he desired, it made no sensible diminution of the whole amount.

Pizarro would now gladly have directed his march on the Peruvian capital. But the distance was great, and his force was small. This must have been still further crippled by the guard required for the Inca, and the chief feared to involve himself deeper in a hostile empire so populous and powerful, with a prize so precious in his keeping. With much anxiety, therefore, he looked for reinforcements from the colonies; and he dispatched a courier to San Miguel, to inform the Spaniards there of his recent successes, and to ascertain if there had been any arrival from Panamá. Meanwhile he employed his men in making Caxamalca a more suitable residence for a Christian host, by erecting a church, or, perhaps, appropriating some Indian edifice to this use, in which mass was regularly performed by the Dominican fathers, with great solemnity. The dilapidated walls of the city were also restored in a more substantial manner than before, and every vestige was soon effaced of the hurricane that had so recently swept over it.

It was not long before Atahuallpa discovered, amidst all the show of religious zeal

in his conquerors, a lurking appetite more potent in most of their bosoms than either religion or ambition. This was the love of gold. He determined to avail himself of it to procure his own freedom. The critical posture of his affairs made it important that this should not be long delayed. His brother Huascar, ever since his defeat, had been detained as a prisoner, subject to the victor's orders. He was now at Andamarca, at no great distance from Caxamalca, and Atahualpa feared, with good reason, that, when his own imprisonment was known, Huascar would find it easy to corrupt his guards, make his escape, and put himself at the head of the contested empire, without a rival to dispute it.

In the hope, therefore, to effect his purpose by appealing to the avarice of his keepers, he one day told Pizarro, that, if he would set him free, he would engage to cover the floor of the apartment on which they stood with gold. Those present listened with an incredulous smile; and, as the Inca received no answer, he said, with some emphasis, that "he would not merely cover the floor but would fill the room with gold as high as he could reach"; and, standing on tiptoe, he stretched out his hand against the wall. All stared with amazement; while they regarded it as the insane boast of a man too eager to procure his liberty to weigh the meaning of his words. Yet Pizarro was sorely perplexed. As he had advanced into the country, much that he had seen, and all that he had heard, had confirmed the dazzling reports first received of the

riches of Peru. Atahualpa himself had given him the most glowing picture of the wealth of the capital, where the roofs of the temples were plated with gold, while the walls were hung with tapestry, and the floors inlaid with tiles of the same precious metal. There must be some foundation for all this. At all events, it was safe to accede to the Inca's proposition; since, by so doing, he could collect, at once, all the gold at his disposal, and thus prevent its being purloined or secreted by the natives. He therefore acquiesced in Atahualpa's offer, and, drawing a red line along the wall at the height which the Inca had indicated, he caused the terms of the proposal to be duly recorded by the notary. The apartment was about seventeen feet broad, by twenty-two feet long, and the line round the walls was nine feet from the floor. This space was to be filled with gold; but it was understood that the gold was not to be melted down into ingots, but to retain the original form of the articles into which it was manufactured, that the Inca might have the benefit of the space which they occupied. He further agreed to fill an adjoining room of small dimensions twice full with silver, in like manner; and he demanded two months to accomplish all this.¹

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¹ In immediately following chapters Prescott tells of the arrival of a vast amount of gold, almost sufficient literally to fulfill the Inca's promise; and then of his "trial" on the charge of exciting his people to insurrection, of his condemnation, and of his execution by strangling on 29 August, 1533.

JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN (1782-1850)

Calhoun was born near Abbeville, South Carolina, on 18 March, 1782. His parents were both children of Scotch-Irish immigrants, and they did not belong to the planter class of the Carolina lowland. The family was poor but, nevertheless—an unusual thing for upland farmers at that time—owned a few slaves, with whom Calhoun shared the hard work of the farm. He had no regular or thorough school-training, and his youth was necessarily, in his surroundings, largely barren of pleasure and friendship. When he was eighteen he began, under the direction of his brother-in-law, a clergyman, systematic preparation for college; and two years later he entered the junior class at Yale. He was graduated with highest honors in 1804, and proceeded to study the law for the next three years, spending half of that time at a law-school in Litchfield, Connecticut. He then began the practice of his profession at Abbeville, with, it is said, no great success, and perhaps with the intention already formed of making that the stepping-stone to a political career. At all events he was soon in the state legislature, and in 1811 he was elected a member of the national House of Representatives. In the same year he married Floride Calhoun, a cousin, whose social position was of the best and whose fortune was sufficient to enable him to devote himself entirely to the public service. He soon made himself felt in the House of Representatives, as a true statesman with broadly national ideals, and as a man singularly powerful in rigorous argument. With the election of Monroe to the presidency, he became Secretary of War (1817), and held the post with high distinction for eight years. He was a man of completely unassailable integrity, but, like too many other men of the age, he was eager to become President. It is clear that this ambition was a factor in his actions throughout the remainder of his life, but it is not clear that it remained wholly or even primarily a selfish aim, nor how much, at various times, it influenced him.

In 1824 he was elected Vice President under John Quincy Adams, and in 1828 he was again chosen for the same office under Andrew Jackson. There was an understanding that he was to succeed Jackson, but the latter presently wanted to succeed himself and, too, Calhoun's enemies succeeded in causing a break between the two men. At the same time a proposal further to "protect" northern manufacturers through tariffs led Calhoun to conclude that a fundamental and irreconcilable difference of interest between the North and the South had come to exist, and he did not hesitate to identify himself with the interest of his own state. While he was still Vice President he directed South Carolina's courageous and dangerous protest against what was felt to be federal tyranny, and in so doing announced the consideration which was at the basis of all his later advocacy of states' rights. The dissimilarity between various sections of the country, and consequent "contrariety of interests," he said, "are so great that they cannot be subjected to the unchecked will of a majority of the whole without defeating the great end of government, without which it is a curse—justice."

Shortly before the close of his second term as Vice President Calhoun resigned that office to represent his state in the Senate, and there he remained—acting, however, as Secretary of State in the middle 1840's, under Tyler—until his death on 31 March, 1850. During this whole period he lost no occasion of reiterating with massive insistence his doctrine of states' rights, and no occasion of bringing about, or of attempting to bring about, action in accordance with that doctrine. It had its origin, as has been intimated, in an economic situation for which he could find no other solution;—the agricultural South depended for its life upon free trade, while the manufacturing North equally needed "protection." But this economic situation of the South was inseparably connected with slavery, which made also for fundamental social and moral differences with the North. Thus it was that Calhoun came to be the leading defender of slavery. His defense of this form of property was not only sincere, but took the bold form of a claim that the "peculiar institution" was positively valuable. "I hold that in the present state of civilization, where two races of different origin, and distinguished by color, and other physical differences, as well as intellectual, are brought together, the relation now existing in the slaveholding states between the two is, instead of an evil, a good—a positive good." In this the world has judged him wrong. But it is now more than time for a realization that Calhoun was not merely the South's great defender of slavery. As a working statesman devoted to the interests of his own people, he inevitably found the starting-point of his political thought in concrete affairs, but he was also a profound theorist who tried to rest his conclusions on deep-lying general

principles. Stimulated by the passing problems of his age, he carried back his scrutiny of political organization to its origin in human nature itself, and discussed a fundamental problem of sovereignty which was not settled for ever by our Civil War, which is not now settled, and which cannot be permanently settled. In so doing he anticipated political thought of more recent times and wrote much which is now and, as far as can be seen, permanently pertinent. His two treatises, *A Disquisition on Government* and *A Discourse on the Constitution and Government of the United States* (both written in the last years of his life and published posthumously, 1851) are, indeed, classics of the world's political literature, and are notable for their sober and lucid style and for their rigorous logic as well as for their profundity of insight and their vigorous handling of perennial problems.

A DISQUISITION ON GOVERNMENT¹

IN order to have a clear and just conception of the nature and object of government, it is indispensable to understand correctly what that constitution or law of our nature is, in which government originates; or, to express it more fully and accurately,—that law, without which government would not, and with which it must, necessarily exist. Without this, it is as impossible to lay any solid foundation for the science of government as it would be to lay one for that of astronomy without a like understanding of that constitution or law of the material world, according to which the several bodies composing the solar system mutually act on each other, and by which they are kept in their respective spheres. The first question, accordingly, to be considered is: What is that constitution or law of our nature, without which government would not exist, and with which its existence is necessary?

In considering this, I assume, as an incontestable fact, that man is so constituted as to be a social being. His inclinations and wants, physical and moral, irresistibly impel him to associate with his kind; and he has, accordingly, never been found, in any age or country, in any state other than the social. In no other, indeed, could he exist; and in no other, —were it possible for him to exist, —could he attain to a full development of his moral and intellectual faculties, or raise himself, in the scale of being, much above the level of the brute creation.

I next assume, also, as a fact not less incontestable, that, while man is so constituted as to make the social state necessary to his existence and the full development of his

faculties, this state itself cannot exist without government. The assumption rests on universal experience. In no age or country has any society or community ever been found, whether enlightened or savage, without government of some description.

Having assumed these, as unquestionable phenomena of our nature, I shall, without further remark, proceed to the investigation of the primary and important question,—What is that constitution of our nature, which, while it impels man to associate with his kind, renders it impossible for society to exist without government?

The answer will be found in the fact (not less incontestable than either of the others), that, while man is created for the social state, and is accordingly so formed as to feel what affects others, as well as what affects himself, he is, at the same time, so constituted as to feel more intensely what affects him directly than what affects him indirectly through others; or, to express it differently, he is so constituted that his direct or individual affections are stronger than his sympathetic or social feelings. I intentionally avoid the expression, *selfish* feelings, as applicable to the former; because, as commonly used, it implies an unusual excess of the individual over the social feelings, in the person to whom it is applied; and, consequently, something depraved and vicious. My object is to exclude such inference, and to restrict the inquiry exclusively to facts in their bearings on the subject under consideration, viewed as mere phenomena appertaining to our nature, constituted as it is; and which are as unquestionable as is that of gravitation, or any other phenomenon of the material world.

In asserting that our individual are stronger than our social feelings, it is not intended to deny that there are instances, growing out of peculiar relations,—as that of a mother and her infant,—or resulting

¹ Reprinted from Vol. I of Calhoun's *Works*, edited in 6 vols. by R. K. Crallé, 1851. This is the earliest edition of the *Disquisition*.

from the force of education and habit over peculiar constitutions, in which the latter have overpowered the former; but these instances are few, and always regarded as something extraordinary. The deep impression they make, whenever they occur, is the strongest proof that they are regarded as exceptions to some general and well understood law of our nature; just as some of the minor powers of the material world are apparently to gravitation.

I might go farther, and assert this to be a phenomenon, not of our nature only, but of all animated existence, throughout its entire range, so far as our knowledge extends. It would, indeed, seem to be essentially connected with the great law of self-preservation which pervades all that feels, from man down to the lowest and most insignificant reptile or insect. In none is it stronger than in man. His social feelings may, indeed, in a state of safety and abundance, combined with high intellectual and moral culture, acquire great expansion and force; but not so great as to overpower this all-pervading and essential law of animated existence.

But that constitution of our nature which makes us feel more intensely what affects us directly than what affects us indirectly through others, necessarily leads to conflict between individuals. Each, in consequence, has a greater regard for his own safety or happiness than for the safety or happiness of others; and, where these come in opposition, is ready to sacrifice the interests of others to his own. And, hence, the tendency to a universal state of conflict between individual and individual; accompanied by the connected passions of suspicion, jealousy, anger, and revenge,—followed by insolence, fraud, and cruelty;—and, if not prevented by some controlling power, ending in a state of universal discord and confusion, destructive of the social state and the ends for which it is ordained. This controlling power, wherever vested, or by whomsoever exercised, is GOVERNMENT.

It follows, then, that man is so constituted that government is necessary to the existence of society, and society to his existence, and the perfection of his faculties. It follows, also, that government has its origin in this twofold constitution of his nature; the sympathetic or social feelings constituting the

remote, and the individual or direct, the proximate cause.

If man had been differently constituted in either particular;—if, instead of being social in his nature, he had been created without sympathy for his kind, and independent of others for his safety and existence; or if, on the other hand, he had been so created, as to feel more intensely what affected others than what affected himself (if that were possible), or, even, had this supposed interest been equal,—it is manifest that, in either case, there would have been no necessity for government, and that none would ever have existed. But, although society and government are thus intimately connected with and dependent on each other,—of the two society is the greater. It is the first in the order of things, and in the dignity of its object; that of society being primary,—to preserve and perfect our race; and that of government secondary and subordinate, to preserve and perfect society. Both are, however, necessary to the existence and well-being of our race, and equally of Divine ordination.

I have said,—if it were possible for man to be so constituted, as to feel what affects others more strongly than what affects himself, or even as strongly,—because, it may be well doubted, whether the stronger feeling or affection of individuals for themselves, combined with a feebler and subordinate feeling or affection for others, is not, in beings of limited reason and faculties, a constitution necessary to their preservation and existence. If reversed,—if their feelings and affections were stronger for others than for themselves, or even as strong, the necessary result would seem to be that all individuality would be lost; and boundless and remediless disorder and confusion would ensue. For each, at the same moment, intensely participating in all the conflicting emotions of those around him, would, of course, forget himself and all that concerned him immediately, in his officious intermeddling with the affairs of all others; which, from his limited reason and faculties, he could neither properly understand nor manage. Such a state of things would, as far as we can see, lead to endless disorder and confusion, not less destructive to our race than a state of anarchy. It would, besides, be remediless,—for government would be impossible; or, if it could by possibility exist,

its object would be reversed. Selfishness would have to be encouraged and benevolence discouraged. Individuals would have to be encouraged, by rewards, to become more selfish, and deterred, by punishments, from being too benevolent; and this, too, by a government administered by those who, on the supposition, would have the greatest aversion for selfishness and the highest admiration for benevolence.

To the Infinite Being, the Creator of all, belongs exclusively the care and superintendence of the whole. He, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, has allotted to every class of animated beings its condition and appropriate functions; and has endowed each with feelings, instincts, capacities, and faculties, best adapted to its allotted condition. To man he has assigned the social and political state, as best adapted to develop the great capacities and faculties, intellectual and moral, with which he has endowed him; and has, accordingly, constituted him so as not only to impel him into the social state, but to make government necessary for his preservation and well-being.

But government, although intended to protect and preserve society, has itself a strong tendency to disorder and abuse of its powers, as all experience and almost every page of history testify. The cause is to be found in the same constitution of our nature which makes government indispensable. The powers which it is necessary for government to possess, in order to repress violence and preserve order, cannot execute themselves. They must be administered by men in whom, like others, the individual are stronger than the social feelings. And hence, the powers vested in them to prevent injustice and oppression on the part of others, will, if left unguarded, be by them converted into instruments to oppress the rest of the community. That, by which this is prevented, by whatever name called, is what is meant by CONSTITUTION, in its most comprehensive sense, when applied to GOVERNMENT.

Having its origin in the same principle of our nature, *constitution* stands to *government*, as *government* stands to *society*; and, as the end for which society is ordained would be defeated without government, so that for which government is ordained would, in a great measure, be defeated without consti-

tution. But they differ in this striking particular. There is no difficulty in forming government. It is not even a matter of choice, whether there shall be one or not. Like breathing, it is not permitted to depend on our volition. Necessity will force it on all communities in some one form or another. Very different is the case as to constitution. Instead of a matter of necessity, it is one of the most difficult tasks imposed on man to form a constitution worthy of the name; while, to form a perfect one,—one that would completely counteract the tendency of government to oppression and abuse, and hold it strictly to the great ends for which it is ordained,—has thus far exceeded human wisdom, and possibly ever will. From this, another striking difference results. Constitution is the contrivance of man, while government is of Divine ordination. Man is left to perfect what the wisdom of the Infinite ordained as necessary to preserve the race.

With these remarks, I proceed to the consideration of the important and difficult question: How is this tendency of government to be counteracted? Or, to express it more fully,—How can those who are invested with the powers of government be prevented from employing them as the means of aggrandizing themselves, instead of using them to protect and preserve society? It cannot be done by instituting a higher power to control the government, and those who administer it. This would be but to change the seat of authority, and to make this higher power, in reality, the government; with the same tendency, on the part of those who might control its powers, to pervert them into instruments of aggrandizement. Nor can it be done by limiting the powers of government, so as to make it too feeble to be made an instrument of abuse; for, passing by the difficulty of so limiting its powers, without creating a power higher than the government itself to enforce the observance of the limitations, it is a sufficient objection that it would, if practicable, defeat the end for which government is ordained, by making it too feeble to protect and preserve society. The powers necessary for this purpose will ever prove sufficient to aggrandize those who control it, at the expense of the rest of the community.

In estimating what amount of power would be requisite to secure the objects of government, we must take into the reckoning what would be necessary to defend the community against external, as well as internal, dangers. Government must be able to repel assaults from abroad, as well as to repress violence and disorders within. It must not be overlooked that the human race is not comprehended in a single society or community. The limited reason and faculties of man, the great diversity of language, customs, pursuits, situation and complexion, and the difficulty of intercourse, with various other causes, have, by their operation, formed a great many separate communities, acting independently of each other. Between these there is the same tendency to conflict,—and from the same constitution of our nature,—as between men individually; and even stronger,—because the sympathetic or social feelings are not so strong between different communities, as between individuals of the same community. So powerful, indeed, is this tendency that it has led to almost incessant wars between contiguous communities for plunder and conquest, or to avenge injuries, real or supposed.

So long as this state of things continues, exigencies will occur in which the entire powers and resources of the community will be needed to defend its existence. When this is at stake, every other consideration must yield to it. Self-preservation is the supreme law, as well with communities as individuals. And hence the danger of withholding from government the full command of the power and resources of the state; and the great difficulty of limiting its powers consistently with the protection and preservation of the community. And hence the question recurs,—By what means can government, without being divested of the full command of the resources of the community, be prevented from abusing its powers?

The question involves difficulties which, from the earliest ages, wise and good men have attempted to overcome;—but hitherto with but partial success. For this purpose many devices have been resorted to, suited to the various stages of intelligence and civilization through which our race has passed, and to the different forms of government to which they have been applied. The

aid of superstition, ceremonies, education, religion, organic arrangements, both of the government and the community, has been, from time to time, appealed to. Some of the most remarkable of these devices, whether regarded in reference to their wisdom and the skill displayed in their application, or to the permanency of their effects, are to be found in the early dawn of civilization;—in the institutions of the Egyptians, the Hindoos, the Chinese, and the Jews. The only materials which that early age afforded for the construction of constitutions, when intelligence was so partially diffused, were applied with consummate wisdom and skill. To their successful application may be fairly traced the subsequent advance of our race in civilization and intelligence, of which we now enjoy the benefits. For, without a constitution,—something to counteract the strong tendency of government to disorder and abuse, and to give stability to political institutions,—there can be little progress or permanent improvement.

In answering the important question under consideration, it is not necessary to enter into an examination of the various contrivances adopted by these celebrated governments to counteract this tendency to disorder and abuse, nor to undertake to treat of constitution in its most comprehensive sense. What I propose is far more limited,—to explain on what principles government must be formed, in order to resist, by its own interior structure,—or, to use a single term, *organism*,—the tendency to abuse of power. This structure, or organism, is what is meant by constitution, in its strict and more usual sense; and it is this which distinguishes what are called constitutional governments from absolute. It is in this strict and more usual sense that I propose to use the term hereafter.

How government, then, must be constructed, in order to counteract, through its organism, this tendency on the part of those who make and execute the laws to oppress those subject to their operation, is the next question which claims attention.

There is but one way in which this can possibly be done; and that is by such an organism as will furnish the ruled with the means of resisting successfully this tendency on the part of the rulers to oppression and

abuse. Power can only be resisted by power,—and tendency by tendency. Those who exercise power and those subject to its exercise,—the rulers and the ruled,—stand in antagonistic relations to each other. The same constitution of our nature which leads rulers to oppress the ruled,—regardless of the object for which government is ordained,—will, with equal strength, lead the ruled to resist, when possessed of the means of making peaceable and effective resistance. Such an organism, then, as will furnish the means by which resistance may be systematically and peaceably made on the part of the ruled, to oppression and abuse of power on the part of the rulers, is the first and indispensable step towards *forming* a constitutional government. And as this can only be effected by or through the right of suffrage,—the right on the part of the ruled to choose their rulers at proper intervals, and to hold them thereby responsible for their conduct;—the responsibility of the rulers to the ruled, through the right of suffrage, is the indispensable and primary principle in the *foundation* of a constitutional government. When this right is properly guarded, and the people sufficiently enlightened to understand their own rights and the interests of the community, and duly to appreciate the motives and conduct of those appointed to make and execute the laws, it is all-sufficient to give to those who elect, effective control over those they have elected.

I call the right of suffrage the indispensable and primary principle; for it would be a great and dangerous mistake to suppose, as many do, that it is, of itself, sufficient to form constitutional governments. To this erroneous opinion may be traced one of the causes why so few attempts to form constitutional governments have succeeded; and why, of the few which have, so small a number have had durable existence. It has led, not only to mistakes in the attempts to form such governments, but to their overthrow, when they have, by some good fortune, been correctly formed. So far from being, of itself, sufficient,—however well guarded it might be, and however enlightened the people,—it would, unaided by other provisions, leave the government as absolute as it would be in the hands of irresponsible rulers; and with a tendency, at least as strong, towards

oppression and abuse of its powers; as I shall next proceed to explain.

The right of suffrage, of itself, can do no more than give complete control to those who elect over the conduct of those they have elected. In doing this, it accomplishes all it possibly can accomplish. This is its aim,—and when this is attained, its end is fulfilled. It can do no more, however enlightened the people, or however widely extended or well guarded the right may be. The sum total, then, of its effects, when most successful, is to make those elected the true and faithful representatives of those who elected them,—instead of irresponsible rulers,—as they would be without it; and thus, by converting it into an agency, and the rulers into agents, to divest government of all claims to sovereignty, and to retain it unimpaired to the community. But it is manifest that the right of suffrage, in making these changes, transfers, in reality, the actual control over the government from those who make and execute the laws to the body of the community; and, thereby, places the powers of the government as fully in the mass of the community as they would be if they, in fact, had assembled, made, and executed the laws themselves, without the intervention of representatives or agents. The more perfectly it does this, the more perfectly it accomplishes its ends; but in doing so, it only changes the seat of authority, without counteracting, in the least, the tendency of the government to oppression and abuse of its powers.

If the whole community had the same interests, so that the interests of each and every portion would be so affected by the action of the government that the laws which oppressed or impoverished one portion would necessarily oppress and impoverish all others,—or the reverse,—then the right of suffrage, of itself, would be all-sufficient to counteract the tendency of the government to oppression and abuse of its powers; and, of course, would form, of itself, a perfect constitutional government. The interest of all being the same, by supposition, as far as the action of the government was concerned, all would have like interests as to what laws should be made, and how they should be executed. All strife and struggle would cease as to who should be elected to make and

execute them. The only question would be, who was most fit; who the wisest and most capable of understanding the common interest of the whole. This decided, the election would pass off quietly, and without party discord; as no one portion could advance its own peculiar interest without regard to the rest, by electing a favorite candidate.

But such is not the case. On the contrary, nothing is more difficult than to equalize the action of the government in reference to the various and diversified interests of the community; and nothing more easy than to pervert its powers into instruments to aggrandize and enrich one or more interests by oppressing and impoverishing the others; and this, too, under the operation of laws couched in general terms;—and which, on their face, appear fair and equal. Nor is this the case in some particular communities only. It is so in all; the small and the great,—the poor and the rich,—irrespective of pursuits, productions, or degrees of civilization;—with, however, this difference, that the more extensive and populous the country, the more diversified the condition and pursuits of its population, and the richer, more luxurious, and dissimilar the people, the more difficult is it to equalize the action of the government,—and the more easy for one portion of the community to pervert its powers to oppress, and plunder the other.

Such being the case, it necessarily results that the right of suffrage, by placing the control of the government in the community must, from the same constitution of our nature which makes government necessary to preserve society, lead to conflict among its different interests,—each striving to obtain possession of its powers, as the means of protecting itself against the others;—or of advancing its respective interests, regardless of the interests of others. For this purpose, a struggle will take place between the various interests to obtain a majority, in order to control the government. If no one interest be strong enough, of itself, to obtain it, a combination will be formed between those whose interests are most alike;—each conceding something to the others, until a sufficient number is obtained to make a majority. The process may be slow, and much time may be required before a compact, organized majority can thus be formed; but

formed it will be in time, even without preconcert or design, by the sure workings of that principle or constitution of our nature in which government itself originates. When once formed, the community will be divided into two great parties,—a major and minor,—between which there will be incessant struggles on the one side to retain, and on the other to obtain the majority,—and, thereby, the control of the government and the advantages it confers.

So deeply seated, indeed, is this tendency to conflict between the different interests or portions of the community, that it would result from the action of the government itself, even though it were possible to find a community, where the people were all of the same pursuits, placed in the same condition of life, and in every respect so situated as to be without inequality of condition or diversity of interests. The advantages of possessing the control of the powers of the government, and, thereby, of its honors and emoluments, are, of themselves, exclusive of all other considerations, ample to divide even such a community into two great hostile parties.

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As, then, the right of suffrage, without some other provision, cannot counteract this tendency of government, the next question for consideration is:—What is that other provision? This demands the most serious consideration; for, of all the questions embraced in the science of government, it involves a principle the most important and the least understood; and when understood, the most difficult of application in practice. It is, indeed, emphatically, that principle which *makes* the constitution, in its strict and limited sense.

From what has been said, it is manifest that this provision must be of a character calculated to prevent any one interest, or combination of interests, from using the powers of government to aggrandize itself at the expense of the others. Here lies the evil; and just in proportion as it shall prevent, or fail to prevent it, in the same degree it will effect, or fail to effect the end intended to be accomplished. There is but one certain mode in which this result can be secured; and that is by the adoption of some restriction or limitation, which shall so effectually

prevent any one interest, or combination of interests, from obtaining the exclusive control of the government as to render hopeless all attempts directed to that end. There is, again, but one mode in which this can be effected; and that is by taking the sense of each interest or portion of the community, which may be unequally and injuriously affected by the action of the government, separately, through its own majority, or in some other way by which its voice may be fairly expressed; and to require the consent of each interest, either to put or to keep the government in action. This, too, can be accomplished only in one way,—and that is by such an organism of the government,—and, if necessary for the purpose, of the community also,—as will, by dividing and distributing the powers of government, give to each division or interest, through its appropriate organ, either a concurrent voice in making and executing the laws, or a veto on their execution. It is only by such an organism that the assent of each can be made necessary to put the government in motion; or the power made effectual to arrest its action, when put in motion;—and it is only by the one or the other that the different interests, orders, classes, or portions, into which the community may be divided, can be protected, and all conflict and struggle between them prevented,—by rendering it impossible to put or to keep it in action, without the concurrent consent of all.

Such an organism as this, combined with the right of suffrage, constitutes, in fact, the elements of constitutional government. The one, by rendering those who make and execute the laws responsible to those on whom they operate, prevents the rulers from oppressing the ruled; and the other, by making it impossible for any one interest or combination of interests or class, or order, or portion of the community, to obtain exclusive control, prevents any one of them from oppressing the other. It is clear that oppression and abuse of power must come, if at all, from the one or the other quarter. From no other can they come. It follows that the two, suffrage and proper organism combined, are sufficient to counteract the tendency of government to oppression and abuse of power; and to restrict it to the fulfillment of the great ends for which it is ordained.

In coming to this conclusion, I have assumed the organism to be perfect, and the different interests, portions, or classes of the community to be sufficiently enlightened to understand its character and object, and to exercise, with due intelligence, the right of suffrage. To the extent that either may be defective, to the same extent the government would fall short of fulfilling its end. But this does not impeach the truth of the principles on which it rests. In reducing them to proper form, in applying them to practical uses, all elementary principles are liable to difficulties; but they are not, on this account, the less true, or valuable. Where the organism is perfect, every interest will be truly and fully represented, and of course the whole community must be so. It may be difficult, or even impossible, to make a perfect organism,—but, although this be true, yet even when, instead of the sense of each and of all, it takes that of a few great and prominent interests only, it would still, in a great measure, if not altogether, fulfill the end intended by a constitution. For, in such case, it would require so large a portion of the community, compared with the whole, to concur, or acquiesce in the action of the government, that the number to be plundered would be too few, and the number to be aggrandized too many, to afford adequate motives to oppression and the abuse of its powers. Indeed, however imperfect the organism, it must have more or less effect in diminishing such tendency.

It may be readily inferred, from what has been stated, that the effect of organism is neither to supersede nor diminish the importance of the right of suffrage; but to aid and perfect it. The object of the latter is to collect the sense of the community. The more fully and perfectly it accomplishes this, the more fully and perfectly it fulfills its end. But the most it can do, of itself, is to collect the sense of the greater number; that is, of the stronger interests, or combination of interests; and to assume this to be the sense of the community. It is only when aided by a proper organism that it can collect the sense of the entire community,—of each and all its interests; of each, through its appropriate organ, and of the whole, through all of them united. This would truly be the sense of the entire community; for, what-

ever diversity each interest might have within itself, as all would have the same interest in reference to the action of the government, the individuals composing each would be fully and truly represented by its own majority or appropriate organ, regarded in reference to the other interests. In brief, every individual of every interest might trust, with confidence, its majority or appropriate organ, against that of every other interest.

It results, from what has been said, that there are two different modes in which the sense of the community may be taken; one, simply by the right of suffrage, unaided; the other, by the right through a proper organism. Each collects the sense of the majority. But one regards numbers only, and considers the whole community as a unit, having but one common interest throughout; and collects the sense of the greater number of the whole, as that of the community. The other, on the contrary, regards interests as well as numbers;—considering the community as made up of different and conflicting interests, as far as the action of the government is concerned; and takes the sense of each, through its majority or appropriate organ, and the united sense of all, as the sense of the entire community. The former of these I shall call the numerical, or absolute majority; and the latter, the concurrent, or constitutional majority. I call it the constitutional majority, because it is an essential element in every constitutional government,—be its form what it may. So great is the difference, politically speaking, between the two majorities, that they cannot be confounded without leading to great and fatal errors; and yet the distinction between them has been so entirely overlooked that, when the term *majority* is used in political discussions, it is applied exclusively to designate the numerical,—as if there were no other. Until this distinction is recognized, and better understood, there will continue to be great liability to error in properly constructing constitutional governments, especially of the popular form, and of preserving them when properly constructed. Until then, the latter will have a strong tendency to slide, first, into the government of the numerical majority, and, finally, into absolute government of some other form. To

show that such must be the case, and at the same time to mark more strongly the difference between the two, in order to guard against the danger of overlooking it, I propose to consider the subject more at length.

The first and leading error which naturally arises from overlooking the distinction referred to, is to confound the numerical majority with the people; and this so completely as to regard them as identical. This is a consequence that necessarily results from considering the numerical as the only majority. All admit that a popular government, or democracy, is the government of the people; for the terms imply this. A perfect government of the kind would be one which would embrace the consent of every citizen or member of the community; but as this is impracticable, in the opinion of those who regard the numerical as the only majority, and who can perceive no other way by which the sense of the people can be taken,—they are compelled to adopt this as the only true basis of popular government, in contradistinction to governments of the aristocratical or monarchical form. Being thus constrained, they are, in the next place, forced to regard the numerical majority, as, in effect, the entire people; that is, the greater part as the whole; and the government of the greater part as the government of the whole. It is thus the two come to be confounded, and a part made identical with the whole. And it is thus, also, that all the rights, powers, and immunities of the whole people come to be attributed to the numerical majority; and, among others, the supreme, sovereign authority of establishing and abolishing governments at pleasure.

This radical error, the consequence of confounding the two, and of regarding the numerical as the only majority, has contributed more than any other cause to prevent the formation of popular constitutional governments,—and to destroy them even when they have been formed. It leads to the conclusion that, in their formation and establishment, nothing more is necessary than the right of suffrage,—and the allotment to each division of the community a representation in the government, in proportion to numbers. If the numerical majority were really the people; and if to take its sense truly were to take the sense of the people

truly, a government so constituted would be a true and perfect model of a popular constitutional government; and every departure from it would detract from its excellence. But, as such is not the case,—as the numerical majority, instead of being the people, is only a portion of them,—such a government, instead of being a true and perfect model of the people's government, that is, a people self-governed, is but the government of a part, over a part,—the major over the minor portion.

But this misconception of the true elements of constitutional government does not stop here. It leads to others equally false and fatal, in reference to the best means of preserving and perpetuating them, when, from some fortunate combination of circumstances, they are correctly formed. For they who fall into these errors regard the restrictions which organism imposes on the will of the numerical majority as restrictions on the will of the people, and, therefore, as not only useless, but wrongful and mischievous. And hence they endeavor to destroy organism, under the delusive hope of making government more democratic.

Such are some of the consequences of confounding the two, and of regarding the numerical as the only majority. And in this may be found the reason why so few popular governments have been properly constructed, and why, of these few, so small a number have proved durable. Such must continue to be the result, so long as these errors continue to be prevalent.

There is another error, of a kindred character, whose influence contributes much to the same results: I refer to the prevalent opinion that a written constitution, containing suitable restrictions on the powers of government, is sufficient, of itself, without the aid of any organism,—except such as is necessary to separate its several departments and render them independent of each other, —to counteract the tendency of the numerical majority to oppression and the abuse of power.

A written constitution certainly has many and considerable advantages; but it is a great mistake to suppose that the mere insertion of provisions to restrict and limit the powers of the government, without investing those for whose protection they are inserted with

the means of enforcing their observance, will be sufficient to prevent the major and dominant party from abusing its powers. Being the party in possession of the government, they will, from the same constitution of man which makes government necessary to protect society, be in favor of the powers granted by the constitution, and opposed to the restrictions intended to limit them. As the major and dominant party, they will have no need of these restrictions for their protection. The ballot-box, of itself, would be ample protection to them. Needing no other, they would come, in time, to regard these limitations as unnecessary and improper restraints;—and endeavor to elude them, with the view of increasing their power and influence.

The minor, or weaker party, on the contrary, would take the opposite direction;—and regard them as essential to their protection against the dominant party. And, hence, they would endeavor to defend and enlarge the restrictions, and to limit and contract the powers. But where there are no means by which they could compel the major party to observe the restrictions, the only resort left them would be a strict construction of the constitution,—that is, a construction which would confine these powers to the narrowest limits which the meaning of the words used in the grant would admit.

To this the major party would oppose a liberal construction,—one which would give to the words of the grant the broadest meaning of which they were susceptible. It would then be construction against construction; the one to contract, and the other to enlarge the powers of the government to the utmost. But of what possible avail could the strict construction of the minor party be, against the liberal interpretation of the major, when the one would have all the powers of the government to carry its construction into effect,—and the other be deprived of all means of enforcing its construction? In a contest so unequal, the result would not be doubtful. The party in favor of the restrictions would be overpowered. At first, they might command some respect, and do something to stay the march of encroachment; but they would, in the progress of the contest, be regarded as mere abstractionists; and, indeed, deservedly, if they should in-

dulge the folly of supposing that the party in possession of the ballot-box and the physical force of the country could be successfully resisted by an appeal to reason, truth, justice, or the obligations imposed by the constitution. For when these, of themselves, shall exert sufficient influence to stay the hand of power, then government will be no longer necessary to protect society, nor constitutions needed to prevent government from abusing its powers. The end of the contest would be the subversion of the constitution, either by the undermining process of construction,—where its meaning would admit of possible doubt,—or by substituting in practice what is called party-usage, in place of its provisions;—or, finally, when no other contrivance would subserve the purpose, by openly and boldly setting them aside. By the one or the other, the restrictions would ultimately be annulled, and the government be converted into one of unlimited powers.

Nor would the division of government into separate, and, as it regards each other, independent departments, prevent this result. Such a division may do much to facilitate its operations, and to secure to its administration greater caution and deliberation; but as each and all the departments,—and, of course, the entire government,—would be under the control of the numerical majority, it is too clear to require explanation, that a mere distribution of its powers among its agents or representatives could do little or nothing to counteract its tendency to oppression and abuse of power. To effect this, it would be necessary to go one step further, and make the several departments the organs of the distinct interests or portions of the community; and to clothe each with a negative on the others. But the effect of this would be to change the government from the numerical into the concurrent majority.

Having now explained the reasons why it is so difficult to form and preserve popular constitutional government, so long as the distinction between the two majorities is overlooked, and the opinion prevails that a written constitution, with suitable restrictions and a proper division of its powers, is sufficient to counteract the tendency of the numerical majority to the abuse of its power,—I shall next proceed to explain,

more fully, why the concurrent majority is an indispensable element in forming constitutional governments; and why the numerical majority, of itself, must, in all cases, make governments absolute.

The necessary consequence of taking the sense of the community by the concurrent majority is, as has been explained, to give to each interest or portion of the community a negative on the others. It is this mutual negative among its various conflicting interests which invests each with the power of protecting itself;—and places the rights and safety of each, where only they can be securely placed, under its own guardianship. Without this there can be no systematic, peaceful, or effective resistance to the natural tendency of each to come into conflict with the others; and without this there can be no constitution. It is this negative power,—the power of preventing or arresting the action of the government,—be it called by what term it may,—veto, interposition, nullification, check, or balance of power,—which, in fact, forms the constitution. They are all but different names for the negative power. In all its forms, and under all its names, it results from the concurrent majority. Without this there can be no negative; and, without a negative, no constitution. The assertion is true in reference to all constitutional governments, be their forms what they may. It is, indeed, the negative power which makes the constitution,—and the positive which makes the government. The one is the power of acting;—and the other the power of preventing or arresting action. The two, combined, make constitutional governments.

But, as there can be no constitution without the negative power, and no negative power without the concurrent majority;—it follows, necessarily, that where the numerical majority has the sole control of the government there can be no constitution; as constitution implies limitation or restriction,—and, of course, is inconsistent with the idea of sole or exclusive power. And hence, the numerical, unmixed with the concurrent majority, necessarily forms, in all cases, absolute government.

It is, indeed, the single, or *one power*, which excludes the negative, and constitutes absolute government; and not the *number*

in whom the power is vested. The numerical majority is as truly a *single power*, and excludes the negative as completely as the absolute government of one, or of the few. The former is as much the absolute government of the democratic, or popular form, as the latter of the monarchical or aristocratical. It has, accordingly, in common with them, the same tendency to oppression and abuse of power.

Constitutional governments, of whatever form, are, indeed, much more similar to each other, in their structure and character, than they are, respectively, to the absolute governments, even of their own class. All constitutional governments, of whatever class they may be, take the sense of the community by its parts,—each through its appropriate organ; and regard the sense of all its parts, as the sense of the whole. They all rest on the right of suffrage, and the responsibility of rulers, directly or indirectly. On the contrary, all absolute governments, of whatever form, concentrate power in one uncontrolled and irresponsible individual or body, whose will is regarded as the sense of the community. And, hence, the great and broad distinction between governments is,—not that of the one, the few, or the many,—but of the constitutional and the absolute.

From this there results another distinction, which, although secondary in its character, very strongly marks the difference between these forms of government. I refer to their respective conservative principle;—that is, the principle by which they are upheld and preserved. This principle, in constitutional governments, is *compromise*;—and in absolute governments, is *force*;—as will be next explained.

It has been already shown that the same constitution of man which leads those who govern to oppress the governed,—if not prevented,—will, with equal force and certainty, lead the latter to resist oppression, when possessed of the means of doing so peaceably and successfully. But absolute governments, of all forms, exclude all other means of resistance to their authority than that of force; and, of course, leave no other alternative to the governed but to acquiesce in oppression, however great it may be, or to resort to force to put down the government. But the dread of such a resort must

necessarily lead the government to prepare to meet force in order to protect itself; and hence, of necessity, force becomes the conservative principle of all such governments.

On the contrary, the government of the concurrent majority, where the organism is perfect, excludes the possibility of oppression, by giving to each interest, or portion, or order,—where there are established classes,—the means of protecting itself, by its negative, against all measures calculated to advance the peculiar interests of others at its expense. Its effect, then, is to cause the different interests, portions, or orders,—as the case may be,—to desist from attempting to adopt any measure calculated to promote the prosperity of one, or more, by sacrificing that of others; and thus to force them to unite in such measures only as would promote the prosperity of all, as the only means to prevent the suspension of the action of the government;—and, thereby, to avoid anarchy, the greatest of all evils. It is by means of such authorized and effectual resistance that oppression is prevented, and the necessity of resorting to force superseded, in governments of the concurrent majority;—and, hence, compromise, instead of force, becomes their conservative principle.

It would, perhaps, be more strictly correct to trace the conservative principle of constitutional governments to the necessity which compels the different interests, or portions, or orders, to compromise,—as the only way to promote their respective prosperity, and to avoid anarchy,—rather than to the compromise itself. No necessity can be more urgent and imperious than that of avoiding anarchy. It is the same as that which makes government indispensable to preserve society; and is not less imperative than that which compels obedience to superior force. Traced to this source, the voice of a people,—uttered under the necessity of avoiding the greatest of calamities, through the organs of a government so constructed as to suppress the expression of all partial and selfish interests, and to give a full and faithful utterance to the sense of the whole community, in reference to its common welfare,—may, without impiety, be called *the voice of God*. To call any other so, would be impious.

In stating that force is the conservative principle of absolute, and compromise of

constitutional governments, I have assumed both to be perfect in their kind; but not without bearing in mind that few or none, in fact, have ever been so absolute as not to be under some restraint, and none so perfectly organized as to represent fully and perfectly the voice of the whole community. Such being the case, all must, in practice, depart more or less from the principles by which they are respectively upheld and preserved; and depend more or less for support, on force, or compromise, as the absolute or the constitutional form predominates in their respective organizations.

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In another particular, governments of the concurrent majority have greatly the advantage. I allude to the difference in their respective tendency, in reference to dividing or uniting the community. That of the concurrent, as has been shown, is to unite the community, let its interests be ever so diversified or opposed; while that of the numerical is to divide it into two conflicting portions, let its interests be, naturally, ever so united and identified.

That the numerical majority will divide the community, let it be ever so homogeneous, into two great parties, which will be engaged in perpetual struggles to obtain the control of the government, has already been established. The great importance of the object at stake must necessarily form strong party attachments and party antipathies;—attachments on the part of the members of each to their respective parties, through whose efforts they hope to accomplish an object dear to all; and antipathies to the opposite party, as presenting the only obstacle to success.

In order to have a just conception of their force, it must be taken into consideration that the object to be won or lost appeals to the strongest passions of the human heart,—avarice, ambition, and rivalry. It is not, then, wonderful that a form of government which periodically stakes all its honors and emoluments as prizes to be contended for, should divide the community into two great hostile parties; or that party attachments, in the progress of the strife, should become so strong among the members of each respectively as to absorb almost every feeling of our nature, both social and individual; or

that their mutual antipathies should be carried to such an excess as to destroy, almost entirely, all sympathy between them, and to substitute in its place the strongest aversion. Nor is it surprising that, under their joint influence, the community should cease to be the common center of attachment, or that each party should find that center only in itself. It is thus, that, in such governments, devotion to party becomes stronger than devotion to country;—the promotion of the interests of party more important than the promotion of the common good of the whole, and its triumph and ascendancy, objects of far greater solicitude than the safety and prosperity of the community. It is thus, also, that the numerical majority, by regarding the community as a unit, and having, as such, the same interests throughout all its parts, must by its necessary operation divide it into two hostile parts, waging, under the forms of law, incessant hostilities against each other.

The concurrent majority, on the other hand, tends to unite the most opposite and conflicting interests, and to blend the whole in one common attachment to the country. By giving to each interest, or portion, the power of self-protection, all strife and struggle between them for ascendancy is prevented; and, thereby, not only every feeling calculated to weaken the attachment to the whole is suppressed, but the individual and the social feelings are made to unite in one common devotion to country. Each sees and feels that it can best promote its own prosperity by conciliating the good-will, and promoting the prosperity of the others. And, hence, there will be diffused throughout the whole community kind feelings between its different portions; and, instead of antipathy, a rivalry amongst them to promote the interests of each other, as far as this can be done consistently with the interest of all. Under the combined influence of these causes, the interests of each would be merged in the common interests of the whole; and thus the community would become a unit, by becoming the common center of attachment of all its parts. And hence, instead of faction, strife, and struggle for party ascendancy, there would be patriotism, nationality, harmony, and a struggle only for supremacy in promoting the common good of the whole.

But the difference in their operation, in this respect, would not end here. Its effects would be as great in a moral, as I have attempted to show they would be in a political point of view. Indeed, public and private morals are so nearly allied, that it would be difficult for it to be otherwise. That which corrupts and debases the community, politically, must also corrupt and debase it morally. The same cause, which, in governments of the numerical majority, gives to party attachments and antipathies such force as to place party triumph and ascendancy above the safety and prosperity of the community, will just as certainly give them sufficient force to overpower all regard for truth, justice, sincerity, and moral obligations of every description. It is, accordingly, found that, in the violent strifes between parties for the high and glittering prize of governmental honors and emoluments, falsehood, injustice, fraud, artifice, slander, and breach of faith, are freely resorted to, as legitimate weapons;—followed by all their corrupting and debasing influences.

In the government of the concurrent majority, on the contrary, the same cause which prevents such strife, as the means of obtaining power, and which makes it the interest of each portion to conciliate and promote the interests of the others, would exert a powerful influence towards purifying and elevating the character of the government and the people, morally as well as politically. The means of acquiring power,—or, more correctly, influence,—in such governments, would be the reverse. Instead of the vices, by which it is acquired in that of the numerical majority, the opposite virtues—truth, justice, integrity, fidelity, and all others, by which respect and confidence are inspired, would be the most certain and effectual means of acquiring it.

Nor would the good effects resulting thence be confined to those who take an active part in political affairs. They would extend to the whole community. For, of all the causes which contribute to form the character of a people, those by which power, influence, and standing in the government are most certainly and readily obtained, are, by far, the most powerful. These are the objects most eagerly sought of all others by the talented and aspiring; and the possession of which

commands the greatest respect and admiration. But, just in proportion to this respect and admiration will be their appreciation by those whose energy, intellect, and position in society are calculated to exert the greatest influence in forming the character of a people. If knowledge, wisdom, patriotism, and virtue be the most certain means of acquiring them, they will be most highly appreciated and assiduously cultivated; and this would cause them to become prominent traits in the character of the people. But if, on the contrary, cunning, fraud, treachery, and party devotion be the most certain, they will be the most highly prized, and become marked features in their character. So powerful, indeed, is the operation of the concurrent majority, in this respect, that, if it were possible for a corrupt and degenerate community to establish and maintain a well-organized government of the kind, it would of itself purify and regenerate them; while, on the other hand, a government based wholly on the numerical majority, would just as certainly corrupt and debase the most patriotic and virtuous people. So great is their difference in this respect, that, just as the one or the other element predominates in the construction of any government, in the same proportion will the character of the government and the people rise or sink in the scale of patriotism and virtue. Neither religion nor education can counteract the strong tendency of the numerical majority to corrupt and debase the people.

If the two be compared, in reference to the ends for which government is ordained, the superiority of the government of the concurrent majority will not be less striking. These, as has been stated, are twofold: to protect, and to perfect society. But to preserve society, it is necessary to guard the community against injustice, violence, and anarchy within, and against attacks from without. If it fail in either, it would fail in the primary end of government, and would not deserve the name.

To perfect society, it is necessary to develop the faculties, intellectual and moral, with which man is endowed. But the main-spring to their development, and, through this, to progress, improvement, and civilization, with all their blessings, is the desire of individuals to better their condition. For

this purpose, liberty and security are indispensable. Liberty leaves each free to pursue the course he may deem best to promote his interest and happiness, as far as it may be compatible with the primary end for which government is ordained;—while security gives assurance to each, that he shall not be deprived of the fruits of his exertions to better his condition. These combined, give to this desire the strongest impulse of which it is susceptible. For to extend liberty beyond the limits assigned would be to weaken the government and to render it incompetent to fulfill its primary end,—the protection of society against dangers, internal and external. The effect of this would be, insecurity; and, of insecurity,—to weaken the impulse of individuals to better their condition, and thereby retard progress and improvement. On the other hand, to extend the powers of the government, so as to contract the sphere assigned to liberty, would have the same effect, by disabling individuals in their efforts to better their condition.

Herein is to be found the principle which assigns to power and liberty their proper spheres, and reconciles each to the other under all circumstances. For, if power be necessary to secure to liberty the fruits of its exertions, liberty, in turn, repays power with interest, by increased population, wealth, and other advantages, which progress and improvement bestow on the community. By thus assigning to each its appropriate sphere, all conflicts between them cease; and each is made to co-operate with and assist the other, in fulfilling the great ends for which government is ordained.

But the principle, applied to different communities, will assign to them different limits. It will assign a larger sphere to power and a more contracted one to liberty, or the reverse, according to circumstances. To the former, there must ever be allotted, under all circumstances, a sphere sufficiently large to protect the community against danger from without and violence and anarchy within. The residuum belongs to liberty. More cannot be safely or rightly allotted to it.

But some communities require a far greater amount of power than others to protect them against anarchy and external dangers; and, of course, the sphere of liberty in such must

be proportionally contracted. The causes calculated to enlarge the one and contract the other are numerous and various. Some are physical;—such as open and exposed frontiers, surrounded by powerful and hostile neighbors. Others are moral;—such as the different degrees of intelligence, patriotism, and virtue among the mass of the community, and their experience and proficiency in the art of self-government. Of these, the moral are, by far, the most influential. A community may possess all the necessary moral qualifications in so high a degree as to be capable of self-government under the most adverse circumstances; while, on the other hand, another may be so sunk in ignorance and vice as to be incapable of forming a conception of liberty, or of living, even when most favored by circumstances, under any other than an absolute and despotic government.

The principle, in all communities, according to these numerous and various causes, assigns to power and liberty their proper spheres. To allow to liberty, in any case, a sphere of action more extended than this assigns, would lead to anarchy; and this, probably, in the end, to a contraction instead of an enlargement of its sphere. Liberty, then, when forced on a people unfit for it, would, instead of a blessing, be a curse; as it would, in its reaction, lead directly to anarchy,—the greatest of all curses. No people, indeed, can long enjoy more liberty than that to which their situation and advanced intelligence and morals fairly entitle them. If more than this be allowed, they must soon fall into confusion and disorder,—to be followed, if not by anarchy and despotism, by a change to a form of government more simple and absolute; and, therefore, better suited to their condition. And hence, although it may be true that a people may not have as much liberty as they are fairly entitled to, and are capable of enjoying,—yet the reverse is unquestionably true,—that no people can long possess more than they are fairly entitled to.

Liberty, indeed, though among the greatest of blessings, is not so great as that of protection; inasmuch as the end of the former is the progress and improvement of the race, while that of the latter is its preservation and perpetuation. And hence, when the

two come into conflict, liberty must, and ever ought to, yield to protection; as the existence of the race is of greater moment than its improvement.

It follows, from what has been stated, that it is a great and dangerous error to suppose that all people are equally entitled to liberty. It is a reward to be earned, not a blessing to be gratuitously lavished on all alike;—a reward reserved for the intelligent, the patriotic, the virtuous and deserving;—and not a boon to be bestowed on a people too ignorant, degraded, and vicious to be capable either of appreciating or of enjoying it. Nor is it any disparagement to liberty that such is, and ought to be, the case. On the contrary, its greatest praise, its proudest distinction is, that an all-wise Providence has reserved it as the noblest and highest reward for the development of our faculties, moral and intellectual. A reward more appropriate than liberty could not be conferred on the deserving;—nor a punishment inflicted on the undeserving more just, than to be subject to lawless and despotic rule. This dispensation seems to be the result of some fixed law;—and every effort to disturb or defeat it, by attempting to elevate a people in the scale of liberty above the point to which they are entitled to rise, must ever prove abortive, and end in disappointment. The progress of a people rising from a lower to a higher point in the scale of liberty is necessarily slow;—and by attempting to precipitate, we either retard, or permanently defeat it.

There is another error, not less great and dangerous, usually associated with the one which has just been considered. I refer to the opinion that liberty and equality are so intimately united that liberty cannot be perfect without perfect equality.

That they are united to a certain extent,—and that equality of citizens, in the eyes of the law, is essential to liberty in a popular government, is conceded. But to go further, and make equality of *condition* essential to liberty, would be to destroy both liberty and progress. The reason is that inequality of condition, while it is a necessary consequence of liberty, is, at the same time, indispensable to progress. In order to understand why this is so, it is necessary to bear in mind that the mainspring to progress is the desire

of individuals to better their condition; and that the strongest impulse which can be given to it is to leave individuals free to exert themselves in the manner they may deem best for that purpose, as far at least as it can be done consistently with the ends for which government is ordained,—and to secure to all the fruits of their exertions. Now, as individuals differ greatly from each other, in intelligence, sagacity, energy, perseverance, skill, habits of industry and economy, physical power, position and opportunity,—the necessary effect of leaving all free to exert themselves to better their condition must be a corresponding inequality between those who may possess these qualities and advantages in a high degree, and those who may be deficient in them. The only means by which this result can be prevented are, either to impose such restrictions on the exertions of those who may possess them in a high degree as will place them on a level with those who do not; or to deprive them of the fruits of their exertions. But to impose such restrictions on them would be destructive of liberty,—while to deprive them of the fruits of their exertions would be to destroy the desire of bettering their condition. It is, indeed, this inequality of condition between the front and rear ranks, in the march of progress, which gives so strong an impulse to the former to maintain their position, and to the latter to press forward into their files. This gives to progress its greatest impulse. To force the front rank back to the rear, or attempt to push forward the rear into line with the front, by the interposition of the government, would put an end to the impulse, and effectually arrest the march of progress.

These great and dangerous errors have their origin in the prevalent opinion that all men are born free and equal;—than which nothing can be more unfounded and false. It rests upon the assumption of a fact which is contrary to universal observation, in whatever light it may be regarded. It is, indeed, difficult to explain how an opinion so destitute of all sound reason ever could have been so extensively entertained, unless we regard it as being confounded with another, which has some semblance of truth;—but which, when properly understood, is not less false and dangerous. I refer to the assertion

that all men are equal in the state of nature; meaning, by a state of nature, a state of individuality, supposed to have existed prior to the social and political state; and in which men lived apart and independent of each other. If such a state ever did exist, all men would have been, indeed, free and equal in it; that is, free to do as they pleased, and exempt from the authority or control of others—as, by supposition, it existed anterior to society and government. But such a state is purely hypothetical. It never did, nor can exist; as it is inconsistent with the preservation and perpetuation of the race. It is, therefore, a great misnomer to call it *the state of nature*. Instead of being the natural state of man, it is, of all conceivable

states, the most opposed to his nature—most repugnant to his feelings, and most incompatible with his wants. His natural state is the social and political—the one for which his Creator made him, and the only one in which he can preserve and perfect his race. As, then, there never was such a state as the so-called state of nature, and never can be, it follows that men, instead of being born in it, are born in the social and political state; and of course, instead of being born free and equal, are born subject, not only to parental authority, but to the laws and institutions of the country where born, and under whose protection they draw their first breath.

* * * * *

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803-1882)

Emerson was born in Boston on 25 May, 1803. His ancestry was not only Puritan but clerical; yet, as an indication how greatly conditions had changed since the seventeenth century, it may be mentioned that his father tended towards Unitarian views and that he at one time hoped to found a church which should have no written expression of creed or covenant. In 1811 this father died, leaving Mrs. Emerson with five young boys to bring up and with practically no money. Her task was the more difficult because she thought first of her sons' educations, and only afterwards of food and clothes; nevertheless, somehow she managed, the sons loyally helping as far as they could. Probably the influence she exerted can best be seen from a letter she wrote to Waldo just after he had entered Harvard, in answer to one in which he had described his new living quarters. "Everything respecting you is doubtless interesting to me," she said, "but your domestic arrangements the least of anything, as these make no part of the man or the character any further than he learns humility from his dependence on such trifles as *convenient accommodations* for his happiness. You, I trust, will rise superior to these little things, for though small indeed, they consume much time that might be appropriated to better purpose and far nobler pursuits." Emerson was to live very completely in the spirit of this counsel, but this did not immediately become apparent. He was graduated from Harvard in 1821, not at the head, but near the middle of his class, and was chosen class-poet only after seven others had declined the honor. There followed several years of school-teaching, and preparation for entrance into the ministry—he was "approved to preach" in 1826—and a trip to the South necessitated by ill-health. In 1829 he was called to the Second Church of Boston, as the junior colleague of Henry Ware, and in the same year he married Miss Ellen Louisa Tucker, of Concord, New Hampshire.

Emerson was now happily settled for his life's work, or so it seemed, for a brief space. But early in 1831 his wife died from tuberculosis, and a year and a half afterwards he was compelled to resign his pastorate. His reasons for this step were characteristic. For some time he had felt an increasing difficulty about prayer; his position required him to pray at certain stated times, but he could not pray sincerely unless he was in prayerful mood, and he could not command such a mood at will. He had likewise come to feel a difficulty about the Lord's Supper, regarding it as an oppressive symbolic rite which he could no longer administer without doing violence to his own convictions. He explained this to his congregation, concluding: "I have no hostility to this institution: I am only stating my want of sympathy with it. . . . That is the end of my opposition, that I am not interested in it." And when his congregation refused to follow him in this, he resigned. It was the courageous act of a sincere man, bound at any cost to preserve his integrity; or, to put it a little differently, it was the act of an individualist, sure that his most sacred duties were to himself.

The condition of Emerson's health in the fall of 1832 made travel advisable, and on Christmas day of this year he sailed for Malta. Thence he went to Sicily, Naples, Rome, Florence, and through France to England. He was chiefly anxious to encounter a great mind. He sought out Landor, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Carlyle—all of them men whose writings had impressed him—but was disappointed. Carlyle disappointed him least, and this was the beginning of a long friendship between the two. But, on the whole, he came home (October, 1833) feeling that the work he had to do must be done independently and could best be done here. That work, which he now faced with renewed strength and hopefulness, was nothing less than the formulation of a new religion. It is enough to say here, concerning it, that it was to be a religion without forms, a religion setting free the inmost spirit of man, not binding the spirit down to the service of alien material symbols. It should be realized that Emerson was not alone in his great aspiration. In America as well as in Europe in the early nineteenth century there were men almost everywhere who felt that the fabric of society was rotten, that the old religion was helpless and well-nigh lifeless, and that, if men were to be saved from the death-like corruption of a materialized civilization given over wholly to the chase after wealth, salvation could come only through a new religion. But Emerson felt, as many others did not, that the new religion could not be forced, that it could be no sudden discovery, that it must be a growth, and that he must advance towards it through the gateway of ever-increasing self-knowledge.

In later years, indeed, he concluded that in modern life the school—aiding the individual to discover, to trust, and to develop his best self through the study of history, literature, and philosophy

—had come to take the place which religion had formerly occupied; but apparently when he returned from Europe he still hoped that he might find some congregation which would be willing to venture with him on a path of religious discovery which, whatever else it might come to mean, would certainly mean the disappearance of creeds and churches. For a time he preached here and there, where opportunity offered; but it was not long until he was forced to recognize that he could never find in the pulpit the freedom he needed. At the same time he began to give a few lectures, and so made the discovery that people would listen with gladness, even with enthusiasm, to whatever he might say from the lecture-platform, even though those same people would not tolerate him in their churches. It was a period when the lyceum, with its courses of lectures, was spreading throughout the country, as if providentially to give Emerson a means of untrammelled communication with people everywhere, and this determined the outward manner of his life from about 1835 until he became too old to endure the hardships of an extended winter lecture-tour. The fees from lectures for many years were small, but he had inherited a small income from his wife, and the total was usually sufficient for his needs, while he kept the independence which for him was an essential condition of existence. In 1834 he wrote in his *Journal*: "Henceforth I design not to utter any speech, poem, or book that is not entirely and peculiarly my work. I will say at public lectures and the like those things which I have meditated for their own sake and not for the first time with a view to that occasion." To this resolve he was true. And his method of giving form to his message was as much his own as its substance. Throughout his life he kept in his *Journal* a daily record of his thoughts and reading. As this material accumulated, he indexed it, gathering it together under general heads which served as the titles of his lectures. Thus his lectures were made, sometimes with the result that they had no very obvious coherency. And his essays were in turn compressed from the lectures.

In 1834 Emerson determined to take up his abode in Concord. At first he had quarters in the Old Manse, where Hawthorne later lived and wrote. In the following year he bought a house at the edge of the village, and married Miss Lydia Jackson, of Plymouth. And here he and his wife lived happily during the rest of their days. In the winters he was away, delivering his lectures. In the winter of 1847-1848 he made a second visit to England, and lectured there. In 1872 the Concord house burned, but was at once rebuilt, while Emerson made a third journey abroad. During his last years his mind gradually weakened, and he died at Concord on 27 April, 1882. His position as the greatest of American men of letters is uncontested and does not need to be insisted upon or justified here. Mr. John Jay Chapman's essay on him (reprinted in the later portion of this work) serves as an excellent commentary, and sufficiently explains Emerson's perennial value and significance.

THE RHODORA:

ON BEING ASKED, WHENCE IS THE FLOWER?¹

IN May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,

I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the redbird come his plumes to cool,

And court the flower that cheapens his array.

¹ The selections from Emerson reprinted in this volume are used by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

Emerson collected the greater number of his poems in two volumes: *Poems*, 1847, and *May-Day and Other Pieces*, 1867. In 1876 he also published a volume entitled *Selected Poems*, which contained six previously uncollected. *The Rhodora* was written in 1834 and first published in the *Western Messenger*, 1839.

Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky, 10
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for
 seeing,

Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there
 brought you.

EACH AND ALL²

LITTLE thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked
 clown
Of thee from the hill-top looking down;
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,
Far-heard, lows not thine ear to charm;
The sexton, tolling his bell at noon,
Deems not that great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,
Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine height;

² Probably written in 1834 or soon thereafter; first published in *Western Messenger*, 1839.

Nor knowest thou what argument
 Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent. 10
 All are needed by each one;
 Nothing is fair or good alone.
 I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
 Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
 I brought him home, in his nest, at even;
 He sings the song, but it cheers not now,
 For I did not bring home the river and sky;—
 He sang to my ear,—they sang to my eye.
 The delicate shells lay on the shore;
 The bubbles of the latest wave 20
 Fresh pearls to their enamel gave,
 And the bellowing of the savage sea
 Greeted their safe escape to me.
 I wiped away the weeds and foam,
 I fetched my sea-born treasures home;
 But the poor, unsightly, noisome things
 Had left their beauty on the shore
 With the sun and the sand and the wild up-
 roar.

The lover watched his graceful maid,
 As 'mid the virgin train she strayed, 30
 Nor knew her beauty's best attire
 Was woven still by the snow-white choir.
 At last she came to his hermitage,
 Like the bird from the woodlands to the
 cage;—

The gay enchantment was undone,
 A gentle wife, but fairy none.
 Then I said, "I covet truth;
 Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat;
 I leave it behind with the games of youth:"—
 As I spoke, beneath my feet 40
 The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
 Running over the club-moss burrs;
 I inhaled the violet's breath;
 Around me stood the oaks and firs;
 Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;
 Over me soared the eternal sky,
 Full of light and of deity;
 Again I saw, again I heard,
 The rolling river, the morning bird;—
 Beauty through my senses stole; 50
 I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

THE APOLOGY¹

THINK me not unkind and rude
 That I walk alone in grove and glen;
 I go to the god of the wood
 To fetch his word to men.

Tax not my sloth that I
 Fold my arms beside the brook;
 Each cloud that floated in the sky
 Writes a letter in my book.

Chide me not, laborious band,
 For the idle flowers I brought; 10
 Every aster in my hand
 Goes home loaded with a thought.

There was never mystery
 But 'tis figured in the flowers;
 Was never secret history
 But birds tell it in the bowers.

One harvest from thy field
 Homeward brought the oxen strong;
 A second crop thine acres yield,
 Which I gather in a song. 20

CONCORD HYMN²

SUNG AT THE COMPLETION OF THE BATTLE
 MONUMENT, JULY 4, 1837

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
 Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
 Here once the embattled farmers stood
 And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
 Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
 And Time the ruined bridge has swept
 Down the dark stream which seaward
 creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
 We set to-day a votive stone; 10
 That memory may their deed redeem,
 When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
 To die, and leave their children free,
 Bid Time and Nature gently spare
 The shaft we raise to them and thee.

¹ Written probably not long before the day on
 which it was sung.

¹ Written in 1834 or soon thereafter.

THE HUMBLE-BEE¹

BURLY, dozing humble-bee,
Where thou art is clime for me.
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines;
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines.

10

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!
Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June;
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And with softness touching all,
Tints the human countenance
With a color of romance,
And infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,
Thou, in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

20

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap and daffodels,

40

¹ Written probably in 1837. In the *Journal* for this year there is entered under 9 May: "Yesterday in the woods I followed the fine humble-bee with rhymes and fancies fine."

Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.

50

Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
When the fierce northwestern blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

60

THE PROBLEM²

I LIKE a church; I like a cowl;
I love a prophet of the soul;
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles;
Yet not for all his faith can see
Would I that cowl'd churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,
Which I could not on me endure?

30

Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought; 10
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe:
The hand that rounded Peter's dome
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome 20
Wrought in a sad sincerity:
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew;—
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

² Written on 10 November, 1839; first published in the *Dial*, 1840.

Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's
nest

Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds
To her old leaves new myriads? 30
Such and so grew these holy piles,
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone,
And Morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbeyes bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For out of Thought's interior sphere
These wonders rose to upper air; 40
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within. 50
Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sibyls told,
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind. 60
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.
I know what say the fathers wise,—
The Book itself before me lies,
Old *Chrysostom*, best *Augustine*,
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,
Taylor, the Shakespeare of divines.¹
His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowlèd portrait dear; 70
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.

THE SPHINX²

THE Sphinx is drowsy,
Her wings are furled:
Her ear is heavy,
She broods on the world.
"Who'll tell me my secret,
The ages have kept?—
I awaited the seer
While they slumbered and slept:—

"The fate of the man-child,
The meaning of man; 10
Known fruit of the unknown;
Dædalian plan;
Out of sleeping a waking,
Out of waking a sleep;
Life death overtaking;
Deep underneath deep?

"Erect as a sunbeam,
Upspringeth the palm;
The elephant browses,
Undaunted and calm; 20
In beautiful motion
The thrush plies his wings;
Kind leaves of his covert,
Your silence he sings.

"The waves, unashamed,
In difference sweet,
Play glad with the breezes,
Old playfellows meet;
The journeying atoms,
Primordial wholes, 30
Firmly draw, firmly drive,
By their animate poles.

"Sea, earth, air, sound, silence,
Plant, quadruped, bird,
By one music enchanted,
One deity stirred,—
Each the other adorning,
Accompany still;
Night veileth the morning,
The vapor the hill. 40

¹ Jeremy Taylor (1613–1667), Bishop of Down and Connor. In a letter of 8 January, 1761, William Mason wrote to Thomas Gray: "After all, why will you not read Jeremy Taylor? Take my word and more for it, he is the Shakespeare of divines."

² First published in the *Dial*, January, 1841. Emerson's statement of the meaning of this poem (quoted by E. W. Emerson) is as follows: "The perception of identity unites all things and explains one by another, and the most rare and strange is equally facile as the most common. But if the mind live only in particulars, and see only differences (wanting the power to see the whole—all in each), then the world addresses to this mind a question it cannot answer, and each new fact tears it in pieces, and it is vanquished by the distracting variety."

"The babe by its mother
Lies bathed in joy;
Glide its hours uncounted,—
The sun is its toy;
Shines the peace of all being,
Without cloud, in its eyes;
And the sum of the world
In soft miniature lies.

"But man crouches and blushes,
Absconds and conceals;
He creepeth and peepeth,
He palter and steals;
Infirm, melancholy,
Jealous glancing around,
An oaf, an accomplice,
He poisons the ground.

"Out spoke the great mother,
Beholding his fear;—
At the sound of her accents
Cold shuddered the sphere:—
'Who has drugged my boy's cup?
Who has mixed my boy's bread?
Who, with sadness and madness,
Has turned my child's head?'"

I heard a poet answer
Aloud and cheerfully,
"Say on, sweet Sphinx! thy dirges
Are pleasant songs to me.
Deep love lieth under
These pictures of time;
They fade in the light of
Their meaning sublime.

"The fiend that man harries
Is love of the Best;
Yawns the pit of the Dragon,
Lit by rays from the Blest.
The Lethe of Nature
Can't trance him again,
Whose soul sees the perfect,
Which his eyes seek in vain.

"To vision profounder,
Man's spirit must dive;
His aye-rolling orb
At no goal will arrive;
The heavens that now draw him
With sweetness untold,
Once found,—for new heavens
He spurneth the old.

"Pride ruined the angels,
Their shame them restores;
Lurks the joy that is sweetest
In stings of remorse.
Have I a lover
Who is noble and free?—
I would he were nobler
Than to love me.

50 "Eterne alternation
Now follows, now flies;
And under pain, pleasure,—
Under pleasure, pain lies. 100
Love works at the center,
Heart-heaving away;
Forth speed the strong pulses
To the borders of day.

60 "Dull Sphinx, Jove keep thy five wits;
Thy sight is growing blear;
Rue, myrrh and cummin for the Sphinx,
Her muddy eyes to clear!"
The old Sphinx bit her thick lip,—
Said, "Who taught thee me to name? 110
I am thy spirit, yoke-fellow;
Of thine eye I am eyebeam.

"Thou art the unanswered question;
Couldst see thy proper eye,
Always it asketh, asketh;
And each answer is a lie.
So take thy quest through nature,
It through thousand natures ply;
Ask on, thou clothed eternity;
Time is the false reply." 120

80 Uprose the merry Sphinx,
And crouched no more in stone;
She melted into purple cloud,
She silvered in the moon;
She spired into a yellow flame;
She flowered in blossoms red;
She flowed into a foaming wave:
She stood Monadnoc's head.

Thorough a thousand voices
Spoke the universal dame;
"Who telleth one of my meanings
Is master of all I am." 130

THE SNOW-STORM¹

ANNOUNCED by all the trumpets of the sky,
 Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
 Seems nowhere to alight; the whited air
 Hides hills and woods; the river, and the
 heaven,
 And veils the farm-house at the garden's
 end.
 The sled and traveler stopped, the courier's
 feet
 Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates
 sit
 Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
 In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry. 10
 Out of an unseen quarry evermore
 Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
 Curves his white bastions with projected
 roof
 Round every windward stake, or tree, or
 door.
 Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
 So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he
 For number or proportion. Mockingly,
 On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
 A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
 Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall, 20
 Maugre the farmer's sighs; and at the gate
 A tapering turret overtops the work.
 And when his hours are numbered, and the
 world
 Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
 Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished
 Art
 To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
 Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
 The frolic architecture of the snow.

FABLE²

THE mountain and the squirrel
 Had a quarrel,
 And the former called the latter "Little
 Prig";
 Bun replied,
 "You are doubtless very big;
 But all sorts of things and weather
 Must be taken in together,
 To make up a year
 And a sphere.

¹ First published in the *Dial*, January, 1841.

² Probably written in 1845.

And I think it no disgrace 10
 To occupy my place.
 If I'm not so large as you,
 You are not so small as I,
 And not half so spry.
 I'll not deny you make
 A very pretty squirrel track;
 Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
 If I cannot carry forests on my back,
 Neither can you crack a nut."

FORBEARANCE³

HAST thou named all the birds without a gun?
 Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?
 At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
 Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?
 And loved so well a high behavior,
 In man or maid, that thou from speech re-
 frained,
 Nobility more nobly to repay?
 O, be my friend, and teach me to be thine!

TO J. W.⁴

SET not thy foot on graves;
 Hear what wine and roses say;
 The mountain chase, the summer waves,
 The crowded town, thy feet may well delay.

Set not thy foot on graves;
 Nor seek to unwind the shroud
 Which charitable Time
 And Nature have allowed
 To wrap the errors of a sage sublime.

Set not thy foot on graves; 10
 Care not to strip the dead
 Of his sad ornament,
 His myrrh, and wine, and rings,

His sheet of lead,
 And trophies buried:
 Go, get them where he earned them when
 alive;
 As resolutely dig or dive.

Life is too short to waste
 In critic peep or cynic bark,
 Quarrel or reprimand: 20
 'Twill soon be dark;
 Up! mind thine own aim, and
 God speed the mark!

³ First published in the *Dial*, January, 1842.

⁴ *I.e.*, John Weiss, clergyman and writer, who, Emerson thought, dwelt too much on Goethe's failings.
 First published in 1847.

DESTINY¹

THAT you are fair or wise is vain,
 Or strong, or rich, or generous;
 You must have also the untaught strain
 That sheds beauty on a rose.
 There's a melody born of melody,
 Which melts the world into a sea.
 Toil could never compass it;
 Art its height could never hit;
 It came never out of wit;
 But a music music-born 10
 Well may Jove and Juno scorn.
 Thy beauty, if it lack the fire
 Which drives me mad with sweet desire,
 What boots it? What the soldier's mail,
 Unless he conquer and prevail?
 What all the goods thy pride which lift,
 If thou pine for another's gift?
 Alas! that one is born in blight,
 Victim of perpetual slight:
 When thou lookest on his face, 20
 Thy heart saith, "Brother, go thy ways!
 None shall ask thee what thou doest,
 Or care a rush for what thou knowest,
 Or listen when thou repliest,
 Or remember where thou liest,
 Or how thy supper is sodden";
 And another is born
 To make the sun forgotten.
 Surely he carries a talisman
 Under his tongue; 30
 Broad his shoulders are and strong;
 And his eye is scornful,
 Threatening, and young.
 I hold it of little matter
 Whether your jewel be of pure water,
 A rose diamond or a white,
 But whether it dazzle me with light.
 I care not how you are dressed,
 In coarsest weeds or in the best;
 Nor whether your name is base or brave; 40
 Nor for the fashion of your behavior;
 But whether you charm me,
 Bid my bread feed and my fire warm me,
 And dress up Nature in your favor.
 One thing is forever good;
 That one thing is Success,—
 Dear to the Eumenides,
 And to all the heavenly brood.
 Who bides at home, nor looks abroad,
 Carries the eagles, and masters the sword. 50

¹ First published in the *Dial*, October, 1841, under a different title, *Fate*.

ODE

INSCRIBED TO W. H. CHANNING²

THOUGH loath to grieve
 The evil time's sole patriot,
 I cannot leave
 My honeyed thought
 For the priest's cant,
 Or statesman's rant.

 If I refuse
 My study for their politique, 10
 Which at the best is trick,
 The angry Muse 10
 Puts confusion in my brain.

 But who is he that prates
 Of the culture of mankind,
 Of better arts and life?
 Go, blindworm, go,
 Behold the famous States
 Harrying Mexico
 With rifle and with knife!

 Or who, with accent bolder,
 Dare praise the freedom-loving moun- 20
 taineer? 20
 I found by thee, O rushing Contoocook!
 And in thy valleys, Agiochook!
 The jackals of the negro-holder.

 The God who made New Hampshire
 Taunted the lofty land
 With little men;—
 Small bat and wren
 House in the oak:—
 If earth-fire cleave
 The upheaved land, and bury the folk, 30
 The southern crocodile would grieve. 30
 Virtue palter; Right is hence;
 Freedom praised, but hid;
 Funeral eloquence
 Rattles the coffin-lid.

 What boots thy zeal,
 O glowing friend,
 That would indignant rend
 The northland from the south?
 Wherefore? to what good end? 40
 Boston Bay and Bunker Hill 40
 Would serve things still;—
 Things are of the snake.

² Probably written in 1846, as a statement of his position when (as E. W. Emerson conjectures) Channing was urging him to join the ranks of the abolitionists. Published in 1847.

The horseman serves the horse,
 The neatherd serves the neat,
 The merchant serves the purse,
 The eater serves his meat;
 'Tis the day of the chattel,
 Web to weave, and corn to grind;
 Things are in the saddle,
 And ride mankind.

50

There are two laws discrete,
 Not reconciled,—
 Law for man, and law for thing;
 The last builds town and fleet,
 But it runs wild,
 And doth the man unking.

'Tis fit the forest fall,
 The steep be graded,
 The mountain tunneled,
 The sand shaded,
 The orchard planted,
 The glebe tilled,
 The prairie granted,
 The steamer built.

60

Let man serve law for man;
 Live for friendship, live for love,
 For truth's and harmony's behoof;
 The state may follow how it can,
 As Olympus follows Jove.

70

Yet do not I implore
 The wrinkled shopman to my sounding
 woods,
 Nor bid the unwilling senator
 Ask votes of thrushes in the solitudes.
 Every one to his chosen work;—
 Foolish hands may mix and mar;
 Wise and sure the issues are.
 Round they roll till dark is light,
 Sex to sex, and even to odd;—
 The over-god
 Who marries Right to Might,
 Who peoples, unpeoples,—
 He who exterminates
 Races by stronger races,
 Black by white faces,—
 Knows to bring honey
 Out of the lion;
 Grafts gentlest scion
 On pirate and Turk.

80

The Cossack eats Poland,
 Like stolen fruit;

90

Her last noble is ruined,
 Her last poet mute:
 Straight, into double band
 The victors divide;
 Half for freedom strike and stand;—
 The astonished Muse finds thousands at
 her side.

GIVE ALL TO LOVE¹

GIVE all to love;
 Obey thy heart;
 Friends, kindred, days,
 Estate, good-fame,
 Plans, credit, and the Muse,—
 Nothing refuse.

'Tis a braver master;
 Let it have scope:
 Follow it utterly,
 Hope beyond hope:
 High and more high
 It dives into noon,
 With wing unspent,
 Untold intent;
 But it is a god,
 Knows its own path
 And the outlets of the sky.

10

It was never for the mean;
 It requireth courage stout.
 Souls above doubt,
 Valor unbending,
 It will reward,—
 They shall return
 More than they were,
 And ever ascending.

20

Leave all for love;
 Yet, hear me, yet,
 One word more thy heart behoyed,
 One pulse more of firm endeavor,—
 Keep thee to-day,
 To-morrow, forever,
 Free as an Arab
 Of thy beloved.

30

Cling with life to the maid;
 But when the surprise,
 First vague shadow of surmise
 Flits across her bosom young,
 Of a joy apart from thee,
 Free be she, fancy-free;

¹ First published in 1847.

Nor thou detain her vesture's hem, 40
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

MUSKETAQUID¹

BECAUSE I was content with these poor fields,
Low, open meads, slender and sluggish
streams,

And found a home in haunts which others
scorned,

The partial wood-gods overpaid my love,
And granted me the freedom of their state,
And in their secret senate have prevailed
With the dear, dangerous lords that rule our
life,

Made moon and planets parties to their
bond,

And through my rock-like, solitary wont
Shot million rays of thought and tender-
ness. 10

For me, in showers, in sweeping showers, the
Spring

Visits the valley;—break away the clouds,—
I bathe in the morn's soft and silvered air,
And loiter willing by yon loitering stream.
Sparrows far off, and nearer, April's bird,
Blue-coated,—flying before from tree to
tree,

Courageous sing a delicate overture
To lead the tardy concert of the year.

Onward and nearer rides the sun of May;
And wide around, the marriage of the
plants 20

Is sweetly solemnized. Then flows amain
The surge of summer's beauty; dell and crag,
Hollow and lake, hillside and pine arcade,
Are touched with genius. Yonder ragged
cliff

Has thousand faces in a thousand hours.

Beneath low hills, in the broad interval
Through which at will our Indian rivulet
Winds mindful still of sannup and of squaw,

Whose pipe and arrowoft the plough unburies,
Here in pine houses built of new-fallen
trees, 30

Supplanters of the tribe, the farmers dwell.
Traveler, to thee, perchance, a tedious road,
Or, it may be, a picture; to these men,
The landscape is an armory of powers,
Which, one by one, they know to draw and
use.

They harness beast, bird, insect, to their
work;

They prove the virtues of each bed of rock,
And, like the chemist 'mid his loaded jars,
Draw from each stratum its adapted use
To drug their crops or weapon their arts
withal. 40

They turn the frost upon their chemic heap,
They set the wind to winnow pulse and grain,
They thank the spring-flood for its fertile
slime,

And, on cheap summit-levels of the snow,
Slide with the sledge to inaccessible woods
O'er meadows bottomless. So, year by year,
They fight the elements with elements
(That one would say, meadow and forest
walked,

Transmuted in these men to rule their like),
And by the order in the field disclose 50
The order regnant in the yeoman's brain.

What these strong masters wrote at large in
miles,

I followed in small copy in my acre;
For there's no rood has not a star above it;
The cordial quality of pear or plum
Ascends as gladly in a single tree
As in broad orchards resonant with bees;
And every atom poises for itself,
And for the whole. The gentle deities
Showed me the lore of colors and of
sounds, 60

The innumerable tenements of beauty,
The miracle of generative force,
Far-reaching concords of astronomy
Felt in the plants and in the punctual birds;
Better, the linkèd purpose of the whole,
And, chiefest prize, found I true liberty
In the glad home plain-dealing Nature gave.
The polite found me impolite; the great
Would mortify me, but in vain; for still

I am a willow of the wilderness, 70
Loving the wind that bent me. All my hurts
My garden spade can heal. A woodland
walk,

¹ First published in 1847.

A quest of river-grapes, a mocking thrush,
A wild-rose, or rock-loving columbine,
Salve my worst wounds.
For thus the wood-gods murmured in my ear:

"Dost love our manners? Canst thou silent lie?

Canst thou, thy pride forgot, like Nature pass
Into the winter night's extinguished mood?

Canst thou shine now, then darkle, 80
And being latent, feel thyself no less?

As, when the all-worshiped moon attracts
the eye,

The river, hill, stems, foliage are obscure,
Yet envies none, none are unenviable."

DAYS¹

DAUGHTERS of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds
them all.

I, in my pleachèd garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late, 10
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

TWO RIVERS²

THY summer voice, Musketaquit,
Repeats the music of the rain;
But sweeter rivers pulsing flit
Through thee, as thou through Concord
Plain.

Thou in thy narrow banks art pent:
The stream I love unbounded goes
Through flood and sea and firmament;
Through light, through life, it forward flows.

I see the inundation sweet,
I hear the spending of the stream 10
Through years, through men, through Nature fleet,
Through love and thought, through power
and dream.

¹ Written in 1851 or 1852; first published in 1857, in the first number of *The Atlantic Monthly*.

² Begun, though possibly not finished, in 1856; first published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1858.

Musketaquit, a goblin strong,
Of shard and flint makes jewels gay;
They lose their grief who hear his song,
And where he winds is the day of day.

So forth and brighter fares my stream,—
Who drink it shall not thirst again;
No darkness stains its equal gleam
And ages drop in it like rain. 20

BRAHMA³

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings; 10
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

ODE

SUNG IN THE TOWN HALL, CONCORD,
JULY 4, 1857

O TENDERLY the haughty day
Fills his blue urn with fire;
One morn is in the mighty heaven,
And one in our desire.

The cannon booms from town to town,
Our pulses beat not less,
The joy-bells chime their tidings down, !
Which children's voices bless.

For He that flung the broad blue fold
O'er-mantling land and sea, 10
One third part of the sky unrolled
For the banner of the free.

³ First published in the first number of *The Atlantic Monthly*, 1857. When Emerson heard that people were puzzled by this poem he remarked to his daughter: "If you tell them to say Jehovah instead of Brahma they will not feel any perplexity."

The men are ripe of Saxon kind
To build an equal state,—
To take the statute from the mind,
And make of duty fate.

United States! the ages plead,—
Present and Past in under-song,—
Go put your creed into your deed,
Nor speak with double tongue.

20

For sea and land don't understand,
Nor skies without a frown
See rights for which the one hand fights
By the other cloven down.

Be just at home; then write your scroll
Of honor o'er the sea,
And bid the broad Atlantic roll,
A ferry of the free.

And henceforth there shall be no chain,
Save underneath the sea
The wires shall murmur through the main
Sweet songs of liberty.

30

The conscious stars accord above,
The waters wild below,
And under, through the cable wove,
Her fiery errands go.

For He that worketh high and wise,
Nor pauses in his plan,
Will take the sun out of the skies
Ere freedom out of man.

40

WALDEINSAMKEIT¹

I do not count the hours I spend
In wandering by the sea;
The forest is my loyal friend,
Like God it useth me.

In plains that room for shadows make
Of skirting hills to lie,
Bound in by streams which give and take
Their colors from the sky;

Or on the mountain-crest sublime,
Or down the oaken glade,
O what have I to do with time?
For this the day was made.

10

Cities of mortals woe-begone
Fantastic care derides,
But in the serious landscape lone
Stern benefit abides.

Sheen will tarnish, honey cloy,
And merry is only a mask of sad,
But, sober on a fund of joy,
The woods at heart are glad.

20

There the great Planter plants
Of fruitful worlds the grain,
And with a million spells enchants
The souls that walk in pain.

Still on the seeds of all he made
The rose of beauty burns;
Through times that wear and forms that
fade,
Immortal youth returns.

The black ducks mounting from the lake,
The pigeon in the pines,
The bittern's boom, a desert make
Which no false art refines.

30

Down in yon watery nook,
Where bearded mists divide,
The gray old gods whom Chaos knew,
The sires of Nature, hide.

Aloft, in secret veins of air,
Blows the sweet breath of song,
O, few to scale those uplands dare,
Though they to all belong!

40

See thou bring not to field or stone
The fancies found in books;
Leave authors' eyes, and fetch your own,
To brave the landscape's looks.

Oblivion here thy wisdom is,
Thy thrift, the sleep of cares;
For a proud idleness like this
Crowns all thy mean affairs.

NATURE²

A subtle chain of countless rings
The next unto the farthest brings;
The eye reads omens where it goes,
And speaks all languages the rose;
And, striving to be man, the worm
Mounts through all the spires of form.

¹ I.e., *Forest Solitude*. Begun in the summer of 1857; published in *Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1858.

² Emerson's first volume, published 1836 (the verses under the title were added in the second edition, 1849). The volume is here reprinted in its entirety.

INTRODUCTION

OUR age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchers of the fathers. It writes biographies, histories, and criticism. The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs? Embosomed for a season in nature, whose floods of life stream around and through us, and invite us, by the powers they supply, to action proportioned to nature, why should we grope among the dry bones of the past, or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe? The sun shines to-day also. There is more wool and flax in the fields. There are new lands, new men, new thoughts. Let us demand our own works and laws and worship.

Undoubtedly we have no questions to ask which are unanswerable. We must trust the perfection of the creation so far as to believe that whatever curiosity the order of things has awakened in our minds, the order of things can satisfy. Every man's condition is a solution in hieroglyphic to those inquiries he would put. He acts it as life, before he apprehends it as truth. In like manner, nature is already, in its forms and tendencies, describing its own design. Let us interrogate the great apparition that shines so peacefully around us. Let us inquire, to what end is nature?

All science has one aim, namely, to find a theory of nature. We have theories of races and of functions, but scarcely yet a remote approach to an idea of creation. We are now so far from the road to truth, that religious teachers dispute and hate each other, and speculative men are esteemed unsound and frivolous. But to a sound judgment, the most abstract truth is the most practical. Whenever a true theory appears, it will be its own evidence. Its test is, that it will explain all phenomena. Now many are thought not only unexplained but inexplicable; as language, sleep, madness, dreams, beasts, sex.

Philosophically considered, the universe is composed of Nature and the Soul. Strictly speaking, therefore, all that is separate from

us, all which Philosophy distinguishes as the NOT ME, that is, both nature and art, all other men and my own body, must be ranked under this name, NATURE. In enumerating the values of nature and casting up their sum, I shall use the word in both senses;—in its common and in its philosophical import. In inquiries so general as our present one, the inaccuracy is not material; no confusion of thought will occur. *Nature*, in the common sense, refers to essences unchanged by man; space, the air, the river, the leaf. *Art* is applied to the mixture of his will with the same things, as in a house, a canal, a statue, a picture. But his operations taken together are so insignificant, a little chipping, baking, patching, and washing, that in an impression so grand as that of the world on the human mind, they do not vary the result.

I. NATURE

To go into solitude, a man needs to retire as much from his chamber as from society. I am not solitary whilst I read and write, though nobody is with me. But if a man would be alone, let him look at the stars. The rays that come from those heavenly worlds will separate between him and what he touches. One might think the atmosphere was made transparent with this design, to give man, in the heavenly bodies, the perpetual presence of the sublime. Seen in the streets of cities, how great they are! If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe and adore; and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown! But every night come out these envoys of beauty, and light the universe with their admonishing smile.

The stars awaken a certain reverence, because though always present, they are inaccessible; but all natural objects make a kindred impression, when the mind is open to their influence. Nature never wears a mean appearance. Neither does the wisest man extort her secret, and lose his curiosity by finding out all her perfection. Nature never became a toy to a wise spirit. The flowers, the animals, the mountains, reflected the wisdom of his best hour, as much as they had delighted the simplicity of his childhood.

When we speak of nature in this manner,

we have a distinct but most poetical sense in the mind. We mean the integrity of impression made by manifold natural objects. It is this which distinguishes the stick of timber of the wood-cutter, from the tree of the poet. The charming landscape which I saw this morning is indubitably made up of some twenty or thirty farms. Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all the parts, that is, the poet. This is the best part of these men's farms, yet to this their warranty-deeds give no title.

To speak truly, few adult persons can see nature. Most persons do not see the sun. At least they have a very superficial seeing. The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child. The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy even into the era of manhood. His intercourse with heaven and earth becomes part of his daily food. In the presence of nature a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows. Nature says,—he is my creature, and maugre all his impertinent griefs, he shall be glad with me. Not the sun or the summer alone, but every hour and season yields its tribute of delight; for every hour and change corresponds to and authorizes a different state of the mind, from breathless noon to grimmest midnight. Nature is a setting that fits equally well a comic or a mourning piece. In good health, the air is a cordial of incredible virtue. Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. I am glad to the brink of fear. In the woods, too, a man casts off his years, as the snake his slough, and at what period soever of life, is always a child. In the woods is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God, a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life,—no disgrace, no calamity (leaving me my eyes), which nature cannot repair. Standing

on the bare ground,—my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space,—all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental: to be brothers, to be acquaintances, master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty. In the wilderness, I find something more dear and connate than in streets or villages. In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature.

The greatest delight which the fields and woods minister is the suggestion of an occult relation between man and the vegetable. I am not alone and unacknowledged. They nod to me, and I to them. The waving of the boughs in the storm is new to me and old. It takes me by surprise, and yet is not unknown. Its effect is like that of a higher thought or a better emotion coming over me, when I deemed I was thinking justly or doing right.

Yet it is certain that the power to produce this delight does not reside in nature, but in man, or in a harmony of both. It is necessary to use these pleasures with great temperance. For nature is not always tricked in holiday attire, but the same scene which yesterday breathed perfume and glittered as for the frolic of the nymphs, is overspread with melancholy to-day. Nature always wears the colors of the spirit. To a man laboring under calamity, the heat of his own fire hath sadness in it. Then there is a kind of contempt of the landscape felt by him who has just lost by death a dear friend. The sky is less grand as it shuts down over less worth in the population.

II. COMMODITY

WHOEVER considers the final cause of the world will discern a multitude of uses that enter as parts into that result. They all admit of being thrown into one of the following classes: Commodity; Beauty; Language; and Discipline.

Under the general name of commodity, I rank all those advantages which our senses

owe to nature. This, of course, is a benefit which is temporary and mediate, not ultimate, like its service to the soul. Yet although low, it is perfect in its kind, and is the only use of nature which all men apprehend. The misery of man appears like childish petulance, when we explore the steady and prodigal provision that has been made for his support and delight on this green ball which floats him through the heavens. What angels invented these splendid ornaments, these rich conveniences, this ocean of air above, this ocean of water beneath, this firmament of earth between? this zodiac of lights, this tent of dropping clouds, this striped coat of climates, this fourfold year? Beasts, fire, water, stones, and corn serve him. The field is at once his floor, his work-yard, his play-ground, his garden, and his bed.

More servants wait on man
Than he'll take notice of.

Nature, in its ministry to man, is not only the material, but is also the process and the result. All the parts incessantly work into each other's hands for the profit of man. The wind sows the seed; the sun evaporates the sea; the wind blows the vapor to the field; the ice, on the other side of the planet, condenses rain on this; the rain feeds the plant; the plant feeds the animal; and thus the endless circulations of the divine charity nourish man.

The useful arts are reproductions or new combinations by the wit of man, of the same natural benefactors. He no longer waits for favoring gales, but by means of steam, he realizes the fable of Æolus's bag, and carries the two and thirty winds in the boiler of his boat. To diminish friction, he paves the road with iron bars, and, mounting a coach with a ship-load of men, animals, and merchandise behind him, he darts through the country, from town to town, like an eagle or a swallow through the air. By the aggregate of these aids, how is the face of the world changed, from the era of Noah to that of Napoleon! The private poor man hath cities, ships, canals, bridges, built for him. He goes to the post-office, and the human race run on his errands; to the book-shop, and the human race read and write of all that happens, for him; to the court-house, and

nations repair his wrongs. He sets his house upon the road, and the human race go forth every morning, and shovel out the snow, and cut a path for him.

But there is no need of specifying particulars in this class of uses. The catalogue is endless, and the examples so obvious, that I shall leave them to the reader's reflection, with the general remark, that this mercenary benefit is one which has respect to a farther good. A man is fed, not that he may be fed, but that he may work.

III. BEAUTY

A NOBLER want of man is served by nature, namely, the love of Beauty.

The ancient Greeks called the world *κόσμος*, beauty. Such is the constitution of all things, or such the plastic power of the human eye, that the primary forms, as the sky, the mountain, the tree, the animal, give us a delight *in and for themselves*; a pleasure arising from outline, color, motion, and grouping. This seems partly owing to the eye itself. The eye is the best of artists. By the mutual action of its structure and of the laws of light, perspective is produced, which integrates every mass of objects, of what character soever, into a well colored and shaded globe, so that where the particular objects are mean and unaffecting, the landscape which they compose is round and symmetrical. And as the eye is the best composer, so light is the first of painters. There is no object so foul that intense light will not make beautiful. And the stimulus it affords to the sense, and a sort of infinitude which it hath, like space and time, make all matter gay. Even the corpse has its own beauty. But besides this general grace diffused over nature, almost all the individual forms are agreeable to the eye, as is proved by our endless imitations of some of them, as the acorn, the grape, the pine-cone, the wheat-ear, the egg, the wings and forms of most birds, the lion's claw, the serpent, the butterfly, sea-shells, flames, clouds, buds, leaves, and the forms of many trees, as the palm.

For better consideration, we may distribute the aspects of Beauty in a threefold manner.

I. First, the simple perception of natural forms is a delight. The influence of the

forms and actions in nature is so needful to man, that, in its lowest functions, it seems to lie on the confines of commodity and beauty. To the body and mind which have been cramped by noxious work or company, nature is medicinal and restores their tone. The tradesman, the attorney comes out of the din and craft of the street and sees the sky and the woods, and is a man again. In their eternal calm, he finds himself. The health of the eye seems to demand a horizon. We are never tired, so long as we can see far enough.

But in other hours, Nature satisfies by its loveliness, and without any mixture of corporeal benefit. I see the spectacle of morning from the hill-top over against my house, from day-break to sun-rise, with emotions which an angel might share. The long slender bars of cloud float like fishes in the sea of crimson light. From the earth, as a shore, I look out into that silent sea. I seem to partake its rapid transformations; the active enchantment reaches my dust, and I dilate and conspire with the morning wind. How does Nature deify us with a few and cheap elements! Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous. The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moon-rise my Paphos, and unimaginable realms of faerie; broad noon shall be my England of the senses and the understanding; the night shall be my Germany of mystic philosophy and dreams.

Not less excellent, except for our less susceptibility in the afternoon, was the charm, last evening, of a January sunset. The western clouds divided and subdivided themselves into pink flakes modulated with tints of unspeakable softness, and the air had so much life and sweetness that it was a pain to come within doors. What was it that nature would say? Was there no meaning in the live repose of the valley behind the mill, and which Homer or Shakespeare could not re-form for me in words? The leafless trees become spires of flame in the sunset, with the blue east for their background, and the stars of the dead calices of flowers, and every withered stem and stubble rimed with frost, contribute something to the mute music.

The inhabitants of cities suppose that the country landscape is pleasant only half the year. I please myself with the graces of

the winter scenery, and believe that we are as much touched by it as by the genial influences of summer. To the attentive eye, each moment of the year has its own beauty, and in the same field, it beholds, every hour, a picture which was never seen before, and which shall never be seen again. The heavens change every moment, and reflect their glory or gloom on the plains beneath. The state of the crop in the surrounding farms alters the expression of the earth from week to week. The succession of native plants in the pastures and roadsides, which makes the silent clock by which time tells the summer hours, will make even the divisions of the day sensible to a keen observer. The tribes of birds and insects, like the plants punctual to their time, follow each other, and the year has room for all. By watercourses, the variety is greater. In July, the blue pontederia or pickerel-weed blooms in large beds in the shallow parts of our pleasant river, and swarms with yellow butterflies in continual motion. Art cannot rival this pomp of purple and gold. Indeed the river is a perpetual gala, and boasts each month a new ornament.

But this beauty of Nature which is seen and felt as beauty, is the least part. The shows of day, the dewy morning, the rainbow, mountains, orchards in blossom, stars, moonlight, shadows in still water, and the like, if too eagerly hunted, become shows merely, and mock us with their unreality. Go out of the house to see the moon, and 'tis mere tinsel; it will not please as when its light shines upon your necessary journey. The beauty that shimmers in the yellow afternoons of October, who ever could clutch it? Go forth to find it and it is gone; 'tis only a mirage as you look from the windows of diligence.

2. The presence of a higher, namely, of the spiritual element is essential to its perfection. The high and divine beauty which can be loved without effeminacy, is that which is found in combination with the human will. Beauty is the mark God sets upon virtue. Every natural action is graceful. Every heroic act is also decent, and causes the place and the bystanders to shine. We are taught by great actions that the universe is the property of every individual in it. Every rational creature has all nature for his dowry

and estate. It is his, if he will. He may divest himself of it; he may creep into a corner, and abdicate his kingdom, as most men do, but he is entitled to the world by his constitution. In proportion to the energy of his thought and will, he takes up the world into himself. "All those things for which men plough, build, or sail, obey virtue," said Sallust. "The winds and waves," said Gibbon, "are always on the side of the ablest navigators." So are the sun and moon and all the stars of heaven. When a noble act is done,—perchance in a scene of great natural beauty; when Leonidas and his three hundred martyrs consume one day in dying, and the sun and moon come each and look at them once in the steep defile of Thermopylæ; when Arnold Winkelried, in the high Alps, under the shadow of the avalanche, gathers in his side a sheaf of Austrian spears to break the line for his comrades; are not these heroes entitled to add the beauty of the scene to the beauty of the deed? When the bark of Columbus nears the shore of America;—before it, the beach lined with savages, fleeing out of all their huts of cane; the sea behind; and the purple mountains of the Indian Archipelago around, can we separate the man from the living picture? Does not the New World clothe his form with her palm-groves and savannahs as fit drapery? Ever does natural beauty steal in like air, and envelop great actions. When Sir Harry Vane was dragged up the Tower-hill, sitting on a sled, to suffer death as the champion of the English laws, one of the multitude cried out to him, "You never sate on so glorious a seat!" Charles II, to intimidate the citizens of London, caused the patriot Lord Russell to be drawn in an open coach through the principal streets of the city on his way to the scaffold. "But," his biographer says, "the multitude imagined they saw liberty and virtue sitting by his side." In private places, among sordid objects, an act of truth or heroism seems at once to draw to itself the sky as its temple, the sun as its candle. Nature stretches out her arms to embrace man, only let his thoughts be of equal greatness. Willingly does she follow his steps with the rose and the violet, and bend her lines of grandeur and grace to the decoration of her darling child. Only let his thoughts be of equal scope, and the frame will suit the pic-

ture. A virtuous man is in unison with her works, and makes the central figure of the visible sphere. Homer, Pindar, Socrates, Phocion, associate themselves fitly in our memory with the geography and climate of Greece. The visible heavens and earth sympathize with Jesus. And in common life whosoever has seen a person of powerful character and happy genius, will have remarked how easily he took all things along with him,—the persons, the opinions and the day, and nature became ancillary to a man.

3. There is still another aspect under which the beauty of the world may be viewed, namely, as it becomes an object of the intellect. Beside the relation of things to virtue, they have a relation to thought. The intellect searches out the absolute order of things as they stand in the mind of God, and without the colors of affection. The intellectual and the active powers seem to succeed each other, and the exclusive activity of the one generates the exclusive activity of the other. There is something unfriendly in each to the other, but they are like the alternate periods of feeding and working in animals; each prepares and will be followed by the other. Therefore does beauty, which, in relation to actions, as we have seen, comes unsought, and comes because it is unsought, remain for the apprehension and pursuit of the intellect; and then again, in its turn, of the active power. Nothing divine dies. All good is eternally reproductive. The beauty of nature re-forms itself in the mind, and not for barren contemplation, but for new creation.

All men are in some degree impressed by the face of the world; some men even to delight. This love of beauty is Taste. Others have the same love in such excess, that, not content with admiring, they seek to embody it in new forms. The creation of beauty is Art.

The production of a work of art throws a light upon the mystery of humanity. A work of art is an abstract or epitome of the world. It is the result or expression of nature, in miniature. For although the works of nature are innumerable and all different, the result or the expression of them all is similar and single. Nature is a sea of forms radically alike and even unique. A leaf, a sunbeam, a landscape, the ocean, make an

analogous impression on the mind. What is common to them all,—that perfectness and harmony, is beauty. The standard of beauty is the entire circuit of natural forms,—the totality of nature; which the Italians expressed by defining beauty "*il piu nell' uno*." Nothing is quite beautiful alone; nothing but is beautiful in the whole. A single object is only so far beautiful as it suggests this universal grace. The poet, the painter, the sculptor, the musician, the architect, seek each to concentrate this radiance of the world on one point, and each in his several work to satisfy the love of beauty which stimulates him to produce. Thus is Art a nature passed through the alembic of man. Thus in art does Nature work through the will of a man filled with the beauty of her first works.

The world thus exists to the soul to satisfy the desire of beauty. This element I call an ultimate end. No reason can be asked or given why the soul seeks beauty. Beauty, in its largest and profoundest sense, is one expression for the universe. God is the all-fair. Truth, and goodness, and beauty, are but different faces of the same All. But beauty in nature is not ultimate. It is the herald of inward and eternal beauty, and is not alone a solid and satisfactory good. It must stand as a part, and not as yet the last or highest expression of the final cause of Nature.

IV. LANGUAGE

LANGUAGE is a third use which Nature subserves to man. Nature is the vehicle of thought, and in a simple, double, and three-fold degree.

1. Words are signs of natural facts.
 2. Particular natural facts are symbols of particular spiritual facts.
 3. Nature is the symbol of spirit.
1. Words are signs of natural facts. The use of natural history is to give us aid in supernatural history; the use of the outer creation, to give us language for the beings and changes of the inward creation. Every word which is used to express a moral or intellectual fact, if traced to its root, is found to be borrowed from some material appearance. *Right* means *straight*; *wrong* means *twisted*. *Spirit* primarily means *wind*; *transgression*,

the crossing of a *line*; *supercilious*, the *raising of the eyebrow*. We say the *heart* to express emotion, the *head* to denote thought; and *thought* and *emotion* are words borrowed from sensible things, and now appropriated to spiritual nature. Most of the process by which this transformation is made, is hidden from us in the remote time when language was framed; but the same tendency may be daily observed in children. Children and savages use only nouns or names of things, which they convert into verbs, and apply to analogous mental acts.

2. But this origin of all words that convey a spiritual import,—so conspicuous a fact in the history of language,—is our least debt to nature. It is not words only that are emblematic; it is things which are emblematic. Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact. Every appearance in nature corresponds to some state of the mind, and that state of the mind can only be described by presenting that natural appearance as its picture. An enraged man is a lion, a cunning man is a fox, a firm man is a rock, a learned man is a torch. A lamb is innocence; a snake is subtle spite; flowers express to us the delicate affections. Light and darkness are our familiar expression for knowledge and ignorance; and heat for love. Visible distance behind and before us, is respectively our image of memory and hope.

Who looks upon a river in a meditative hour and is not reminded of the flux of all things? Throw a stone into the stream, and the circles that propagate themselves are the beautiful type of all influence. Man is conscious of a universal soul within or behind his individual life, wherein, as in a firmament, the natures of Justice, Truth, Love, Freedom, arise and shine. This universal soul he calls Reason: it is not mine, or thine, or his, but we are its; we are its property and men. And the blue sky in which the private earth is buried, the sky with its eternal calm, and full of everlasting orbs, is the type of Reason. That which intellectually considered we call Reason, considered in relation to nature, we call Spirit. Spirit is the Creator. Spirit hath life in itself. And man in all ages and countries embodies it in his language as the FATHER.

It is easily seen that there is nothing lucky or capricious in these analogies, but that

they are constant, and pervade nature. These are not the dreams of a few poets, here and there, but man is an analogist, and studies relations in all objects. He is placed in the center of beings, and a ray of relation passes from every other being to him. And neither can man be understood without these objects, nor these objects without man. All the facts in natural history taken by themselves, have no value, but are barren, like a single sex. But marry it to human history, and it is full of life. Whole floras, all Linnaeus's and Buffon's volumes, are dry catalogues of facts; but the most trivial of these facts, the habit of a plant, the organs, or work, or noise of an insect, applied to the illustration of a fact in intellectual philosophy, or in any way associated to human nature, affects us in the most lively and agreeable manner. The seed of a plant,—to what affecting analogies in the nature of man is that little fruit made use of, in all discourse, up to the voice of Paul, who calls the human corpse a seed,—“It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.” The motion of the earth round its axis and round the sun, makes the day and the year. These are certain amounts of brute light and heat. But is there no intent of an analogy between man's life and the seasons? And do the seasons gain no grandeur or pathos from that analogy? The instincts of the ant are very unimportant considered as the ant's; but the moment a ray of relation is seen to extend from it to man, and the little drudge is seen to be a monitor, a little body with a mighty heart, then all its habits, even that said to be recently observed, that it never sleeps, become sublime.

Because of this radical correspondence between visible things and human thoughts, savages, who have only what is necessary, converse in figures. As we go back in history, language becomes more picturesque, until its infancy, when it is all poetry; or all spiritual facts are represented by natural symbols. The same symbols are found to make the original elements of all languages. It has moreover been observed, that the idioms of all languages approach each other in passages of the greatest eloquence and power. And as this is the first language, so is it the last. This immediate dependence of language upon nature, this conversion of an out-

ward phenomenon into a type of somewhat in human life, never loses its power to affect us. It is this which gives that piquancy to the conversation of a strong-natured farmer or backwoodsman, which all men relish.

A man's power to connect his thought with its proper symbol, and so to utter it, depends on the simplicity of his character, that is, upon his love of truth and his desire to communicate it without loss. The corruption of man is followed by the corruption of language. When simplicity of character and the sovereignty of ideas is broken up by the prevalence of secondary desires,—the desire of riches, of pleasure, of power, and of praise,—and duplicity and falsehood take place of simplicity and truth, the power over nature as an interpreter of the will is in a degree lost; new imagery ceases to be created, and old words are perverted to stand for things which are not; a paper currency is employed, when there is no bullion in the vaults. In due time the fraud is manifest, and words lose all power to stimulate the understanding or the affections. Hundreds of writers may be found in every long-civilized nation who for a short time believe and make others believe that they see and utter truths, who do not of themselves clothe one thought in its natural garment, but who feed unconsciously on the language created by the primary writers of the country, those, namely, who hold primarily on nature.

But wise men pierce this rotten diction and fasten words again to visible things; so that picturesque language is at once a commanding certificate that he who employs it is a man in alliance with truth and God. The moment our discourse rises above the ground line of familiar facts and is inflamed with passion or exalted by thought, it clothes itself in images. A man conversing in earnest, if he watch his intellectual processes, will find that a material image more or less luminous arises in his mind, contemporaneous with every thought, which furnishes the vestment of the thought. Hence, good writing and brilliant discourse are perpetual allegories. This imagery is spontaneous. It is the blending of experience with the present action of the mind. It is proper creation. It is the working of the Original Cause through the instruments he has already made.

These facts may suggest the advantage

which the country life possesses, for a powerful mind, over the artificial and curtailed life of cities. We know more from nature than we can at will communicate. Its light flows into the mind evermore, and we forget its presence. The poet, the orator, bred in the woods, whose senses have been nourished by their fair and appeasing changes, year after year, without design and without heed,—shall not lose their lesson altogether, in the roar of cities or the broil of politics. Long hereafter, amidst agitation and terror in national councils,—in the hour of revolution,—these solemn images shall reappear in their morning luster, as fit symbols and words of the thoughts which the passing events shall awaken. At the call of a noble sentiment, again the woods wave, the pines murmur, the river rolls and shines, and the cattle low upon the mountains, as he saw and heard them in his infancy. And with these forms, the spells of persuasion, the keys of power are put into his hands.

3. We are thus assisted by natural objects in the expression of particular meanings. But how great a language to convey such pepper-corn informations! Did it need such noble races of creatures, this profusion of forms, this host of orbs in heaven, to furnish man with the dictionary and grammar of his municipal speech? Whilst we use this grand cipher to expedite the affairs of our pot and kettle, we feel that we have not yet put it to its use, neither are able. We are like travelers using the cinders of a volcano to roast their eggs. Whilst we see that it always stands ready to clothe what we would say, we cannot avoid the question whether the characters are not significant of themselves. Have mountains, and waves, and skies, no significance but what we consciously give them when we employ them as emblems of our thoughts? The world is emblematic. Parts of speech are metaphors, because the whole of nature is a metaphor of the human mind. The laws of moral nature answer to those of matter as face to face in a glass. "The visible world and the relation of its parts, is the dial plate of the invisible." The axioms of physics translate the laws of ethics. Thus, "the whole is greater than its part"; "reaction is equal to action"; "the smallest weight may be made to lift the greatest, the difference of weight being com-

pensated by time"; and many the like propositions, which have an ethical as well as physical sense. These propositions have a much more extensive and universal sense when applied to human life, than when confined to technical use.

In like manner, the memorable words of history and the proverbs of nations consist usually of a natural fact, selected as a picture or parable of a moral truth. Thus: A rolling stone gathers no moss; A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; A cripple in the right way will beat a racer in the wrong; Make hay while the sun shines; 'Tis hard to carry a full cup even; Vinegar is the son of wine; The last ounce broke the camel's back; Long-lived trees make roots first;—and the like. In their primary sense these are trivial facts, but we repeat them for the value of their analogical import. What is true of proverbs, is true of all fables, parables, and allegories.

This relation between the mind and matter is not fancied by some poet, but stands in the will of God, and so is free to be known by all men. It appears to men, or it does not appear. When in fortunate hours we ponder this miracle, the wise man doubts if at all other times he is not blind and deaf:

Can these things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder?

for the universe becomes transparent, and the light of higher laws than its own shines through it. It is the standing problem which has exercised the wonder and the study of every fine genius since the world began; from the era of the Egyptians and the Brahmins to that of Pythagoras, of Plato, of Bacon, of Leibnitz, of Swedenborg. There sits the Sphinx at the road-side, and from age to age, as each prophet comes by, he tries his fortune at reading her riddle. There seems to be a necessity in spirit to manifest itself in material forms; and day and night, river and storm, beast and bird, acid and alkali, pre-exist in necessary Ideas in the mind of God, and are what they are by virtue of preceding affections in the world of spirit. A Fact is the end or last issue of spirit. The visible creation is the terminus or the circumference of the invisible world. "Material objects," said a French philosopher, "are necessarily kinds of *scoriæ* of the substantial thoughts of

the Creator, which must always preserve an exact relation to their first origin; in other words, visible nature must have a spiritual and moral side."

This doctrine is abstruse, and though the images of "garment," "scoriae," "mirror," *etc.*, may stimulate the fancy, we must summon the aid of subtler and more vital expositors to make it plain. "Every scripture is to be interpreted by the same spirit which gave it forth,"—is the fundamental law of criticism. A life in harmony with Nature, the love of truth and of virtue, will purge the eyes to understand her text. By degrees we may come to know the primitive sense of the permanent objects of nature, so that the world shall be to us an open book, and every form significant of its hidden life and final cause.

A new interest surprises us, whilst, under the view now suggested, we contemplate the fearful extent and multitude of objects; since "every object rightly seen, unlocks a new faculty of the soul." That which was unconscious truth, becomes, when interpreted and defined in an object, a part of the domain of knowledge,—a new weapon in the magazine of power.

V. DISCIPLINE

IN view of the significance of nature, we arrive at once at a new fact, that nature is a discipline. This use of the world includes the preceding uses, as parts of itself.

Space, time, society, labor, climate, food, locomotion, the animals, the mechanical forces, give us sincerest lessons, day by day, whose meaning is unlimited. They educate both the Understanding and the Reason. Every property of matter is a school for the understanding,—its solidity or resistance, its inertia, its extension, its figure, its divisibility. The understanding adds, divides, combines, measures, and finds nutriment and room for its activity in this worthy scene. Meantime, Reason transfers all these lessons into its own world of thought, by perceiving the analogy that marries Matter and Mind.

I. Nature is a discipline of the understanding in intellectual truths. Our dealing with sensible objects is a constant exercise in the necessary lessons of difference, of likeness, of order, of being and seeming, of progressive

arrangement; of ascent from particular to general; of combination to one end of manifold forces. Proportioned to the importance of the organ to be formed, is the extreme care with which its tuition is provided,—a care pretermitted in no single case. What tedious training, day after day, year after year, never ending, to form the common sense; what continual reproduction of annoyances, inconveniences, dilemmas; what rejoicing over us of little men; what disputing of prices, what reckonings of interest,—and all to form the Hand of the mind;—to instruct us that "good thoughts are no better than good dreams, unless they be executed!"

The same good office is performed by Property and its filial systems of debt and credit. Debt, grinding debt, whose iron face the widow, the orphan, and the sons of genius fear and hate;—debt, which consumes so much time, which so cripples and disheartens a great spirit with cares that seem so base, is a preceptor whose lessons cannot be forgone, and is needed most by those who suffer from it most. Moreover, property, which has been well compared to snow,—*"if it fall level to-day, it will be blown into drifts to-morrow,"*—is the surface action of internal machinery, like the index on the face of a clock. Whilst now it is the gymnastics of the understanding, it is hiving, in the foresight of the spirit, experience in profounder laws.

The whole character and fortune of the individual are affected by the least inequalities in the culture of the understanding; for example, in the perception of differences. Therefore is Space, and therefore Time, that man may know that things are not huddled and lumped, but sundered and individual. A bell and a plough have each their use, and neither can do the office of the other. Water is good to drink, coal to burn, wool to wear; but wool cannot be drunk, nor water spun, nor coal eaten. The wise man shows his wisdom in separation, in gradation, and his scale of creatures and of merits is as wide as nature. The foolish have no range in their scale, but suppose every man is as every other man. What is not good they call the worst, and what is not hateful, they call the best.

In like manner, what good heed Nature forms in us! She pardons no mistakes. Her yea is yea, and her nay, nay.

The first steps in Agriculture, Astronomy, Zoölogy (those first steps which the farmer, the hunter, and the sailor take), teach that Nature's dice are always loaded; that in her heaps and rubbish are concealed sure and useful results.

How calmly and genially the mind apprehends one after another the laws of physics! What noble emotions dilate the mortal as he enters into the councils of the creation, and feels by knowledge the privilege to BE! His insight refines him. The beauty of nature shines in his own breast. Man is greater that he can see this, and the universe less because Time and Space relations vanish as laws are known.

Here again we are impressed and even daunted by the immense Universe to be explored. "What we know is a point to what we do not know." Open any recent journal of science, and weigh the problems suggested concerning Light, Heat, Electricity, Magnetism, Physiology, Geology, and judge whether the interest of natural science is likely to be soon exhausted.

Passing by many particulars of the discipline of nature, we must not omit to specify two.

The exercise of the Will, or the lesson of power, is taught in every event. From the child's successive possession of his several senses up to the hour when he saith, "Thy will be done!" he is learning the secret that he can reduce under his will, not only particular events but great classes, nay, the whole series of events, and so conform all facts to his character. Nature is thoroughly mediate. It is made to serve. It receives the dominion of man as meekly as the ass on which the Savior rode. It offers all its kingdoms to man as the raw material which he may mold into what is useful. Man is never weary of working it up. He forges the subtle and delicate air into wise and melodious words, and gives them wing as angels of persuasion and command. One after another his victorious thought comes up with and reduces all things, until the world becomes at last only a realized will,—the double of the man.

2. Sensible objects conform to the premonitions of Reason and reflect the conscience. All things are moral; and in their boundless changes have an unceasing reference to spiritual nature. Therefore is nature

glorious with form, color, and motion: that every globe in the remotest heaven, every chemical change from the rudest crystal up to the laws of life, every change of vegetation from the first principle of growth in the eye of a leaf, to the tropical forest and antediluvian coal-mine, every animal function from the sponge up to Hercules, shall hint or thunder to man the laws of right and wrong, and echo the Ten Commandments. Therefore is Nature ever the ally of Religion: lends all her pomp and riches to the religious sentiment. Prophet and priest, David, Isaiah, Jesus, have drawn deeply from this source. This ethical character so penetrates the bone and marrow of nature, as to seem the end for which it was made. Whatever private purpose is answered by any member or part, this is its public and universal function, and is never omitted. Nothing in nature is exhausted in its first use. When a thing has served an end to the uttermost, it is wholly new for an ulterior service. In God, every end is converted into a new means. Thus the use of commodity, regarded by itself, is mean and squalid. But it is to the mind an education in the doctrine of Use, namely, that a thing is good only so far as it serves; that a conspiring of parts and efforts to the production of an end is essential to any being. The first and gross manifestation of this truth is our inevitable and hated training in values and wants, in corn and meat.

It has already been illustrated, that every natural process is a version of a moral sentence. The moral law lies at the center of nature and radiates to the circumference. It is the pith and marrow of every substance, every relation, and every process. All things with which we deal, preach to us. What is a farm but a mute gospel? The chaff and the wheat, weeds and plants, blight, rain, insects, sun,—it is a sacred emblem from the first furrow of spring to the last stack which the snow of winter overtakes in the fields. But the sailor, the shepherd, the miner, the merchant, in their several resorts, have each an experience precisely parallel, and leading to the same conclusion: because all organizations are radically alike. Nor can it be doubted that this moral sentiment which thus scents the air, grows in the grain, and impregnates the waters of the world, is caught by man and sinks into his soul. The

moral influence of nature upon every individual is that amount of truth which it illustrates to him. Who can estimate this? Who can guess how much firmness the sea-beaten rock has taught the fisherman? how much tranquillity has been reflected to man from the azure sky, over whose unspotted deeps the winds forevermore drive flocks of stormy clouds, and leave no wrinkle or stain? how much industry and providence and affection we have caught from the pantomime of brutes? What a searching preacher of self-command is the varying phenomenon of Health!

Herein is especially apprehended the unity of Nature,—the unity in variety,—which meets us everywhere. All the endless variety of things make an identical impression. Xenophanes complained in his old age that, look where he would, all things hastened back to Unity. He was weary of seeing the same entity in the tedious variety of forms. The fable of Proteus has a cordial truth. A leaf, a drop, a crystal, a moment of time, is related to the whole, and partakes of the perfection of the whole. Each particle is a microcosm, and faithfully renders the likeness of the world.

Not only resemblances exist in things whose analogy is obvious, as when we detect the type of the human hand in the flipper of the fossil saurus, but also in objects wherein there is great superficial unlikeness. Thus architecture is called "frozen music," by De Staël and Goethe. Vitruvius thought an architect should be a musician. "A Gothic church," said Coleridge, "is a petrified religion." Michael Angelo maintained that, to an architect, a knowledge of anatomy is essential. In Haydn's oratorios, the notes present to the imagination not only motions, as of the snake, the stag, and the elephant, but colors also; as the green grass. The law of harmonic sounds reappears in the harmonic colors. The granite is differenced in its laws only by the more or less of heat from the river that wears it away. The river, as it flows, resembles the air that flows over it; the air resembles the light which traverses it with more subtle currents; the light resembles the heat which rides with it through Space. Each creature is only a modification of the other; the likeness in them is more than the difference, and their radical law is one and the

same. A rule of one art, or a law of one organization, holds true throughout nature. So intimate is this Unity that, it is easily seen, it lies under the undermost garment of nature, and betrays its source in Universal Spirit. For it pervades Thought also. Every universal truth which we express in words, implies or supposes every other truth. *Omne verum vero consonat.* It is like a great circle on a sphere, comprising all possible circles; which, however, may be drawn and comprise it in like manner. Every such truth is the absolute Ens seen from one side. But it has innumerable sides.

The central Unity is still more conspicuous in actions. Words are finite organs of the infinite mind. They cannot cover the dimensions of what is in truth. They break, chop, and impoverish it. An action is the perfection and publication of thought. A right action seems to fill the eye, and to be related to all nature. "The wise man, in doing one thing, does all; or, in the one thing he does rightly, he sees the likeness of all which is done rightly."

Words and actions are not the attributes of brute nature. They introduce us to the human form, of which all other organizations appear to be degradations. When this appears among so many that surround it, the spirit prefers it to all others. It says, "From such as this have I drawn joy and knowledge; in such as this have I found and beheld myself; I will speak to it; it can speak again; it can yield me thought already formed and alive." In fact, the eye,—the mind,—is always accompanied by these forms, male and female; and these are incomparably the richest informations of the power and order that lie at the heart of things. Unfortunately every one of them bears the marks as of some injury; is marred and superficially defective. Nevertheless, far different from the deaf and dumb nature around them, these all rest like fountain-pipes on the unfathomed sea of thought and virtue whereto they alone, of all organizations, are the entrances.

It were a pleasant inquiry to follow into detail their ministry to our education, but where would it stop? We are associated in adolescent and adult life with some friends, who, like skies and waters, are coextensive with our idea; who, answering each to a certain affection of the soul, satisfy our desire

on that side; whom we lack power to put at such focal distance from us, that we can mend or even analyze them. We cannot choose but love them. When much intercourse with a friend has supplied us with a standard of excellence, and has increased our respect for the resources of God who thus sends a real person to outgo our ideal; when he has, moreover, become an object of thought, and, whilst his character retains all its unconscious effect, is converted in the mind into solid and sweet wisdom,—it is a sign to us that his office is closing, and he is commonly withdrawn from our sight in a short time.

VI. IDEALISM

Thus is the unspeakable but intelligible and practicable meaning of the world conveyed to man, the immortal pupil, in every object of sense. To this one end of Discipline, all parts of nature conspire.

A noble doubt perpetually suggests itself,—whether this end be not the Final Cause of the Universe; and whether nature outwardly exists. It is a sufficient account of that Appearance we call the World, that God will teach a human mind, and so makes it the receiver of a certain number of congruent sensations, which we call sun and moon, man and woman, house and trade. In my utter impotence to test the authenticity of the report of my senses, to know whether the impressions they make on me correspond with outlying objects, what difference does it make, whether Orion is up there in heaven, or some god paints the image in the firmament of the soul? The relations of parts and the end of the whole remaining the same, what is the difference, whether land and sea interact, and worlds revolve and intermingle without number or end,—deep yawning under deep, and galaxy balancing galaxy, throughout absolute space,—or whether, without relations of time and space, the same appearances are inscribed in the constant faith of man? Whether nature enjoy a substantial existence without, or is only in the apocalypse of the mind, it is alike useful and alike venerable to me. Be it what it may, it is ideal to me so long as I cannot try the accuracy of my senses.

The frivolous make themselves merry with the Ideal theory, as if its consequences were

burlesque; as if it affected the stability of nature. It surely does not. God never jests with us, and will not compromise the end of nature by permitting any inconsequence in its procession. Any distrust of the permanence of laws would paralyze the faculties of man. Their permanence is sacredly respected, and his faith therein is perfect. The wheels and springs of man are all set to the hypothesis of the permanence of nature. We are not built like a ship to be tossed, but like a house to stand. It is a natural consequence of this structure, that so long as the active powers predominate over the reflective, we resist with indignation any hint that nature is more short-lived or mutable than spirit. The broker, the wheelwright, the carpenter, the tollman, are much displeased at the intimation.

But whilst we acquiesce entirely in the permanence of natural laws, the question of the absolute existence of nature still remains open. It is the uniform effect of culture on the human mind, not to shake our faith in the stability of particular phenomena, as of heat, water, azote; but to lead us to regard nature as phenomenon, not a substance; to attribute necessary existence to spirit; to esteem nature as an accident and an effect.

To the senses and the unrenewed understanding, belongs a sort of instinctive belief in the absolute existence of nature. In their view man and nature are indissolubly joined. Things are ultimates, and they never look beyond their sphere. The presence of Reason mars this faith. The first effort of thought tends to relax this despotism of the senses which binds us to nature as if we were a part of it, and shows us nature aloof, and, as it were, afloat. Until this higher agency intervened, the animal eye sees, with wonderful accuracy, sharp outlines and colored surfaces. When the eye of Reason opens, to outline and surface are at once added grace and expression. These proceed from imagination and affection, and abate somewhat of the angular distinctness of objects. If the Reason be stimulated to more earnest vision, outlines and surfaces become transparent, and are no longer seen; causes and spirits are seen through them. The best moments of life are these delicious awakenings of the higher powers, and the reverential withdrawing of nature before its God.

Let us proceed to indicate the effects of culture.

1. Our first institution in the Ideal philosophy is a hint from Nature herself. Nature is made to conspire with spirit to emancipate us. Certain mechanical changes, a small alteration in our local position, apprises us of a dualism. We are strangely affected by seeing the shore from a moving ship, from a balloon, or through the tints of an unusual sky. The least change in our point of view gives the whole world a pictorial air. A man who seldom rides, needs only to get into a coach and traverse his own town, to turn the street into a puppet-show. The men, the women,—talking, running, bartering, fighting,—the earnest mechanic, the loungeur, the beggar, the boys, the dogs, are unrealized at once, or, at least, wholly detached from all relation to the observer, and seen as apparent, not substantial beings. What new thoughts are suggested by seeing a face of country quite familiar, in the rapid movement of the railroad car! Nay, the most wonted objects (make a very slight change in the point of vision) please us most. In a camera obscura, the butcher's cart, and the figure of one of our own family amuse us. So a portrait of a well-known face gratifies us. Turn the eyes upside down, by looking at the landscape through your legs, and how agreeable is the picture, though you have seen it any time these twenty years!

In these cases, by mechanical means, is suggested the difference between the observer and the spectacle,—between man and nature. Hence arises a pleasure mixed with awe; I may say, a low degree of the sublime is felt, from the fact, probably, that man is hereby apprised that whilst the world is a spectacle, something in himself is stable.

2. In a higher manner the poet communicates the same pleasure. By a few strokes he delineates, as on air, the sun, the mountain, the camp, the city, the hero, the maiden, not different from what we know them, but only lifted from the ground and afloat before the eye. He unfixes the land and the sea, makes them revolve around the axis of his primary thought, and disposes them anew. Possessed himself by a heroic passion, he uses matter as symbols of it. The sensual man conforms thoughts to things; the poet conforms things to his thoughts. The one

esteems nature as rooted and fast; the other, as fluid, and impresses his being thereon. To him, the refractory world is ductile and flexible; he invests dust and stones with humanity, and makes them the words of the Reason. The Imagination may be defined to be the use which the Reason makes of the material world. Shakespeare possesses the power of subordinating nature for the purposes of expression, beyond all poets. His imperial muse tosses the creation like a bauble from hand to hand, and uses it to embody any caprice of thought that is uppermost in his mind. The remotest spaces of nature are visited, and the farthest Sundered things are brought together, by a subtile spiritual connection. We are made aware that magnitude of material things is relative, and all objects shrink and expand to serve the passion of the poet. Thus in his sonnets, the lays of birds, the scents and dyes of flowers he finds to be the *shadow* of his beloved; time, which keeps her from him, is his *chest*; the suspicion she has awakened, is her *ornament*:

The ornament of beauty is Suspect,
A crow which flies in heaven's sweetest air.

His passion is not the fruit of chance; it swells, as he speaks, to a city, or a state:

No, it was builded far from accident;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Under the brow of thralling discontent;
It fears not policy, that heretic,
That works on leases of short numbered hours,
But all alone stands hugely politic.

In the strength of his constancy, the Pyramids seem to him recent and transitory. The freshness of youth and love dazzles him with its resemblance to morning:

Take those lips away
Which so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes,—the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn.

The wild beauty of this hyperbole, I may say in passing, it would not be easy to match in literature.

This transfiguration which all material objects undergo through the passion of the poet,—this power which he exerts to dwarf the great, to magnify the small,—might be illustrated by a thousand examples from his

plays. I have before me the *Tempest*, and will cite only these few lines:

ARIEL. The strong based promontory
Have I made shake, and by the spurs plucked
up
The pine and cedar.

Prospero calls for music to soothe the frantic
Alonzo, and his companions:

A solemn air, and the best comforter
To an unsettled fancy, cure thy brains
Now useless, boiled within thy skull.

Again:

The charm dissolves apace,
And, as the morning steals upon the night,
Melting the darkness, so their rising senses
Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle
Their clearer reason.

Their understanding
Begins to swell: and the approaching tide
Will shortly fill the reasonable shores
That now lie foul and muddy.

The perception of real affinities between events (that is to say, of *ideal* affinities, for those only are real) enables the poet thus to make free with the most imposing forms and phenomena of the world, and to assert the predominance of the soul.

3. Whilst thus the poet animates nature with his own thoughts, he differs from the philosopher only herein, that the one proposes Beauty as his main end; the other Truth. But the philosopher, not less than the poet, postpones the apparent order and relations of things to the empire of thought. "The problem of philosophy," according to Plato, "is, for all that exists conditionally, to find a ground unconditioned and absolute." It proceeds on the faith that a law determines all phenomena, which being known, the phenomena can be predicted. That law, when in the mind, is an idea. Its beauty is infinite. The true philosopher and the true poet are one, and a beauty, which is truth, and a truth, which is beauty, is the aim of both. Is not the charm of one of Plato's or Aristotle's definitions strictly like that of the *Antigone* of Sophocles? It is, in both cases, that a spiritual life has been imparted to nature; that the solid seeming block of matter has been pervaded and dissolved by a thought; that this feeble human being has penetrated the vast masses of nature with an

informing soul, and recognized itself in their harmony, that is, seized their law. In physics, when this is attained, the memory disburthens itself of its cumbrous catalogues of particulars, and carries centuries of observation in a single formula.

Thus even in physics, the material is degraded before the spiritual. The astronomer, the geometer, rely on their irrefragable analysis, and disdain the results of observation. The sublime remark of Euler on his law of arches, "This will be found contrary to all experience, yet is true," had already transferred nature into the mind, and left matter like an outcast corpse.

4. Intellectual science has been observed to beget invariably a doubt of the existence of matter. Turgot said, "He that has never doubted the existence of matter, may be assured he has no aptitude for metaphysical inquiries." It fastens the attention upon immortal necessary uncreated natures, that is, upon Ideas; and in their presence we feel that the outward circumstance is a dream and a shade. Whilst we wait in this Olympus of gods, we think of nature as an appendix to the soul. We ascend into their region, and know that these are the thoughts of the Supreme Being. "These are they who were set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When he prepared the heavens, they were there; when he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the fountains of the deep. Then they were by him, as one brought up with him. Of them took he counsel."

Their influence is proportionate. As objects of science they are accessible to few men. Yet all men are capable of being raised by piety or by passion into their region. And no man touches these divine natures, without becoming, in some degree, himself divine. Like a new soul, they renew the body. We become physically nimble and lightsome; we tread on air; life is no longer irksome, and we think it will never be so. No man fears age or misfortune or death in their serene company, for he is transported out of the district of change. Whilst we behold unveiled the nature of Justice and Truth, we learn the difference between the absolute and the conditional or relative. We apprehend the absolute. As it were, for the first time, *we exist*. We become immortal,

for we learn that time and space are relations of matter; that with a perception of truth or a virtuous will they have no affinity.

5. Finally, religion and ethics, which may be fitly called the practice of ideas, or the introduction of ideas into life, have an analogous effect with all lower culture, in degrading nature and suggesting its dependence on spirit. Ethics and religion differ herein: that the one is the system of human duties commencing from man; the other, from God. Religion includes the personality of God; Ethics does not. They are one to our present design. They both put nature under foot. The first and last lesson of religion is, "The things that are seen, are temporal; the things that are unseen, are eternal." It puts an affront upon nature. It does that for the unschooled, which philosophy does for Berkeley and Viasa. The uniform language that may be heard in the churches of the most ignorant sects is,—“Contemn the unsubstantial shows of the world; they are vanities, dreams, shadows, unrealities; seek the realities of religion.” The devotee flouts nature. Some theosophists have arrived at a certain hostility and indignation towards matter, as the Manichean and Plotinus. They distrusted in themselves any looking back to these flesh-pots of Egypt. Plotinus was ashamed of his body. In short, they might all say of matter, what Michael Angelo said of external beauty, “It is the frail and weary weed, in which God dresses the soul which he has called into time.”

It appears that motion, poetry, physical and intellectual science, and religion, all tend to affect our convictions of the reality of the external world. But I own there is something ungrateful in expanding too curiously the particulars of the general proposition, that all culture tends to imbue us with idealism. I have no hostility to nature, but a child's love to it. I expand and live in the warm day like corn and melons. Let us speak her fair. I do not wish to fling stones at my beautiful mother, nor soil my gentle nest. I only wish to indicate the true position of nature in regard to man, wherein to establish man all right education tends; as the ground which to attain is the object of human life, that is, of man's connection with nature. Culture inverts the vulgar views of nature, and brings the mind to call that ap-

parent which it uses to call real, and that real which it uses to call visionary. Children, it is true, believe in the external world. The belief that it appears only, is an afterthought, but with culture this faith will as surely arise on the mind as did the first.

The advantage of the ideal theory over the popular faith is this, that it presents the world in precisely that view which is most desirable to the mind. It is, in fact, the view which Reason, both speculative and practical, that is, philosophy and virtue, take. For seen in the light of thought, the world always is phenomenal; and virtue subordinates it to the mind. Idealism sees the world in God. It beholds the whole circle of persons and things, of actions and events, of country and religion, not as painfully accumulated, atom after atom, act after act, in an aged creeping Past, but as one vast picture which God paints on the instant eternity for the contemplation of the soul. Therefore the soul holds itself off from a too trivial and microscopic study of the universal tablet. It respects the end too much to immerse itself in the means. It sees something more important in Christianity than the scandals of ecclesiastical history or the niceties of criticism; and, very incurious concerning persons or miracles, and not at all disturbed by chasms of historical evidence, it accepts from God the phenomenon, as it finds it, as the pure and awful form of religion in the world. It is not hot and passionate at the appearance of what it calls its own good or bad fortune, at the union or opposition of other persons. No man is its enemy. It accepts whatsoever befalls, as part of its lesson. It is a watcher more than a doer, and it is a doer, only that it may the better watch.

VII. SPIRIT

It is essential to a true theory of nature and of man, that it should contain somewhat progressive. Uses that are exhausted or that may be, and facts that end in the statement, cannot be all that is true of this brave lodging wherein man is harbored, and wherein all his faculties find appropriate and endless exercise. And all the uses of nature admit of being summed in one, which yields the activity of man an infinite scope. Through all its kingdoms, to the suburbs and outskirts

of things, it is faithful to the cause whence it had its origin. It always speaks of Spirit. It suggests the absolute. It is a perpetual effect. It is a great shadow pointing always to the sun behind us.

The aspect of Nature is devout. Like the figure of Jesus, she stands with bended head, and hands folded upon the breast. The happiest man is he who learns from nature the lesson of worship.

Of that ineffable essence which we call Spirit, he that thinks most, will say least. We can foresee God in the coarse, and, as it were, distant phenomena of matter; but when we try to define and describe himself, both language and thought desert us, and we are as helpless as fools and savages. That essence refuses to be recorded in propositions, but when man has worshiped him intellectually, the noblest ministry of nature is to stand as the apparition of God. It is the organ through which the universal spirit speaks to the individual, and strives to lead back the individual to it.

When we consider Spirit, we see that the views already presented do not include the whole circumference of man. We must add some related thoughts.

Three problems are put by nature to the mind: What is matter? Whence is it? and Whereto? The first of these questions only, the ideal theory answers. Idealism saith: matter is a phenomenon, not a substance. Idealism acquaints us with the total disparity between the evidence of our own being and the evidence of the world's being. The one is perfect; the other, incapable of any assurance; the mind is a part of the nature of things; the world is a divine dream, from which we may presently awake to the glories and certainties of day. Idealism is a hypothesis to account for nature by other principles than those of carpentry and chemistry. Yet, if it only deny the existence of matter, it does not satisfy the demands of the spirit. It leaves God out of me. It leaves me in the splendid labyrinth of my perceptions, to wander without end. Then the heart resists it, because it balks the affections in denying substantive being to men and women. Nature is so pervaded with human life that there is something of humanity in all and in every particular. But this theory makes nature foreign to me, and does not account

for that consanguinity which we acknowledge to it.

Let it stand then, in the present state of our knowledge, merely as a useful introductory hypothesis, serving to apprise us of the eternal distinction between the soul and the world.

But when, following the invisible steps of thought, we come to inquire, Whence is matter? and Whereto? many truths arise to us out of the recesses of consciousness. We learn that the highest is present to the soul of man; that the dread universal essence, which is not wisdom, or love, or beauty, or power, but all in one, and each entirely, is that for which all things exist, and that by which they are; that spirit creates; that behind nature, throughout nature, spirit is present; one and not compound, it does not act upon us from without, that is, in space and time, but spiritually, or through ourselves: therefore, that spirit, that is, the Supreme Being, does not build up nature around us but puts it forth through us, as the life of the tree puts forth new branches and leaves through the pores of the old. As a plant upon the earth, so a man rests upon the bosom of God; he is nourished by unfailing fountains, and draws at his need inexhaustible power. Who can set bounds to the possibilities of man? Once inhale the upper air, being admitted to behold the absolute natures of justice and truth, and we learn that man has access to the entire mind of the Creator, is himself the creator in the finite. This view, which admonishes me where the sources of wisdom and power lie, and points to virtue as to

The golden key

Which opes the palace of eternity,

carries upon its face the highest certificate of truth, because it animates me to create my own world through the purification of my soul.

The world proceeds from the same spirit as the body of man. It is a remoter and inferior incarnation of God, a projection of God in the unconscious. But it differs from the body in one important respect. It is not, like that, now subjected to the human will. Its serene order is inviolable by us. It is, therefore, to us, the present expositor of the divine mind. It is a fixed point whereby we may measure our departure. As we de-

generate, the contrast between us and our house is more evident. We are as much strangers in nature as we are aliens from God. We do not understand the notes of birds. The fox and the deer run away from us; the bear and tiger rend us. We do not know the uses of more than a few plants, as corn and the apple, the potato and the vine. Is not the landscape, every glimpse of which hath a grandeur, a face of him? Yet this may show us what discord is between man and nature, for you cannot freely admire a noble landscape if laborers are digging in the field hard by. The poet finds something ridiculous in his delight until he is out of the sight of men.

VIII. PROSPECTS

IN inquiries respecting the laws of the world and the frame of things, the highest reason is always the truest. That which seems faintly possible, it is so refined, is often faint and dim because it is deepest seated in the mind among the eternal verities. Empirical science is apt to cloud the sight, and by the very knowledge of functions and processes to bereave the student of the manly contemplation of the whole. The savant becomes unpoetic. But the best read naturalist who lends an entire and devout attention to truth, will see that there remains much to learn of his relation to the world, and that it is not to be learned by any addition or subtraction or other comparison of known quantities, but is arrived at by untaught sallies of the spirit, by a continual self-recovery, and by entire humility. He will perceive that there are far more excellent qualities in the student than preciseness and infallibility; that a guess is often more fruitful than an indisputable affirmation, and that a dream may let us deeper into the secret of nature than a hundred concerted experiments.

For the problems to be solved are precisely those which the physiologist and the naturalist omit to state. It is not so pertinent to man to know all the individuals of the animal kingdom, as it is to know whence and whereto is this tyrannizing unity in his constitution, which evermore separates and classifies things, endeavoring to reduce the most diverse to one form. When I behold a rich landscape, it is less to my purpose to recite correctly the order and superposition of the

strata, than to know why all thought of multitude is lost in a tranquil sense of unity. I cannot greatly honor minuteness in details, so long as there is no hint to explain the relation between things and thoughts; no ray upon the *metaphysics* of conchology, of botany, of the arts, to show the relation of the forms of flowers, shells, animals, architecture, to the mind, and build science upon ideas. In a cabinet of natural history, we become sensible of a certain occult recognition and sympathy in regard to the most unwieldy and eccentric forms of beast, fish, and insect. The American who has been confined, in his own country, to the sight of buildings designed after foreign models, is surprised on entering York Minster or St. Peter's at Rome, by the feeling that these structures are imitations also,—faint copies of an invisible archetype. Nor has science sufficient humanity, so long as the naturalist overlooks that wonderful congruity which subsists between man and the world; of which he is lord, not because he is the most subtle inhabitant, but because he is its head and heart, and finds something of himself in every great and small thing, in every mountain stratum, in every new law of color, fact of astronomy, or atmospheric influence which observation or analysis lays open. A perception of this mystery inspires the muse of George Herbert, the beautiful psalmist of the seventeenth century. The following lines are part of his little poem on *Man*.

Man is all symmetry,
Full of proportions, one limb to another,
And to all the world besides.
Each part may call the farthest, brother;
For head with foot hath private amity,
And both with moons and tides.

Nothing hath got so far
But man hath caught and kept it as his prey;
His eyes dismount the highest star;
He is in little all the sphere.
Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they
Find their acquaintance there.

For us the winds do blow,
The earth doth rest, heaven move, and fountains
flow.
Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight, or as our treasure;
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure.

The stars have us to bed:
Night draws the curtain, which the sun with-
draws:

Music and light attend our head.
All things unto our flesh are kind
In their descent and being; to our mind
In their ascent and cause.

More servants wait on man
Than he'll take notice of; in every path
He treads down that which doth befriend him
When sickness makes him pale and wan.
Oh mighty love! Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him.

The perception of this class of truths makes the attraction which draws men to science, but the end is lost sight of in attention to the means. In view of this half-sight of science, we accept the sentence of Plato, that "poetry comes nearer to vital truth than history." Every surmise and vaticination of the mind is entitled to a certain respect, and we learn to prefer imperfect theories, and sentences which contain glimpses of truth, to digested systems which have no one valuable suggestion. A wise writer will feel that the ends of study and composition are best answered by announcing undiscovered regions of thought, and so communicating, through hope, new activity to the torpid spirit.

I shall therefore conclude this essay with some traditions of man and nature, which a certain poet sang to me; and which, as they have always been in the world, and perhaps reappear to every bard, may be both history and prophecy.

"The foundations of man are not in matter, but in spirit. But the element of spirit is eternity. To it, therefore, the longest series of events, the oldest chronologies are young and recent. In the cycle of the universal man, from whom the known individuals proceed, centuries are points, and all history is but the epoch of one degradation.

"We distrust and deny inwardly our sympathy with nature. We own and disown our relation to it, by turns. We are like Nebuchadnezzar, dethroned, bereft of reason, and eating grass like an ox. But who can set limits to the remedial force of spirit?

"A man is a god in ruins. When men are innocent, life shall be longer, and shall pass into the immortal as gently as we awake from dreams. Now, the world would be

insane and rabid, if these disorganizations should last for hundreds of years. It is kept in check by death and infancy. Infancy is the perpetual Messiah, which comes into the arms of fallen men, and pleads with them to return to paradise.

"Man is the dwarf of himself. Once he was permeated and dissolved by spirit. He filled nature with his overflowing currents. Out from him sprang the sun and moon; from man the sun, from woman the moon. The laws of his mind, the periods of his actions externized themselves into day and night, into the year and the seasons. But, having made for himself this huge shell, his waters retired; he no longer fills the veins and veinlets; he is shrunk to a drop. He sees that the structure still fits him, but fits him colossally. Say, rather, once it fitted him, now it corresponds to him from far and on high. He adores timidly his own work. Now is man the follower of the sun, and woman the follower of the moon. Yet sometimes he starts in his slumber, and wonders at himself and his house, and muses strangely at the resemblance betwixt him and it. He perceives that if his law is still paramount, if still he have elemental power, if his word is sterling yet in nature, it is not conscious power, it is not inferior but superior to his will. It is instinct." Thus my Orphic poet sang.

At present, man applies to nature but half his force. He works on the world with his understanding alone. He lives in it and masters it by a penny-wisdom; and he that works most in it is but a half-man, and whilst his arms are strong and his digestion good, his mind is imbruted, and he is a selfish savage. His relation to nature, his power over it, is through the understanding, as by manure; the economic use of fire, wind, water, and the mariner's needle; steam, coal, chemical agriculture; the repairs of the human body by the dentist and the surgeon. This is such a resumption of power as if a banished king should buy his territories inch by inch, instead of vaulting at once into his throne. Meantime, in the thick darkness, there are not wanting gleams of a better light,—occasional examples of the action of man upon nature with his entire force,—with reason as well as understanding. Such examples are: the traditions of miracles in the earliest antiquity of all nations; the history of

Jesus Christ; the achievements of a principle, as in religious and political revolutions, and in the abolition of the slave-trade; the miracles of enthusiasm, as those reported of Swedenborg, Hohenlohe, and the Shakers; many obscure and yet contested facts, now arranged under the name of Animal Magnetism; prayer; eloquence; self-healing; and the wisdom of children. These are examples of Reason's momentary grasp of the scepter; the exertions of a power which exists not in time or space, but an instantaneous in-streaming causing power. The difference between the actual and the ideal force of man is happily figured by the schoolmen, in saying that the knowledge of man is an evening knowledge, *vespertina cognitio*, but that of God is a morning knowledge, *matutina cognitio*.

The problem of restoring to the world original and eternal beauty is solved by the redemption of the soul. The ruin or the blank that we see when we look at nature, is in our own eye. The axis of vision is not coincident with the axis of things, and so they appear not transparent but opaque. The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is because man is dis-united with himself. He cannot be a naturalist until he satisfies all the demands of the spirit. Love is as much its demand as perception. Indeed, neither can be perfect without the other. In the uttermost meaning of the words, thought is devout, and devotion is thought. Deep calls unto deep. But in actual life, the marriage is not celebrated. There are innocent men who worship God after the tradition of their fathers, but their sense of duty has not yet extended to the use of all their faculties. And there are patient naturalists, but they freeze their subject under the wintry light of the understanding. Is not prayer also a study of truth,—a sally of the soul into the unfound infinite? No man ever prayed heartily without learning something. But when a faithful thinker, resolute to detach every object from personal relations and see it in the light of thought, shall, at the same time, kindle science with the fire of the holiest affections, then will God go forth anew into the creation.

It will not need, when the mind is prepared for study, to search for objects. The invariable mark of wisdom is to see the miraculous

in the common. What is a day? What is a year? What is summer? What is woman? What is a child? What is sleep? To our blindness, these things seem unaffecting. We make fables to hide the baldness of the fact and conform it, as we say, to the higher law of the mind. But when the fact is seen under the light of an idea, the gaudy fable fades and shrivels. We behold the real higher law. To the wise, therefore, a fact is true poetry, and the most beautiful of fables. These wonders are brought to our own door. You also are a man. Man and woman and their social life, poverty, labor, sleep, fear, fortune, are known to you. Learn that none of these things is superficial, but that each phenomenon has its roots in the faculties and affections of the mind. Whilst the abstract question occupies your intellect, nature brings it in the concrete to be solved by your hands. It were a wise inquiry for the closet, to compare, point by point, especially at remarkable crises in life, our daily history with the rise and progress of ideas in the mind.

So shall we come to look at the world with new eyes. It shall answer the endless inquiry of the intellect,—What is truth? and of the affections,—What is good? by yielding itself passive to the educated Will. Then shall come to pass what my poet said: "Nature is not fixed but fluid. Spirit alters, molds, makes it. The immobility or bruteness of nature is the absence of spirit; to pure spirit it is fluid, it is volatile, it is obedient. Every spirit builds itself a house and beyond its house a world and beyond its world a heaven. Know then that the world exists for you. For you is the phenomenon perfect. What we are, that only can we see. All that Adam had, all that Cæsar could, you have and can do. Adam called his house, heaven and earth; Cæsar called his house, Rome; you perhaps call yours, a cobbler's trade; a hundred acres of ploughed land; or a scholar's garret. Yet line for line and point for point your dominion is as great as theirs, though without fine names. Build therefore your own world. As fast as you conform your life to the pure idea in your mind, that will unfold its great proportions. A correspondent revolution in things will attend the influx of the spirit. So fast will disagreeable appearances, swine, spiders, snakes, pests, mad-houses, prisons, enemies, vanish; they are

temporary and shall be no more seen. The sordor and filths of nature, the sun shall dry up and the wind exhale. As when the summer comes from the south the snow-banks melt and the face of the earth becomes green before it, so shall the advancing spirit create its ornaments along its path, and carry with it the beauty it visits and the song which enchants it; it shall draw beautiful faces, warm hearts, wise discourse, and heroic acts, around its way, until evil is no more seen. The kingdom of man over nature, which cometh not with observation,—a dominion such as now is beyond his dream of God,—he shall enter without more wonder than the blind man feels who is gradually restored to perfect sight.”

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR¹

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN, I greet you on the recommencement of our literary year. Our anniversary is one of hope, and, perhaps, not enough of labor. We do not meet for games of strength or skill, for the recitation of histories, tragedies, and odes, like the ancient Greeks; for parliaments of love and poesy, like the Troubadours; nor for the advancement of science, like our contemporaries in the British and European capitals. Thus far, our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such it is precious as the sign of an indestructible instinct. Perhaps the time is already come when it ought to be, and will be, something else; when the sluggish intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp, which now flames in our zenith, as-

tronomers announce, shall one day be the pole-star for a thousand years?

In this hope I accept the topic which not only usage but the nature of our association seem to prescribe to this day,—the AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Year by year we come up hither to read one more chapter of his biography. Let us inquire what light new days and events have thrown on his character and his hopes.

It is one of those fables which out of an unknown antiquity convey an unlooked-for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself; just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end.

The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime; that there is One Man,—present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty; and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all. Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier. In the *divided* or social state these functions are parceled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his. The fable implies that the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers. But, unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely subdivided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops, and cannot be gathered. The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney a statute-book; the mechanic a machine; the sailor a rope of the ship.

¹ Phi Beta Kappa oration, Harvard College, 31 August, 1837. Published in Boston in the same year.

In this distribution of functions the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state he is *Man Thinking*. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

In this view of him, as *Man Thinking*, the theory of his office is contained. Him Nature solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures; him the past instructs; him the future invites. Is not indeed every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student's behoof? And, finally, is not the true scholar the only true master? But the old oracle said, "All things have two handles; beware of the wrong one." In life, too often, the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school, and consider him in reference to the main influences he receives.

I. The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and, after sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find,—so entire, so boundless. Far too as her splendors shine, system on system shooting like rays, upward, downward, without center, without circumference,—in the mass and in the particle, Nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young mind every thing is individual, stands by itself. By and by, it finds how to join two things and see in them one nature; then three, then three thousand; and so, tyrannized over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground whereby contrary and remote things cohere and flower out from one stem. It presently learns that since the dawn of history there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is

classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic, and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter; and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambitious soul sits down before each refractory fact; one after another reduces all strange constitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on forever to animate the last fiber of organization, the outskirts of nature, by insight.

Thus to him, to this school-boy under the bending dome of day, is suggested that he and it proceed from one root; one is leaf and one is flower; relation, sympathy, stirring in every vein. And what is that root? Is not that the soul of his soul? A thought too bold; a dream too wild. Yet when this spiritual light shall have revealed the law of more earthly natures,—when he has learned to worship the soul, and to see that the natural philosophy that now is, is only the first gropings of its gigantic hand, he shall look forward to an ever expanding knowledge as to a becoming creator. He shall see that nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself," and the modern precept, "Study nature," become at last one maxim.

II. The next great influence into the spirit of the scholar is the mind of the Past,—in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is inscribed. Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth,—learn the amount of this influence more conveniently,—by considering their value alone.

The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new

arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him life; it went out from him truth. It came to him short-lived actions; it went out from him immortal thoughts. It came to him business; it went from him poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand, and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone, of transmuting life into truth. In proportion to the completeness of the distillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be. But none is quite perfect. As no air-pump can by any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or write a book of pure thought, that shall be as efficient, in all respects, to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this.

Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation, the act of thought, is transferred to the record. The poet chanting was felt to be a divine man: henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforward it is settled the book is perfect; as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it, and makes an outcry if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books.

Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the bookworm. Hence the book-learned

class, who value books, as such; not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate with the world and the soul. Hence the restorers of readings, the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all degrees.

Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although in almost all men obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth and utters truth, or creates. In this action it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. In its essence it is progressive. The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius. This is good, say they,—let us hold by this. They pin me down. They look backward and not forward. But genius looks forward: the eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hind-head: man hopes: genius creates. Whatever talents may be, if the man create not, the pure efflux of the Deity is not his;—cinders and smoke there may be, but not yet flame. There are creative manners, there are creative actions, and creative words; manners, actions, words, that is, indicative of no custom or authority, but springing spontaneous from the mind's own sense of good and fair.

On the other part, instead of being its own seer, let it receive from another mind its truth, though it were in torrents of light, without periods of solitude, inquest, and self-recovery, and a fatal disservice is done. Genius is always sufficiently the enemy of genius by over-influence. The literature of every nation bears me witness. The English dramatic poets have Shakespearized now for two hundred years.

Undoubtedly there is a right way of reading, so it be sternly subordinated. Man Thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times. When he can read God directly, the

hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must,—when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining,—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again, where the dawn is. We hear, that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says, "A fig tree, looking on a fig tree, becometh fruitful."

It is remarkable, the character of the pleasure we derive from the best books. They impress us with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads. We read the verses of one of the great English poets, of Chaucer, of Marvell, of Dryden, with the most modern joy,—with a pleasure, I mean, which is in great part caused by the abstraction of all *time* from their verses. There is some awe mixed with the joy of our surprise, when this poet, who lived in some past world, two or three hundred years ago, says that which lies close to my own soul, that which I also had well-nigh thought and said. But for the evidence thence afforded to the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds, we should suppose some preëstablished harmony, some foresight of souls that were to be, and some preparation of stores for their future wants, like the fact observed in insects, who lay up food before death for the young grub they shall never see.

I would not be hurried by any love of system, by any exaggeration of instincts, to underrate the Book. We all know, that as the human body can be nourished on any food, though it were boiled grass and the broth of shoes, so the human mind can be fed by any knowledge. And great and heroic men have existed who had almost no other information than by the printed page. I only would say that it needs a strong head to bear that diet. One must be an inventor to read well. As the proverb says, "He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry out the wealth of the Indies." There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world. We then see, what is always true, that as the seer's hour of vision

is short and rare among heavy days and months, so is its record, perchance, the least part of his volume. The discerning will read, in his Plato or Shakespeare, only that least part,—only the authentic utterances of the oracle;—all the rest he rejects, were it never so many times Plato's and Shakespeare's.

Of course there is a portion of reading quite indispensable to a wise man. History and exact science he must learn by laborious reading. Colleges, in like manner, have their indispensable office,—to teach elements. But they can only highly serve us when they aim not to drill, but to create; when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame. Thought and knowledge are natures in which apparatus and pretension avail nothing. Gowns and pecuniary foundations, though of towns of gold, can never countervail the least sentence or syllable of wit. Forget this, and our American colleges will recede in their public importance, whilst they grow richer every year.

III. There goes in the world a notion that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian,—as unfit for any handiwork or public labor as a pen-knife for an ax. The so-called "practical men" sneer at speculative men, as if, because they speculate or *see*, they could do nothing. I have heard it said that the clergy,—who are always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day,—are addressed as women; that the rough, spontaneous conversation of men they do not hear, but only a mincing and diluted speech. They are often virtually disfranchised; and indeed there are advocates for their celibacy. As far as this is true of the studious classes, it is not just and wise. Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential. Without it he is not yet man. Without it thought can never ripen into truth. Whilst the world hangs before the eye as a cloud of beauty, we cannot even see its beauty. Inaction is cowardice, but there can be no scholar without the heroic mind. The preamble of thought, the transition through which it passes from the unconscious to the conscious, is action. Only so much do I know, as I have lived. Instantly we know

whose words are loaded with life, and whose not.

The world,—this shadow of the soul, or *other me*,—lies wide around. Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself. I run eagerly into this resounding tumult. I grasp the hands of those next me, and take my place in the ring to suffer and to work, taught by an instinct that so shall the dumb abyss be vocal with speech. I pierce its order; I dissipate its fear; I dispose of it within the circuit of my expanding life. So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted, or so far have I extended my being, my dominion. I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake. It is pearls and rubies to his discourse. Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instructors in eloquence and wisdom. The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action passed by, as a loss of power.

It is the raw material out of which the intellect molds her splendid products. A strange process too, this by which experience is converted into thought, as a mulberry leaf is converted into satin. The manufacture goes forward at all hours.

The actions and events of our childhood and youth are now matters of calmest observation. They lie like fair pictures in the air. Not so with our recent actions,—with the business which we now have in hand. On this we are quite unable to speculate. Our affections as yet circulate through it. We no more feel or know it than we feel the feet, or the hand, or the brain of our body. The new deed is yet a part of life,—remains for a time immersed in our unconscious life. In some contemplative hour it detaches itself from the life like a ripe fruit, to become a thought of the mind. Instantly it is raised, transfigured; the corruptible has put on incorruption. Henceforth it is an object of beauty, however base its origin and neighborhood. Observe too the impossibility of antedating this act. In its grub state, it cannot fly, it cannot shine, it is a dull grub. But suddenly, without observation, the selfsame thing unfurls beautiful wings, and is an angel of wisdom. So is there no fact, no event, in our private history, which shall not, sooner or

later, lose its adhesive, inert form, and astonish us by soaring from our body into the empyrean. Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys, and dogs, and ferules, the love of little maids and berries, and many another fact that once filled the whole sky, are gone already; friend and relative, profession and party, town and country, nation and world, must also soar and sing.

Of course, he who has put forth his total strength in fit actions has the richest return of wisdom. I will not shut myself out of this globe of action, and transplant an oak into a flower-pot, there to hunger and pine; nor trust the revenue of some single faculty, and exhaust one vein of thought, much like those Savoyards, who, getting their livelihood by carving shepherds, shepherdesses, and smoking Dutchmen, for all Europe, went out one day to the mountain to find stock, and discovered that they had whittled up the last of their pine trees. Authors we have, in numbers, who have written out their vein, and who, moved by a commendable prudence, sail for Greece or Palestine, follow the trapper into the prairie, or ramble round Algiers, to replenish their merchantable stock.

If it were only for a vocabulary, the scholar would be covetous of action. Life is our dictionary. Years are well spent in country labors; in town; in the insight into trades and manufactures; in frank intercourse with many men and women; in science; in art; to the one end of mastering in all their facts a language by which to illustrate and embody our perceptions. I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech. Life lies behind us as the quarry from whence we get tiles and copestones for the masonry of to-day. This is the way to learn grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the work-yard made.

But the final value of action, like that of books, and better than books, is that it is a resource. That great principle of Undulation in nature, that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath; in desire and satiety; in the ebb and flow of the sea; in day and night; in heat and cold; and, as yet more deeply ingrained in every atom and every fluid, is known to us under the name of

Polarity,—these “fits of easy transmission and reflection,” as Newton called them, are the law of nature because they are the law of spirit.

The mind now thinks, now acts, and each fit reproduces the other. When the artist has exhausted his materials, when the fancy no longer paints, when thoughts are no longer apprehended and books are a weariness,—he has always the resource *to live*. Character is higher than intellect. Thinking is the function. Living is the functionary. The stream retreats to its source. A great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think. Does he lack organ or medium to impart his truth? He can still fall back on this elemental force of living them. This is a total act. Thinking is a partial act. Let the grandeur of justice shine in his affairs. Let the beauty of affection cheer his lowly roof. Those “far from fame,” who dwell and act with him, will feel the force of his constitution in the doings and passages of the day better than it can be measured by any public and designed display. Time shall teach him that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives. Herein he unfolds the sacred germ of his instinct, screened from influence. What is lost in seemliness is gained in strength. Not out of those on whom systems of education have exhausted their culture, comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhandseled savage nature; out of terrible Druids and Berserkers come at last Alfred and Shakespeare.

I hear therefore with joy whatever is beginning to be said of the dignity and necessity of labor to every citizen. There is virtue yet in the hoe and the spade, for learned as well as for unlearned hands. And labor is everywhere welcome; always we are invited to work; only be this limitation observed, that a man shall not for the sake of wider activity sacrifice any opinion to the popular judgments and modes of action.

I have now spoken of the education of the scholar by nature, by books, and by action. It remains to say somewhat of his duties.

They are such as become Man Thinking. They may all be comprised in self-trust. The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amidst appearances. He plies the slow, un-

honored, and unpaid task of observation. Flamsteed¹ and Herschel, in their glazed observatories, may catalogue the stars with the praise of all men, and the results being splendid and useful, honor is sure. But he, in his private observatory, cataloguing obscure and nebulous stars of the human mind, which as yet no man has thought of as such,—watching days and months sometimes for a few facts; correcting still his old records;—must relinquish display and immediate fame. In the long period of his preparation he must betray often an ignorance and shiftlessness in popular arts, incurring the disdain of the able who shoulder him aside. Long he must stammer in his speech; often forgo the living for the dead. Worse yet, he must accept—how often!—poverty and solitude. For the ease and pleasure of treading the old road, accepting the fashions, the education, the religion of society, he takes the cross of making his own, and, of course, the self-accusation, the faint heart, the frequent uncertainty and loss of time, which are the nettles and tangling vines in the way of the self-relying and self-directed; and the state of virtual hostility in which he seems to stand to society, and especially to educated society. For all this loss and scorn, what offset? He is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who raises himself from private considerations and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatsoever oracles the human heart, in all emergencies, in all solemn hours, has uttered as its commentary on the world of actions,—these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing men and events of to-day,—this he shall hear and promulgate.

These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself, and to defer never to the popular cry. He and he only knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great

¹ English astronomer (1646-1719).

decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if all depended on this particular up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit his belief that a popgun is a popgun, though the ancient and honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom. In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself; add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his own time,—happy enough if he can satisfy himself alone that this day he has seen something truly. Success treads on every right step. For the instinct is sure, that prompts him to tell his brother what he thinks. He then learns that in going down into the secrets of his own mind he has descended into the secrets of all minds. He learns that he who has mastered any law in his private thoughts, is master to that extent of all men whose language he speaks, and of all into whose language his own can be translated. The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that which men in crowded cities find true for them also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank confessions, his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses, until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers;—that they drink his words because he fulfills for them their own nature; the deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true. The people delight in it; the better part of every man feels, This is my music; this myself.

In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be,—free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, “without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution.” Brave; for fear is a thing which a scholar by his very function puts behind him. Fear always springs from ignorance. It is a shame to him if his tranquillity, amid dangerous times, arise from the presumption that like children and women his is a protected class; or if he seek a temporary peace by the diver-

sion of his thoughts from politics or vexed questions, hiding his head like an ostrich in the flowering bushes, peeping into microscopes, and turning rhymes, as a boy whistles to keep his courage up. So is the danger a danger still; so is the fear worse. Manlike let him turn and face it. Let him look into its eye and search its nature, inspect its origin,—see the whelping of this lion,—which lies no great way back; he will then find in himself a perfect comprehension of its nature and extent; he will have made his hands meet on the other side, and can henceforth defy it and pass on superior. The world is his who can see through its pretension. What deafness, what stone-blind custom, what overgrown error you behold is there only by sufferance,—by your sufferance. See it to be a lie, and you have already dealt it its mortal blow.

Yes, we are the cowed,—we the trustless. It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into nature; that the world was finished a long time ago. As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it. To ignorance and sin, it is flint. They adapt themselves to it as they may; but in proportion as a man has any thing in him divine, the firmament flows before him and takes his signet and form. Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind. They are the kings of the world who give the color of their present thought to all nature and all art, and persuade men by the cheerful serenity of their carrying the matter, that this thing which they do is the apple which the ages have desired to pluck, now at last ripe, and inviting nations to the harvest. The great man makes the great thing. Wherever Macdonald sits, there is the head of the table. Linnæus makes botany the most alluring of studies, and wins it from the farmer and the herb-woman; Davy, chemistry; and Cuvier, fossils. The day is always his who works in it with serenity and great aims. The unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth, as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon.

For this self-trust, the reason is deeper than can be fathomed,—darker than can be enlightened. I might not carry with me the feeling of my audience in stating my own

belief. But I have already shown the ground of my hope, in adverting to the doctrine that man is one. I believe man has been wronged; he has wronged himself. He has almost lost the light that can lead him back to his prerogatives. Men are become of no account. Men in history, men in the world of to-day, are bugs, are spawn, and are called "the mass" and "the herd." In a century, in a millennium, one or two men; that is to say, one or two approximations to the right state of every man. All the rest behold in the hero or the poet their own green and crude being,—ripened; yes, and are content to be less, so *that* may attain to its full stature. What a testimony, full of grandeur, full of pity, is borne to the demands of his own nature, by the poor clansman, the poor partisan, who rejoices in the glory of his chief. The poor and the low find some amends to their immense moral capacity, for their acquiescence in a political and social inferiority. They are content to be brushed like flies from the path of a great person, so that justice shall be done by him to that common nature which it is the dearest desire of all to see enlarged and glorified. They sun themselves in the great man's light, and feel it to be their own element. They cast the dignity of man from their downtrodden selves upon the shoulders of a hero, and will perish to add one drop of blood to make that great heart beat, those giant sinews combat and conquer. He lives for us, and we live in him.

Men such as they are, very naturally seek money or power; and power, because it is as good as money,—the "spoils," so called, "of office." And why not? for they aspire to the highest, and this, in their sleep-walking, they dream is highest. Wake them and they shall quit the false good and leap to the true, and leave governments to clerks and desks. This revolution is to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture. The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the upbuilding of a man. Here are the materials strewn along the ground. The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy, more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history. For a man, rightly viewed, comprehendeth the particular natures of all men. Each philosopher, each bard, each

actor has only done for me, as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself. The books which once we valued more than the apple of the eye, we have quite exhausted. What is that but saying that we have come up with the point of view which the universal mind took through the eyes of one scribe; we have been that man, and have passed on. First, one, then another, we drain all cisterns, and waxing greater by all these supplies, we crave a better and more abundant food. The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.

But I have dwelt perhaps tediously upon this abstraction of the Scholar. I ought not to delay longer to add what I have to say of nearer reference to the time and to this country.

Historically, there is thought to be a difference in the ideas which predominate over successive epochs, and there are data for marking the genius of the Classic, of the Romantic, and now of the Reflective or Philosophical age. With the views I have intimated of the oneness or the identity of the mind through all individuals, I do not much dwell on these differences. In fact, I believe each individual passes through all three. The boy is a Greek; the youth, romantic; the adult, reflective. I deny not, however, that a revolution in the leading idea may be distinctly enough traced.

Our age is bewailed as the age of Introversion. Must that needs be evil? We, it seems, are critical; we are embarrassed with second thoughts; we cannot enjoy anything for hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists; we are lined with eyes; we see with our feet; the time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness,—

Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.

It is so bad then? Sight is the last thing to be pitied. Would we be blind? Do we fear

lest we should outsee nature and God, and drink truth dry? I look upon the discontent of the literary class as a mere announcement of the fact that they find themselves not in the state of mind of their fathers, and regret the coming state as untried; as a boy dreads the water before he has learned that he can swim. If there is any period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution; when the old and the new stand side by side and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

I read with some joy of the auspicious signs of the coming days, as they glimmer already through poetry and art, through philosophy and science, through church and state.

One of these signs is the fact that the same movement which effected the elevation of what was called the lowest class in the state, assumed in literature a very marked and as benign an aspect. Instead of the sublime and beautiful, the near, the low, the common, was explored and poetized. That which had been negligently trodden under foot by those who were harnessing and provisioning themselves for long journeys into far countries, is suddenly found to be richer than all foreign parts. The literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the meaning of household life, are the topics of the time. It is a great stride. It is a sign—is it not?—of new vigor when the extremities are made active, when currents of warm life run into the hands and the feet. I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic; what is doing in Italy or Arabia; what is Greek art, or Provençal minstrelsy; I embrace the common, I explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low. Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds. What would we really know the meaning of? The meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; the ballad in the street; the news of the boat; the glance of the eye; the form and the gait of the body;—show me the ultimate reason of these matters; show me the sublime presence of the highest spiritual cause lurking, as always it

does lurk, in these suburbs and extremities of nature; let me see every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly on an eternal law; and the shop, the plough, and the ledger referred to the like cause by which light undulates and poets sing;—and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany and lumber-room, but has form and order; there is no trifle, there is no puzzle, but one design unites and animates the farthest pinnacle and the lowest trench.

This idea has inspired the genius of Goldsmith, Burns, Cowper, and, in a newer time, of Goethe, Wordsworth, and Carlyle. This idea they have differently followed and with various success. In contrast with their writing, the style of Pope, of Johnson, of Gibbon, looks cold and pedantic. This writing is blood-warm. Man is surprised to find that things near are not less beautiful and wondrous than things remote. The near explains the far. The drop is a small ocean. A man is related to all nature. This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries. Goethe, in this very thing the most modern of the moderns, has shown us, as none ever did, the genius of the ancients.

There is one man of genius who has done much for this philosophy of life, whose literary value has never yet been rightly estimated;—I mean Emanuel Swedenborg. The most imaginative of men, yet writing with the precision of a mathematician, he endeavored to engraft a purely philosophical Ethics on the popular Christianity of his time. Such an attempt of course must have difficulty which no genius could surmount. But he saw and showed the connection between nature and the affections of the soul. He pierced the emblematic or spiritual character of the visible, audible, tangible world. Especially did his shade-loving muse hover over and interpret the lower parts of nature; he showed the mysterious bond that allies moral evil to the foul material forms, and has given in epical parables a theory of insanity, of beasts, of unclean and fearful things.

Another sign of our times, also marked by an analogous political movement, is the new importance given to the single person. Every thing that tends to insulate the individual,—to surround him with barriers of natural respect, so that each man shall feel

the world is his, and man shall treat with man as a sovereign state with a sovereign state,—tends to true union as well as greatness. “I learned,” said the melancholy Pestalozzi, “that no man in God’s wide earth is either willing or able to help any other man.” Help must come from the bosom alone. The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be an university of knowledges. If there be one lesson more than another which should pierce his ear, it is, The world is nothing, the man is all; in yourself is the law of all nature, and you know not yet how a globule of sap ascends; in yourself slumbers the whole of Reason; it is for you to know all; it is for you to dare all. Mr. President and Gentlemen, this confidence in the unsearched might of man belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by all preparation, to the American Scholar. We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame. Public and private avarice make the air we breathe thick and fat. The scholar is decent, indolent, complaisant. See already the tragic consequence. The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself. There is no work for any but the decorous and the complaisant. Young men of the fairest promise, who begin life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God, find the earth below not in unison with these, but are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges, or die of disgust, some of them suicides. What is the remedy? They did not yet see, and thousands of young men as hopeful now crowding to the barriers for the career do not yet see, that if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him. Patience,—patience; with the shades of all the good and great for company; and for solace the perspective of your own infinite life; and for work the study and the communication of principles, the making those instincts prevalent, the conversion of the world. Is it not the chief disgrace in the world, not to be an unit;—not to be reckoned one character;—not to yield that

peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, of the party, the section, to which we belong; and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north, or the south? Not so, brothers and friends,—please God, ours shall not be so. We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds. The study of letters shall be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defense and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.

ESSAYS¹

II. SELF-RELIANCE

*Ne te quæsieris extra.*²

Man is his own star; and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man,
Commands all light, all influence, all fate;
Nothing to him falls early or too late.
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.

— Epilogue to Beaumont and Fletcher’s
Honest Man’s Fortune.

Cast the bantling on the rocks,
Suckle him with the she-wolf’s teat,
Wintered with the hawk and fox,
Power and speed be hands and feet.

I READ the other day some verses written by an eminent painter which were original and not conventional. The soul always hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment they instill is of more value than any thought they may contain. To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense; for the inmost in due time becomes the outmost, and our first thought is rendered back to us by the

¹ This volume, later called *Essays, First Series*, was published in 1841. It contains twelve essays: *History, Self-Reliance, Compensation, Spiritual Laws, Love, Friendship, Prudence, Heroism, The Over-Soul, Circles, Intellect, Art*.

² Seek not beyond yourself.

trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato, and Milton is that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men, but what *they* thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the luster of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else to-morrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature; and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without preëstablished harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace. It is a deliverance which does not deliver. In the attempt his genius deserts him; no muse befriends; no invention, no hope.

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that

iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers, and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.

What pretty oracles nature yields us on this text in the face and behavior of children, babes, and even brutes! That divided and rebel mind, that distrust of a sentiment because our arithmetic has computed the strength and means opposed to our purpose, these have not. Their mind being whole, their eye is as yet unconquered, and when we look in their faces we are disconcerted. Infancy conforms to nobody; all conform to it; so that one babe commonly makes four or five out of the adults who prattle and play to it. So God has armed youth and puberty and manhood no less with its own piquancy and charm, and made it enviable and gracious and its claims not to be put by, if it will stand by itself. Do not think the youth has no force, because he cannot speak to you and me. Hark! in the next room his voice is sufficiently clear and emphatic. It seems he knows how to speak to his contemporaries. Bashful or bold then, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.

The nonchalance of boys who are sure of a dinner, and would disdain as much as a lord to do or say aught to conciliate one, is the healthy attitude of human nature. A boy is in the parlor what the pit is in the playhouse; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as pass by, he tries and sentences them on their merits, in the swift, summary ways of boys, as good, bad, interesting, silly, eloquent, troublesome. He cumbers himself never about consequences, about interests; he gives an independent, genuine verdict. You must court him; he does not court you. But the man is as it were clapped into jail by his conscious-

ness. As soon as he has once acted or spoken with *éclat* he is a committed person, watched by the sympathy or the hatred of hundreds, whose affections must now enter into his account. There is no Lethe for this. Ah, that he could pass again into his neutrality! Who can thus avoid all pledges and, having observed, observe again from the same unaffected, unbiased, unbribable, unaffrighted innocence,—must always be formidable. He would utter opinions on all passing affairs, which being seen to be not private but necessary, would sink like darts into the ear of men and put them in fear.

These are the voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, "What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within?" my friend suggested,—“But these impulses may be from below, not from above.” I replied, “They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil’s child, I will live then from the Devil.” No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong what is against it. A man is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition as if every thing were titular and ephemeral but he. I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions. Every decent and well-spoken

individual affects and sways me more than is right. I ought to go upright and vital, and speak the rude truth in all ways. If malice and vanity wear the coat of philanthropy, shall that pass? If an angry bigot assumes this bountiful cause of Abolition, and comes to me with his last news from Barbadoes, why should I not say to him, “Go love thy infant; love thy wood-chopper; be good-natured and modest; have that grace; and never varnish your hard, uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home.” Rough and graceless would be such greeting, but truth is handsomer than the affectation of love. Your goodness must have some edge to it,—else it is none. The doctrine of hatred must be preached, as the counteraction of the doctrine of love, when that pules and whines. I shun father and mother and wife and brother when my genius calls me. I would write on the lintels of the door-post, *Whim*. I hope it is somewhat better than whim at last, but we cannot spend the day in explanation. Expect me not to show cause why I seek or why I exclude company. Then again, do not tell me, as a good man did to-day, of my obligation to put all poor men in good situations. Are they *my* poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong. There is a class of persons to whom by all spiritual affinity I am bought and sold; for them I will go to prison if need be; but your miscellaneous popular charities; the education at college of fools; the building of meeting-houses to the vain end to which many now stand; alms to sots, and the thousand-fold Relief Societies;—though I confess with shame I sometimes succumb and give the dollar, it is a wicked dollar, which by and by I shall have the manhood to withhold.

Virtues are, in the popular estimate, rather the exception than the rule. There is the man *and* his virtues. Men do what is called a good action, as some piece of courage or charity, much as they would pay a fine in expiation of daily non-appearance on parade. Their works are done as an apology or extenuation of their living in the world,—as invalids and the insane pay a high board. Their virtues are penances. I do not wish to

expiate, but to live. My life is for itself and not for a spectacle. I much prefer that it should be of a lower strain, so it be genuine and equal, than that it should be glittering and unsteady. I wish it to be sound and sweet, and not to need diet and bleeding. I ask primary evidence that you are a man, and refuse this appeal from the man to his actions. I know that for myself it makes no difference whether I do or forbear those actions which are reckoned excellent. I cannot consent to pay for a privilege where I have intrinsic right. Few and mean as my gifts may be, I actually am, and do not need for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows any secondary testimony.

* What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time and blurs the impression of your character. If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible-society, vote with a great party either for the government or against it, spread your table like base housekeepers,—under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are: and of course so much force is withdrawn from your proper life. But do your work, and I shall know you. Do your work, and you shall reinforce yourself. A man must consider what a blindman's-buff is this game of conformity. If I know your sect I anticipate your argument. I hear a preacher announce for his text and topic the expediency of one of the institutions of his church. Do I not know beforehand that not possibly can he say a new and spontaneous word? Do I not know that with all this ostentation of examining the grounds of the institution he will do no such thing? Do I not know that he is pledged to himself not to look but at one side, the permitted side, not as a

man, but as a parish minister? He is a retained attorney, and these airs of the bench are the emptiest affectation. Well, most men have bound their eyes with one or another handkerchief, and attached themselves to some one of these communities of opinion. This conformity makes them not false in a few particulars, authors of a few lies, but false in all particulars. Their every truth is not quite true. Their two is not the real two, their four not the real four; so that every word they say chagrins us and we know not where to begin to set them right. Meantime nature is not slow to equip us in the prison-uniform of the party to which we adhere. We come to wear one cut of face and figure, and acquire by degrees the gentlest asinine expression. There is a mortifying experience in particular, which does not fail to wreak itself also in the general history; I mean "the foolish face of praise," the forced smile which we put on in company where we do not feel at ease, in answer to conversation which does not interest us. The muscles, not spontaneously moved but moved by a low usurping willfulness, grow tight about the outline of the face, with the most disagreeable sensation.

For nonconformity the world whips you with its displeasure. And therefore a man must know how to estimate a sour face. The by-standers look askance on him in the public street or in the friend's parlor. If this aversion had its origin in contempt and resistance like his own he might well go home with a sad countenance; but the sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows and a newspaper directs. Yet is the discontent of the multitude more formidable than that of the senate and the college. It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world to brook the rage of the cultivated classes. Their rage is decorous and prudent, for they are timid, as being very vulnerable themselves. But when to their feminine rage the indignation of the people is added, when the ignorant and the poor are aroused, when the unintelligent brute force that lies at the bottom of society is made to growl and mow, it needs the habit of magnanimity and religion to treat it godlike as a trifle of no concernment.

The other terror that scares us from self-trust is our consistency; a reverence for our

past act or word because the eyes of others have no other data for computing our orbit than our past acts, and we are loth to disappoint them.

But why should you keep your head over your shoulder? Why drag about this corpse of your memory, lest you contradict somewhat you have stated in this or that public place? Suppose you should contradict yourself; what then? It seems to be a rule of wisdom never to rely on your memory alone, scarcely even in acts of pure memory, but to bring the past for judgment into the thousand-eyed present, and live ever in a new day. In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity, yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat in the hand of the harlot, and flee.

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day.—“Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood.”—Is it so bad then to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.

I suppose no man can violate his nature. All the sallies of his will are rounded in by the law of his being, as the inequalities of Andes and Himmaleh are insignificant in the curve of the sphere. Nor does it matter how you gauge and try him. A character is like an acrostic or Alexandrian stanza;—read it forward, backward, or across, it still spells the same thing.¹ In this pleasing contrite wood-life which God allows me, let me record day by day my honest thought without prospect or retrospect, and, I cannot doubt, it will be found symmetrical, though I mean it not and see it not. My book should smell of pines and resound with the hum of insects.

¹ This is a palindrome (for example, “Madam, I’m Adam”).

The swallow over my window should interweave that thread or straw he carries in his bill into my web also. We pass for what we are. Character teaches above our wills. Men imagine that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt actions, and do not see that virtue or vice emit a breath every moment.

There will be an agreement in whatever variety of actions, so they be each honest and natural in their hour. For of one will, the actions will be harmonious, however unlike they seem. These varieties are lost sight of at a little distance, at a little height of thought. One tendency unites them all. The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks. See the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to the average tendency. Your genuine action will explain itself and will explain your other genuine actions. Your conformity explains nothing. Act singly, and what you have already done singly will justify you now. Greatness appeals to the future. If I can be firm enough to-day to do right and scorn eyes, I must have done so much right before as to defend me now. Be it how it will, do right now. Always scorn appearances and you always may. The force of character is cumulative. All the foregone days of virtue work their health into this. What makes the majesty of the heroes of the senate and the field, which so fills the imagination? The consciousness of a train of great days and victories behind. They shed an united light on the advancing actor. He is attended as by a visible escort of angels. That is it which throws thunder into Chatham’s voice, and dignity into Washington’s port, and America into Adams’s eye. Honor is venerable to us because it is no ephemera. It is always ancient virtue. We worship it to-day because it is not of to-day. We love it and pay it homage because it is not a trap for our love and homage, but is self-dependent, self-derived, and therefore of an old immaculate pedigree, even if shown in a young person.

I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted and ridiculous henceforward. Instead of the gong for dinner, let us hear a whistle from the Spartan fife. Let us never bow and apologize more. A great man is coming to eat at my house. I do not wish

to please him; I wish that he should wish to please me. I will stand here for humanity, and though I would make it kind, I would make it true. Let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment of the times, and hurl in the face of custom and trade and office, the fact which is the upshot of all history, that there is a great responsible Thinker and Actor working wherever a man works; that a true man belongs to no other time or place, but is the center of things. Where he is, there is nature. He measures you and all men and all events. Ordinarily, everybody in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person. Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else; it takes place of the whole creation. The man must be so much that he must make all circumstances indifferent. Every true man is a cause, a country, and an age; requires infinite spaces and numbers and time fully to accomplish his design;—and posterity seem to follow his steps as a train of clients. A man Cæsar is born, and for ages after we have a Roman Empire. Christ is born, and millions of minds so grow and cleave to his genius that he is confounded with virtue and the possible of man. An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man; as, Monachism, of the Hermit Antony; the Reformation, of Luther; Quakerism, of Fox; Methodism, of Wesley; Abolition, of Clarkson.¹ Scipio, Milton called “the height of Rome”; and all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons.

Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet. Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a charity-boy, a bastard, or an interloper in the world which exists for him. But the man in the street, finding no worth in himself which corresponds to the force which built a tower or sculptured a marble god, feels poor when he looks on these. To him a palace, a statue, or a costly book have an alien and forbidding air, much like a gay equipage, and seem to say like that, “Who are you, Sir?” Yet they all are his, suitors for his notice, petitioners to his faculties that they will come out and take possession. The picture waits for my verdict; it is not to command me, but

¹ English agitator and writer against slavery (1760–1846).

I am to settle its claims to praise. That popular fable of the sot who was picked up dead-drunk in the street, carried to the duke’s house, washed and dressed and laid in the duke’s bed, and, on his waking, treated with all obsequious ceremony like the duke, and assured that he had been insane, owes its popularity to the fact that it symbolizes so well the state of man, who is in the world a sort of sot, but now and then wakes up, exercises his reason, and finds himself a true prince.

Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic. In history our imagination plays us false. Kingdom and lordship, power and estate, are a gaudier vocabulary than private John and Edward in a small house and common day’s work; but the things of life are the same to both; the sum total of both is the same. Why all this deference to Alfred and Scanderbeg² and Gustavus? Suppose they were virtuous; did they wear out virtue? As great a stake depends on your private act to-day as followed their public and renowned steps. When private men shall act with original views, the luster will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen.

The world has been instructed by its kings, who have so magnetized the eyes of nations. It has been taught by this colossal symbol the mutual reverence that is due from man to man. The joyful loyalty with which men have everywhere suffered the king, the noble, or the great proprietor to walk among them by a law of his own, make his own scale of men and things and reverse theirs, pay for benefits not with money but with honor, and represent the law in his person, was the hieroglyphic by which they obscurely signified their consciousness of their own right and comeliness, the right of every man.

The magnetism which all original action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. Who is the Trustee? What is the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded? What is the nature and power of that science-baffling star, without parallax, without calculable elements, which shoots a ray of beauty even into trivial and impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear? The inquiry

² *I. e.*, Iskander Bey (1403–1468), Albanian prince who defended his country successfully from Turkish attack.

leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are tuitions. In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For the sense of being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from space, from light, from time, from man, but one with them and proceeds obviously from the same source whence their life and being also proceed. We first share the life by which things exist and afterwards see them as appearances in nature and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of action and of thought. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams. If we ask whence this comes, if we seek to pry into the soul that causes, all philosophy is at fault. Its presence or its absence is all we can affirm. Every man discriminates between the voluntary acts of his mind and his involuntary perceptions, and knows that to his involuntary perceptions a perfect faith is due. He may err in the expression of them, but he knows that these things are so, like day and night, not to be disputed. My wilful actions and acquisitions are but roving;—the idlest reverie, the faintest native emotion, command my curiosity and respect. Thoughtless people contradict as readily the statement of perceptions as of opinions, or rather much more readily; for they do not distinguish between perception and notion. They fancy that I choose to see this or that thing. But perception is not whimsical, but fatal. If I see a trait, my children will see it after me, and in course of time all mankind,—although it may chance that no one has seen it before me. For my perception of it is as much a fact as the sun.

The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps. It must be that when God speaketh he should communicate, not one thing, but all things; should fill the world

with his voice; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the center of the present thought; and new-date and new-create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple and receives a divine wisdom, old things pass away,—means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present hour. All things are made sacred by relation to it,—one as much as another. All things are dissolved to their center by their cause, and in the universal miracle petty and particular miracles disappear. If therefore a man claims to know and speak of God and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old moldered nation in another country, in another world, believe him not. Is the acorn better than the oak which is its fullness and completion? Is the parent better than the child into whom he has cast his ripened being? Whence then this worship of the past? The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul. Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul is light: where it is, is day; where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury if it be anything more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming.

Man is timid and apologetic; he is no longer upright; he dares not say "I think," "I am," but quotes some saint or sage. He is ashamed before the blade of grass or the blowing rose. These roses under my window make no reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God to-day. There is no time to them. There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence. Before a leaf-bud has burst, its whole life acts; in the full-blown flower there is no more; in the leafless root there is no less. Its nature is satisfied and it satisfies nature in all moments alike. But man postpones or remembers; he does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present, above time.

This should be plain enough. Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself unless he speaks the phraseology of I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul.

We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts, on a few lives. We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grandames and tutors, and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see,—painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke; afterwards, when they come into the point of view which those had who uttered these sayings, they understand them and are willing to let the words go; for at any time they can use words as good when occasion comes. If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition. That thought by what I can now nearest approach to say it, is this. When good is near you, when you have life in yourself, it is not by any known or accustomed way; you shall not discern the footprints of any other; you shall not see the face of man; you shall not hear any name;—the way, the thought, the good, shall be wholly strange and new. It shall exclude example and experience. You take the way from man, not to man. All persons that ever existed are its forgotten ministers. Fear and hope are alike beneath it. There is somewhat low even in hope. In the hour of vision there is nothing that can be called gratitude, nor properly joy. The soul raised over passion beholds identity and eternal causation, perceives the self-existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowing that all things go well. Vast spaces of nature, the Atlantic Ocean, the South Sea; long intervals of time, years, centuries, are of no account. This which I think and feel underlay every former state of life and circumstances, as it does underlie my present, and what is called life and what is called death.

(Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose; it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf, in the darting to an aim. This one fact the

world hates; that the soul *becomes*; for that forever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame, confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside. Why then do we prate of self-reliance? Inasmuch as the soul is present there will be power not confident but agent. To talk of reliance is a poor external way of speaking. Speak rather of that which relies because it works and is. Who has more obedience than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round him I must revolve by the gravitation of spirits. We fancy it rhetoric when we speak of eminent virtue. We do not yet see that virtue is Height, and that a man or a company of men, plastic and permeable to principles, by the law of nature must overpower and ride all cities, nations, kings, rich men, poets, who are not.

This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as on every topic, the resolution of all into the ever-blessed ONE. Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue as they contain. Commerce, husbandry, hunting, whaling, war, eloquence, personal weight, are somewhat, and engage my respect as examples of its presence and impure action. I see the same law working in nature for conservation and growth. Power is, in nature, the essential measure of right. Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which cannot help itself. The genesis and maturation of a planet, its poise and orbit, the bended tree recovering itself from the strong wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetable, are demonstrations of the self-sufficing and therefore self-relying soul.

Thus all concentrates: let us not rove; let us sit at home with the cause. Let us stun and astonish the intruding rabble of men and books and institutions by a simple declaration of the divine fact. Bid the invaders take the shoes from off their feet, for God is here within. Let our simplicity judge them, and our docility to our own law demonstrate the poverty of nature and fortune beside our native riches.

But now we are a mob. Man does not stand in awe of man, nor is his genius ad-

monished to stay at home, to put itself in communication with the internal ocean, but it goes abroad to beg a cup of water of the urns of other men. We must go alone. I like the silent church before the service begins, better than any preaching. How far off, how cool, how chaste the persons look, begirt each one with a precinct or sanctuary! So let us always sit. Why should we assume the faults of our friend, or wife, or father, or child, because they sit around our hearth, or are said to have the same blood? All men have my blood and I have all men's. Not for that will I adopt their petulance or folly, even to the extent of being ashamed of it. But your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation. At times the whole world seems to be in conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, client, child, sickness, fear, want, charity, all knock at once at thy closet door and say,—“Come out unto us.” But keep thy state; come not into their confusion. The power men possess to annoy me I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can come near me but through my act. “What we love that we have, but by desire we bereave ourselves of the love.”

If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist our temptations; let us enter into the state of war and wake Thor and Woden, courage and constancy, in our Saxon breasts. This is to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth. Check this lying hospitality and lying affection. Live no longer to the expectation of these deceived and deceiving people with whom we converse. Say to them, “O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth's. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law. I will have no covenants but proximities. I shall endeavor to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife,—but these relations I must fill after a new and unprecedented way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you. If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I will not hide my tastes or aversions. I will

so trust that what is deep is holy, that I will do strongly before the sun and moon whatever inly rejoices me and the heart appoints. If you are noble, I will love you; if you are not, I will not hurt you and myself by hypocritical attentions. If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I will seek my own. I do this not selfishly but humbly and truly. It is alike your interest, and mine, and all men's, however long we have dwelt in lies, to live in truth. Does this sound harsh to-day? You will soon love what is dictated by your nature as well as mine, and if we follow the truth it will bring us out safe at last.”—But so may you give these friends pain. Yes, but I cannot sell my liberty and my power, to save their sensibility. Besides, all persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth; then will they justify me and do the same thing.

The populace think that your rejection of popular standards is a rejection of all standard, and mere antinomianism; and the bold sensualist will use the name of philosophy to gild his crimes. But the law of consciousness abides. There are two confessionals, in one or the other of which we must be shriven. You may fulfill your round of duties by clearing yourself in the *direct*, or in the *reflex* way. Consider whether you have satisfied your relations to father, mother, cousin, neighbor, town, cat, and dog; whether any of these can upbraid you. But I may also neglect this reflex standard and absolve me to myself. I have my own stern claims and perfect circle. It denies the name of duty to many offices that are called duties. But if I can discharge its debts it enables me to dispense with the popular code. If any one imagines that this law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day.

And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity and has ventured to trust himself for a taskmaster. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others!

If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society*, he will see the need of these ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we

are become timorous, desponding whimperers. We are afraid of truth, afraid of fortune, afraid of death, and afraid of each other. Our age yields no great and perfect persons. We want men and women who shall renovate life and our social state, but we see that most natures are insolvent, cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force, and do lean and beg day and night continually. Our housekeeping is mendicant, our arts, our occupations, our marriages, our religion we have not chosen, but society has chosen for us. We are parlor soldiers. We shun the rugged battle of fate, where strength is born.

If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is *ruined*. If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges and is not installed in an office within one year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *teams it, farms it, peddles*, keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always like a cat falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls. He walks abreast with his days and feels no shame in not "studying a profession," for he does not postpone his life, but lives already. He has not one chance, but a hundred chances. Let a Stoic open the resources of man and tell men they are not leaning willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall appear; that a man is the word made flesh, born to shed healing to the nations; that he should be ashamed of our compassion, and that the moment he acts from himself, tossing the laws, the books, idolatries and customs out of the window, we pity him no more but thank and revere him;—and that teacher shall restore the life of man to splendor and make his name dear to all history.

It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men; in their religion; in their education; in their pursuits; their modes of

living; their association; in their property; in their speculative views.

1. In what prayers do men allow themselves! That which they call a holy office is not so much as brave and manly. Prayer looks abroad and asks for some foreign addition to come through some foreign virtue, and loses itself in endless mazes of natural and supernatural, and mediatorial and miraculous. Prayer that craves a particular commodity, anything less than all good, is vicious. Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and theft. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends. Caratach, in Fletcher's *Bonduca*, when admonished to inquire the mind of the god Audate, replies,—

His hidden meaning lies in our endeavors;
Our valors are our best gods.

Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance: it is infirmity of will. Regret calamities if you can thereby help the sufferer; if not, attend your own work and already the evil begins to be repaired. Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with their own reason. The secret of fortune is joy in our hands. Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide; him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him because he did not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him because he held on his way and scorned our disapprobation. The gods love him because men hated him. "To the persevering mortal," said Zoroaster, "the blessed Immortals are swift."

As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. They say with those foolish Israelites, "Let not God speak to us, lest we die. Speak thou, speak any man with us, and we will obey."¹ Everywhere I am hindered of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple doors and recites fables merely of his brother's, or his brother's brother's God. Every new mind is a new classification. If it prove a mind of uncommon activity and power, a Locke, a Lavoisier, a Hutton, a Bentham, a Fourier, it imposes its classification on other men, and lo! a new system. In proportion to the depth of the thought, and so to the number of the objects it touches and brings within reach of the pupil, is his complacency. But chiefly is this apparent in creeds and churches, which are also classifications of some powerful mind acting on the elemental thought of duty and man's relation to the Highest. Such is Calvinism, Quakerism, Swedenborgism. The pupil takes the same delight in subordinating everything to the new terminology as a girl who has just learned botany in seeing a new earth and new seasons thereby. It will happen for a time that the pupil will find his intellectual power has grown by the study of his master's mind. But in all unbalanced minds the classification is idolized, passes for the end and not for a speedily exhaustible means, so that the walls of the system blend to their eye in the remote horizon with the walls of the universe; the luminaries of heaven seem to them hung on the arch their master built. They cannot imagine how you aliens have any right to see,—how you can see; "It must be somehow that you stole the light from us." They do not yet perceive that light, unsystematic, indomitable, will break into any cabin, even into theirs. Let them chirp awhile and call it their own. If they are honest and do well, presently their neat new pinfold will be too strait and low, will crack, will lean, will rot and vanish, and the immortal light, all young and joyful, million-orbed, million-colored, will beam over the universe as on the first morning.

2. It is for want of self-culture that the superstition of Traveling, whose idols are Italy, England, Egypt, retains its fascination

for all educated Americans. They who made England, Italy, or Greece venerable in the imagination, did so by sticking fast where they were, like an axis of the earth. In manly hours we feel that duty is our place. The soul is no traveler; the wise man stays at home, and when his necessities, his duties, on any occasion call him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still and shall make men sensible by the expression of his countenance that he goes, the missionary of wisdom and virtue, and visits cities and men like a sovereign and not like an interloper or a valet.

I have no churlish objection to the circumnavigation of the globe for the purposes of art, of study, and benevolence, so that the man is first domesticated, or does not go abroad with the hope of finding somewhat greater than he knows. He who travels to be amused, or to get somewhat which he does not carry, travels away from himself, and grows old even in youth among old things. In Thebes, in Palmyra, his will and mind have become old and dilapidated as they. He carries ruins to ruins.

Traveling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places. At home I dream that at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from. I seek the Vatican and the palaces. I affect to be intoxicated with sights and suggestions, but I am not intoxicated. My giant goes with me wherever I go.

3. But the rage of traveling is a symptom of a deeper unsoundness affecting the whole intellectual action. The intellect is vagabond, and our system of education fosters restlessness. Our minds travel when our bodies are forced to stay at home. We imitate; and what is imitation but the traveling of the mind? Our houses are built with foreign taste; our shelves are garnished with foreign ornaments; our opinions, our tastes, our faculties lean, and follow the Past and the Distant. The soul created the arts wherever they have flourished. It was in his own mind that the artist sought his model. It was an application of his own thought to

¹ Exodus, xx, 19; Deuteronomy, v, 25-27.

the thing to be done and the conditions to be observed. And why need we copy the Doric or the Gothic model? Beauty, convenience, grandeur of thought and quaint expression are as near to us as to any, and if the American artist will study with hope and love the precise thing to be done by him, considering the climate, the soil, the length of the day, the wants of the people, the habit and form of the government, he will create a house in which all these will find themselves fitted, and taste and sentiment will be satisfied also.

Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous half possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him. No man yet knows what it is, nor can, till that person has exhibited it. Where is the master who could have taught Shakespeare? Where is the master who could have instructed Franklin, or Washington, or Bacon, or Newton? Every great man is a unique. The Scipionism of Scipio is precisely that part he could not borrow. Shakespeare will never be made by the study of Shakespeare. Do that which is assigned you, and you cannot hope too much or dare too much. There is at this moment for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the colossal chisel of Phidias, or trowel of the Egyptians, or the pen of Moses or Dante, but different from all these. Not possibly will the soul, all rich, all eloquent, with thousand-cloven tongue, deign to repeat itself; but if you can hear what these patriarchs say, surely you can reply to them in the same pitch of voice; for the ear and the tongue are two organs of one nature. Abide in the simple and noble regions of thy life, obey thy heart, and thou shall reproduce the Foreworld again.

4. As our Religion, our Education, our Art look abroad, so does our spirit of society. All men plume themselves on the improvement of society, and no man improves.

Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes continual changes; it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration. For everything that is given something is taken. Society acquires new arts and loses

old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil, and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat, and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of the two men and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. If the traveler tell us truly, strike the savage with a broad-ax and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave.

The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle. He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows as little; and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind. His note-books impair his memory; his libraries overload his wit; the insurance-office increases the number of accidents; and it may be a question whether machinery does not encumber; whether we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity, entrenched in establishments and forms, some vigor of wild virtue. For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?

There is no more deviation in the moral standard than in the standard of height or bulk. No greater men are now than ever were. A singular equality may be observed between the great men of the first and of the last ages; nor can all the science, art, religion, and philosophy of the nineteenth century avail to educate greater men than Plutarch's heroes, three or four and twenty centuries ago. Not in time is the race progressive. Phocion,¹ Socrates, Anaxagoras, Diogenes, are great men, but they leave no class. He who is really of their class will not be called by their name, but will be his own man, and in his turn the founder of a sect. The arts and inventions of each period are only its

¹ Athenian military commander and statesman, leader of aristocratic party, put to death 317 B.C. by political opponents.

costume and do not invigorate men. The harm of the improved machinery may compensate its good. Hudson and Behring accomplished so much in their fishing-boats as to astonish Parry and Franklin,¹ whose equipment exhausted the resources of science and art. Galileo, with an opera-glass, discovered a more splendid series of celestial phenomena than any one since. Columbus found the New World in an undecked boat. It is curious to see the periodical disuse and perishing of means and machinery which were introduced with loud laudation a few years or centuries before. The great genius returns to essential man. We reckoned the improvements of the art of war among the triumphs of science, and yet Napoleon conquered Europe by the bivouac, which consisted of falling back on naked valor and disencumbering it of all aids. The Emperor held it impossible to make a perfect army, says Las Casas, "without abolishing our arms, magazines, commissaries, and carriages, until, in imitation of the Roman custom, the soldier should receive his supply of corn, grind it in his hand-mill and bake his bread himself."

Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The same particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal. The persons who make up a nation to-day, next year die, and their experience dies with them.

And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the want of self-reliance. Men have looked away from themselves and at things so long that they have come to esteem the religious, learned, and civil institutions as guards of property, and they deprecate assaults on these, because they feel them to be assaults on property. They measure their esteem of each other by what each has, and not by what each is. But a cultivated man becomes ashamed of his property, out of new respect for his nature. Especially he hates what he has if he see that it is accidental,—came to him by inheritance, or gift, or crime; then he feels that it is not having; it does not belong to him, has no root in him and merely lies there because no revolution or no robber

takes it away. But that which a man is, does always by necessity acquire; and what the man acquires, is living property, which does not wait the beck of rulers, or mobs, or revolutions, or fire, or storm, or bankruptcies, but perpetually renews itself wherever the man breathes. "Thy lot or portion of life," said the Caliph Ali, "is seeking after thee; therefore be at rest from seeking after it." Our dependence on these foreign goods leads us to our slavish respect for numbers. The political parties meet in numerous conventions; the greater the concourse and with each new uproar of announcement, The delegation from Essex! The Democrats from New Hampshire! The Whigs of Maine! the young patriot feels himself stronger than before by a new thousand of eyes and arms. In like manner the reformers summon conventions and vote and resolve in multitude. Not so, O friends! will the God deign to enter and inhabit you, but by a method precisely the reverse. It is only as a man puts off all foreign support and stands alone that I see him to be strong and to prevail. He is weaker by every recruit to his banner. Is not a man better than a town? Ask nothing of men, and, in the endless mutation, thou only firm column must presently appear the upholder of all that surrounds thee. He who knows that power is inborn, that he is weak because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and, so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought, instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, commands his limbs, works miracles; just as a man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head.

So use all that is called Fortune. Most men gamble with her, and gain all, and lose all, as her wheel rolls. But do thou leave as unlawful these winnings, and deal with Cause and Effect, the chancellors of God. In the Will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheel of Chance, and shalt sit hereafter out of fear from her rotations. A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick or the return of your absent friend, or some other favorable event raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.

¹ *I.e.*, Sir John Franklin, English explorer (1786-1847).

IX. THE OVER-SOUL

But souls that of his own good life partake
 He loves as his own self; dear as his eye
 They are to Him: He'll never them forsake:
 When they shall die, then God himself shall die:
 They live, they live in blest eternity.

—Henry More.

Space is ample, east and west,
 But two cannot go abreast,
 Cannot travel in it two:
 Yonder masterful cuckoo
 Crowds every egg out of the nest,
 Quick or dead, except its own;
 A spell is laid on sod and stone,
 Night and day 've been tampered with,
 Every quality and pith
 Surcharged and sultry with a power
 That works its will on age and hour.

THERE is a difference between one and another hour of life in their authority and subsequent effect. Our faith comes in moments; our vice is habitual. Yet there is a depth in those brief moments which constrains us to ascribe more reality to them than to all other experiences. For this reason the argument which is always forthcoming to silence those who conceive extraordinary hopes of man, namely the appeal to experience, is forever invalid and vain. We give up the past to the objector, and yet we hope. He must explain this hope. We grant that human life is mean, but how did we find out that it was mean? What is the ground of this uneasiness of ours; of this old discontent? What is the universal sense of want and ignorance, but the fine innuendo by which the soul makes its enormous claim? Why do men feel that the natural history of man has never been written, but he is always leaving behind what you have said of him, and it becomes old, and books of metaphysics worthless? The philosophy of six thousand years has not searched the chambers and magazines of the soul. In its experiments there has always remained, in the last analysis, a residuum it could not resolve. Man is a stream whose source is hidden. Our being is descending into us from we know not whence. The most exact calculator has no prescience that somewhat incalculable may not balk the very next moment. I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher origin for events than the will I call mine.

As with events, so is it with thoughts.

When I watch that flowing river, which, out of regions I see not, pours for a season its streams into me, I see that I am a pensioner; not a cause but a surprised spectator of this ethereal water; that I desire and look up and put myself in the attitude of reception, but from some alien energy the visions come.

The Supreme Critic on the errors of the past and the present, and the only prophet of that which must be, is that great nature in which we rest as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere; that Unity, that Over-Soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other; that common heart of which all sincere conversation is the worship, to which all right action is submission; that overpowering reality which confutes our tricks and talents, and constrains every one to pass for what he is, and to speak from his character and not from his tongue, and which evermore tends to pass into our thought and hand and become wisdom and virtue and power and beauty. We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE. And this deep power in which we exist and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one. We see the world piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree; but the whole, of which these are the shining parts, is the soul. Only by the vision of that Wisdom can the horoscope of the ages be read, and by falling back on our better thoughts, by yielding to the spirit of prophecy which is innate in every man, we can know what it saith. Every man's words who speaks from that life must sound vain to those who do not dwell in the same thought on their own part. I dare not speak for it. My words do not carry its august sense; they fall short and cold. Only itself can inspire whom it will, and behold! their speech shall be lyrical, and sweet, and universal as the rising of the wind. Yet I desire, even by profane words, if I may not use sacred, to indicate the heaven of this deity and to report what hints I have collected of the transcendent simplicity and energy of the Highest Law.

If we consider what happens in conversation, in reveries, in remorse, in times of passion, in surprises, in the instructions of dreams, wherein often we see ourselves in masquerade,—the droll disguises only magnifying and enhancing a real element and forcing it on our distant notice,—we shall catch many hints that will broaden and lighten into knowledge of the secret of nature. All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty, but a light; is not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and the will; is the background of our being, in which they lie,—an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed. From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all. A man is the façade of a temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide. What we commonly call man, the eating, drinking, planting, counting man, does not, as we know him, represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect, but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action, would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love. And the blindness of the intellect begins when it would be something of itself. The weakness of the will begins when the individual would be something of himself. All reform aims in some one particular to let the soul have its way through us; in other words, to engage us to obey.

Of this pure nature every man is at some time sensible. Language cannot paint it with his colors. It is too subtle. It is undefinable, unmeasurable; but we know that it pervades and contains us. We know that all spiritual being is in man. A wise old proverb says, "God comes to see us without bell"; that is, as there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul, where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the depths of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God. Justice we see and know, Love, Freedom, Power. These

natures no man ever got above, but they tower over us, and most in the moment when our interests tempt us to wound them.

The sovereignty of this nature whereof we speak is made known by its independency of those limitations which circumscribe us on every hand. The soul circumscribes all things. As I have said, it contradicts all experience. In like manner it abolishes time and space. The influence of the senses has in most men overpowered the mind to that degree that the walls of time and space have come to look real and insurmountable; and to speak with levity of these limits is, in the world, the sign of insanity. Yet time and space are but inverse measures of the force of the soul. The spirit sports with time,—

Can crowd eternity into an hour,
Or stretch an hour to eternity.

We are often made to feel that there is another youth and age than that which is measured from the year of our natural birth. Some thoughts always find us young, and keep us so. Such a thought is the love of the universal and eternal beauty. Every man parts from that contemplation with the feeling that it rather belongs to ages than to mortal life. The least activity of the intellectual powers redeems us in a degree from the conditions of time. In sickness, in languor, give us a strain of poetry or a profound sentence, and we are refreshed; or produce a volume of Plato or Shakespeare, or remind us of their names, and instantly we come into a feeling of longevity. See how the deep divine thought reduces centuries and millenniums, and makes itself present through all ages. Is the teaching of Christ less effective now than it was when first his mouth was opened? The emphasis of facts and persons in my thought has nothing to do with time. And so always the soul's scale is one, the scale of the senses and the understanding is another. Before the revelations of the soul, Time, Space, and Nature shrink away. In common speech we refer all things to time, as we habitually refer the immensely sundered stars to one concave sphere. And so we say that the Judgment is distant or near, that the Millennium approaches, that a day of certain political, moral, social reforms is at hand, and the like, when we mean that in the nature of things one of the facts we contem-

plate is external and fugitive, and the other is permanent and connate with the soul. The things we now esteem fixed shall, one by one, detach themselves like ripe fruit from our experience, and fall. The wind shall blow them none knows whither. The landscape, the figures, Boston, London, are facts as fugitive as any institution past, or any whiff of mist or smoke, and so is society, and so is the world. The soul looketh steadily forwards, creating a world before her, leaving worlds behind her. She has no dates, nor rites, nor persons, nor specialties, nor men. The soul knows only the soul; the web of events is the flowing robe in which she is clothed.

After its own law and not by arithmetic is the rate of its progress to be computed. The soul's advances are not made by gradation, such as can be represented by motion in a straight line, but rather by ascension of state, such as can be represented by metamorphosis,—from the egg to the worm, from the worm to the fly. The growths of genius are of a certain *total* character, that does not advance the elect individual first over John, then Adam, then Richard, and give to each the pain of discovered inferiority,—but by every throes of growth the man expands there where he works, passing, at each pulsation, classes, populations, of men. With each divine impulse the mind rends the thin rinds of the visible and finite, and comes out into eternity, and inspires and expires its air. It converses with truths that have always been spoken in the world, and becomes conscious of a closer sympathy with Zeno and Arrian than with persons in the house.

This is the law of moral and of mental gain. The simple rise as by specific levity not into a particular virtue, but into the region of all the virtues. They are in the spirit which contains them all. The soul requires purity, but purity is not it; requires justice, but justice is not that; requires beneficence, but is somewhat better; so that there is a kind of descent and accommodation felt when we leave speaking of moral nature to urge a virtue which it enjoins. To the well-born child all the virtues are natural, and not painfully acquired. Speak to his heart, and the man becomes suddenly virtuous.

Within the same sentiment is the germ of intellectual growth, which obeys the same law. Those who are capable of humility,

of justice, of love, of aspiration, stand already on a platform that commands the sciences and arts, speech and poetry, action and grace. For whoso dwells in this moral beatitude already anticipates those special powers which men prize so highly. The lover has no talent, no skill, which passes for quite nothing with his enamored maiden, however little she may possess of related faculty; and the heart which abandons itself to the Supreme Mind finds itself related to all its works, and will travel a royal road to particular knowledges and powers. In ascending to this primary and aboriginal sentiment we have come from our remote station on the circumference instantaneously to the center of the world, where, as in the closet of God, we see causes, and anticipate the universe, which is but a slow effect.

One mode of the divine teaching is the incarnation of the spirit in a form,—in forms, like my own. I live in society; with persons who answer to thoughts in my own mind, or express a certain obedience to the great instincts to which I live. I see its presence to them. I am certified of a common nature; and these other souls, these separated selves, draw me as nothing else can. They stir in me the new emotions we call passion; of love hatred, fear, admiration, pity; thence come conversation, competition, persuasion, cities, and war. Persons are supplementary to the primary teaching of the soul. In youth we are mad for persons. Childhood and youth see all the world in them. But the larger experience of man discovers the identical nature appearing through them all. Persons themselves acquaint us with the impersonal. In all conversation between two persons tacit reference is made, as to a third party, to a common nature. That third party or common nature is not social; it is impersonal; is God. And so in groups where debate is earnest, and especially on high questions, the company become aware that the thought rises to an equal level in all bosoms, that all have a spiritual property in what was said, as well as the sayer. They all become wiser than they were. It arches over them like a temple, this unity of thought in which every heart beats with nobler sense of power and duty, and thinks and acts with unusual solemnity. All are conscious of attaining to higher self-possession. It shines for all.

There is a certain wisdom of humanity which is common to the greatest men with the lowest, and which our ordinary education often labors to silence and obstruct. The mind is one, and the best minds, who love truth for its own sake, think much less of property in truth. They accept it thankfully everywhere, and do not label or stamp it with any man's name, for it is theirs long beforehand, and from eternity. The learned and the studious of thought have no monopoly of wisdom. Their violence of direction in some degree disqualifies them to think truly. We owe many valuable observations to people who are not very acute or profound, and who say the thing without effort which we want and have long been hunting in vain. The action of the soul is oftener in that which is felt and left unsaid than in that which is said in any conversation. It broods over every society, and they unconsciously seek for it in each other. We know better than we do. We do not yet possess ourselves, and we know at the same time that we are much more. I feel the same truth how often in my trivial conversation with my neighbors, that somewhat higher in each of us overlooks this by-play, and Jove nods to Jove from behind each of us.

Men descend to meet. In their habitual and mean service to the world, for which they forsake their native nobleness, they resemble those Arabian sheiks who dwell in mean houses and affect an external poverty, to escape the rapacity of the Pacha, and reserve all their display of wealth for their interior and guarded retirements.

As it is present in all persons, so it is in every period of life. It is adult already in the infant man. In my dealing with my child, my Latin and Greek, my accomplishments and my money stead me nothing; but as much soul as I have avails. If I am willful, he sets his will against mine, one for one, and leaves me, if I please, the degradation of beating him by my superiority of strength. But if I renounce my will and act for the soul, setting that up as umpire between us two, out of his young eyes looks the same soul; he reveres and loves with me.

The soul is the perceiver and revealer of truth. We know truth when we see it, let sceptic and scoffer say what they choose. Foolish people ask you, when you have

spoken what they do not wish to hear, "How do you know it is truth, and not an error of your own?" We know truth when we see it, from opinion, as we know when we are awake that we are awake. It was a grand sentence of Emanuel Swedenborg, which would alone indicate the greatness of that man's perception,—“It is no proof of a man's understanding to be able to affirm whatever he pleases; but to be able to discern that what is true is true, and that what is false is false,—this is the mark and character of intelligence.” In the book I read, the good thought returns to me, as every truth will, the image of the whole soul. To the bad thought which I find in it, the same soul becomes a discerning, separating sword, and lops it away. We are wiser than we know. If we will not interfere with our thought, but will act entirely, or see how the thing stands in God, we know the particular thing, and every thing, and every man. For the Maker of all things and all persons stands behind us and casts his dread omniscience through us over things.

But beyond this recognition of its own in particular passages of the individual's experience, it also reveals truth. And here we should seek to reinforce ourselves by its very presence, and to speak with a worthier, loftier strain of that advent. For the soul's communication of truth is the highest event in nature, since it then does not give somewhat from itself, but it gives itself, or passes into and becomes that man whom it enlightens; or, in proportion to that truth he receives, it takes him to itself.

We distinguish the announcements of the soul, its manifestations of its own nature, by the term *Revelation*. These are always attended by the emotion of the sublime. For this communication is an influx of the Divine mind into our mind. It is an ebb of the individual rivulet before the flowing surges of the sea of life. Every distinct apprehension of this central commandment agitates men with awe and delight. A thrill passes through all men at the reception of new truth, or at the performance of a great action, which comes out of the heart of nature. In these communications the power to see is not separated from the will to do, but the insight proceeds from obedience, and the obedience proceeds from a joyful perception.

Every moment when the individual feels himself invaded by it is memorable. By the necessity of our constitution a certain enthusiasm attends the individual's consciousness of that divine presence. The character and duration of this enthusiasm vary with the state of the individual, from an ecstasy and trance and prophetic inspiration,—which is its rarer appearance,—to the faintest glow of virtuous emotion, in which form it warms, like our household fires, all the families and associations of men, and makes society possible. A certain tendency to insanity has always attended the opening of the religious sense in men, as if they had been “blasted with excess of light.” The trances of Socrates, the “union” of Plotinus, the vision of Porphyry, the conversion of Paul, the aurora of Behmen, the convulsions of George Fox and his Quakers, the illumination of Swedenborg, are of this kind. What was in the case of these remarkable persons a ravishment, has, in innumerable instances in common life, been exhibited in less striking manner. Everywhere the history of religion betrays a tendency to enthusiasm. The rapture of the Moravian and Quietist; the opening of the eternal sense of the Word, in the language of the New Jerusalem Church; the *revival* of the Calvinistic churches; the *experiences* of the Methodists, are varying forms of that shudder of awe and delight with which the individual soul always mingles with the universal soul.

The nature of these revelations is the same; they are perceptions of the absolute law. They are solutions of the soul's own questions. They do not answer the questions which the understanding asks. The soul answers never by words, but by the thing itself that is inquired after.

Revelation is the disclosure of the soul. The popular notion of a revelation is that it is a telling of fortunes. In past oracles of the soul the understanding seeks to find answers to sensual questions, and undertakes to tell from God how long men shall exist, what their hands shall do and who shall be their company, adding names and dates and places. But we must pick no locks. We must check this low curiosity. An answer in words is delusive; it is really no answer to the questions you ask. Do not require a description of the countries towards which you sail. The

description does not describe them to you, and to-morrow you arrive there and know them by inhabiting them. Men ask concerning the immortality of the soul, the employments of heaven, the state of the sinner, and so forth. They even dream that Jesus has left replies to precisely these interrogatories. Never a moment did that sublime spirit speak in their *patois*. To truth, justice, love, the attributes of the soul, the idea of immutableness is essentially associated. Jesus, living in these moral sentiments, heedless of sensual fortunes, heeding only the manifestations of these, never made the separation of the idea of duration from the essence of these attributes, nor uttered a syllable concerning the duration of the soul. It was left to his disciples to sever duration from the moral elements, and to teach the immortality of the soul as a doctrine, and maintain it by evidences. The moment the doctrine of the immortality is separately taught, man is already fallen. In the flowing of love, in the adoration of humility, there is no question of continuance. No inspired man ever asks this question or condescends to these evidences. For the soul is true to itself, and the man in whom it is shed abroad cannot wander from the present, which is infinite, to a future which would be finite.

These questions which we lust to ask about the future are a confession of sin. God has no answer for them. No answer in words can reply to a question of things. It is not in an arbitrary “decree of God,” but in the nature of man, that a veil shuts down on the facts of to-morrow; for the soul will not have us read any other cipher than that of cause and effect. By this veil which curtains events it instructs the children of men to live in to-day. The only mode of obtaining an answer to these questions of the senses is to forgo all low curiosity, and, accepting the tide of being which floats us into the secret of nature, work and live, work and live, and all unawares the advancing soul has built and forged for itself a new condition, and the question and the answer are one.

By the same fire, vital, consecrating, celestial, which burns until it shall dissolve all things into the waves and surges of an ocean of light, we see and know each other, and what spirit each is of. Who can tell the

grounds of his knowledge of the character of the several individuals in his circle of friends? No man. Yet their acts and words do not disappoint him. In that man, though he knew no ill of him, he put no trust. In that other, though they had seldom met, authentic signs had yet passed, to signify that he might be trusted as one who had an interest in his own character. We know each other very well,—which of us has been just to himself and whether that which we teach or behold is only an aspiration or is our honest effort also.

We are all discerners of spirits. That diagnosis lies aloft in our life or unconscious power. The intercourse of society, its trade, its religion, its friendships, its quarrels, is one wide judicial investigation of character. In full court, or in small committee, or confronted face to face, accuser and accused, men offer themselves to be judged. Against their will they exhibit those decisive trifles by which character is read. But who judges? and what? Not our understanding. We do not read them by learning or craft. No; the wisdom of the wise man consists herein, that he does not judge them; he lets them judge themselves, and merely reads and records their own verdict.

By virtue of this inevitable nature, private will is overpowered, and, maugre our efforts or our imperfections, your genius will speak from you, and mine from me. That which we are, we shall teach, not voluntarily but involuntarily. Thoughts come into our minds by avenues which we never left open, and thoughts go out of our minds through avenues which we never voluntarily opened. Character teaches over our head. The infallible index of true progress is found in the tone the man takes. Neither his age, nor his breeding, nor company, nor books, nor actions, nor talents, nor all together can hinder him from being deferential to a higher spirit than his own. If he have not found his home in God, his manners, his forms of speech, the turn of his sentences, the build, shall I say, of all his opinions will involuntarily confess it, let him brave it out how he will. If he have found his center, the Deity will shine through him, through all the disguises of ignorance, of ungenial temperament, of unfavorable circumstance. The tone of seeking is one, and the tone of having is another.

The great distinction between teachers sacred or literary,—between poets like Herbert, and poets like Pope,—between philosophers like Spinoza, Kant, and Coleridge, and philosophers like Locke, Paley, Mackintosh, and Stewart,—between men of the world who are reckoned accomplished talkers, and here and there a fervent mystic, prophesying half insane under the infinitude of his thought,—is that one class speak *from within*, or from experience, as parties and possessors of the fact; and the other class *from without*, as spectators merely, or perhaps as acquainted with the fact on the evidence of third persons. It is of no use to preach to me from without. I can do that too easily myself. Jesus speaks always from within, and in a degree that transcends all others. In that is the miracle. I believe beforehand that it ought so to be. All men stand continually in the expectation of the appearance of such a teacher. But if a man do not speak from within the veil, where the word is one with that it tells of, let him lowly confess it.

The same Omniscience flows into the intellect and makes what we call genius. Much of the wisdom of the world is not wisdom, and the most illuminated class of men are no doubt superior to literary fame, and are not writers. Among the multitude of scholars and authors we feel no hallowing presence; we are sensible of a knack and skill rather than of inspiration; they have a light and know not whence it comes and call it their own; their talent is some exaggerated faculty, some overgrown member, so that their strength is a disease. In these instances the intellectual gifts do not make the impression of virtue, but almost of vice; and we feel that a man's talents stand in the way of his advancement in truth. But genius is religious. It is a larger imbibing of the common heart. It is not anomalous, but more like and not less like other men. There is in all great poets a wisdom of humanity which is superior to any talents they exercise. The author, the wit, the partisan, the fine gentleman, does not take place of the man. Humanity shines in Homer, in Chaucer, in Spenser, in Shakespeare, in Milton. They are content with truth. They use the positive degree. They seem frigid and phlegmatic to those who have been spiced with the frantic passion and violent coloring of inferior but popular writers.

For they are poets by the free course which they allow to the informing soul, which through their eyes beholds again and blesses the things which it hath made. The soul is superior to its knowledge, wiser than any of its works. The great poet makes us feel our own wealth, and then we think less of his compositions. His best communication to our mind is to teach us to despise all he has done. Shakespeare carries us to such a lofty strain of intelligent activity as to suggest a wealth which beggars his own; and we then feel that the splendid works which he has created, and which in other hours we extol as a sort of self-existent poetry, take no stronger hold of real nature than the shadow of a passing traveler on the rock. The inspiration which uttered itself in Hamlet and Lear could utter things as good from day to day forever. Why then should I make account of Hamlet and Lear, as if we had not the soul from which they fell as syllables from the tongue?

This energy does not descend into individual life on any other condition than entire possession. It comes to the lowly and simple; it comes to whomsoever will put off what is foreign and proud; it comes as insight; it comes as serenity and grandeur. When we see those whom it inhabits, we are apprised of new degrees of greatness. From that inspiration the man comes back with a changed tone. He does not talk with men with an eye to their opinion. He tries them. It requires of us to be plain and true. The vain traveler attempts to embellish his life by quoting my lord and the prince and the countess, who thus said or did to *him*. The ambitious vulgar show you their spoons and brooches and rings, and preserve their cards and compliments. The more cultivated, in their account of their own experience, cull out the pleasing, poetic circumstance,—the visit to Rome, the man of genius they saw, the brilliant friend they know; still further on perhaps the gorgeous landscape, the mountain lights, the mountain thoughts they enjoyed yesterday,—and so seek to throw a romantic color over their life. But the soul that ascends to worship the great God is plain and true; has no rose-color, no fine friends, no chivalry, no adventures; does not want admiration; dwells in the hour that now is, in the earnest experience of the common

day,—by reason of the present moment and the mere trifle having become porous to thought and bibulous of the sea of light.

Converse with a mind that is grandly simple, and literature looks like word-catching. The simplest utterances are worthiest to be written, yet are they so cheap and so things of course, that in the infinite riches of the soul it is like gathering a few pebbles off the ground, or bottling a little air in a phial, when the whole earth and the whole atmosphere are ours. Nothing can pass there, or make you one of the circle, but the casting aside your trappings and dealing man to man in naked truth, plain confession and omniscient affirmation.

Souls such as these treat you as gods would, walk as gods in the earth, accepting without any admiration your wit, your bounty, your virtue even,—say rather your act of duty, for your virtue they own as their proper blood, royal as themselves, and over-royal, and the father of the gods. But what rebuke their plain fraternal bearing casts on the mutual flattery with which authors solace each other and wound themselves! These flatter not. I do not wonder that these men go to see Cromwell and Christina and Charles II and James I and the Grand Turk. For they are, in their own elevation, the fellows of kings, and must feel the servile tone of conversation in the world. They must always be a godsend to princes, for they confront them, a king to a king, without ducking or concession, and give a high nature the refreshment and satisfaction of resistance, of plain humanity, of even companionship, and of new ideas. They leave them wiser and superior men. Souls like these make us feel that sincerity is more excellent than flattery. Deal so plainly with man and woman as to constrain the utmost sincerity and destroy all hope of trifling with you. It is the highest compliment you can pay. Their “highest praising,” said Milton, “is not flattery, and their plainest advice is a kind of praising.”

Ineffable is the union of man and God in every act of the soul. The simplest person who in his integrity worships God, becomes God; yet forever and ever the influx of this better and universal self is new and unsearchable. It inspires awe and astonishment. How dear, how soothing to man, arises the

idea of God, peopling the lonely place, effacing the scars of our mistakes and disappointments! When we have broken our god of tradition and ceased from our god of rhetoric, then may God fire the heart with his presence. It is the doubling of the heart itself, nay, the infinite enlargement of the heart with a power of growth to a new infinity on every side. It inspires in man an infallible trust. He has not the conviction, but the sight, that the best is the true, and may in that thought easily dismiss all particular uncertainties and fears, and adjourn to the sure revelation of time the solution of his private riddles. He is sure that his welfare is dear to the heart of being. In the presence of law to his mind he is overflowed with a reliance so universal that it sweeps away all cherished hopes and the most stable projects of mortal condition in its flood. He believes that he cannot escape from his good. The things that are really for thee gravitate to thee. You are running to seek your friend. Let your feet run, but your mind need not. If you do not find him, will you not acquiesce that it is best you should not find him? for there is a power, which, as it is in you, is in him also, and could therefore very well bring you together, if it were for the best. You are preparing with eagerness to go and render a service to which your talent and your taste invite you, the love of men and the hope of fame. Has it not occurred to you that you have no right to go, unless you are equally willing to be prevented from going? O, believe, as thou livest, that every sound that is spoken over the round world, which thou oughtest to hear, will vibrate on thine ear! Every proverb, every book, every byword that belongs to thee for aid or comfort, shall surely come home through open or winding passages. Every friend whom not thy fantastic will but the great and tender heart in thee craveth, shall lock thee in his embrace. And this because the heart in thee is the heart of all; not a valve, not a wall, not an intersection is there anywhere in nature, but one blood rolls uninterruptedly an endless circulation through all men, as the water of the globe is all one sea, and, truly seen, its tide is one.

Let man then learn the revelation of all nature and all thought to his heart; this, namely, that the Highest dwells with him; that the sources of nature are in his own

mind, if the sentiment of duty is there. But if he would know what the great God speaketh, he must "go into his closet and shut the door," as Jesus said. God will not make himself manifest to cowards. He must greatly listen to himself, withdrawing himself from all the accents of other men's devotion. Even their prayers are hurtful to him, until he have made his own. Our religion vulgarly stands on numbers of believers. Whenever the appeal is made,—no matter how indirectly,—to numbers, proclamation is then and there made that religion is not. He that finds God a sweet enveloping thought to him never counts his company. When I sit in that presence, who shall dare to come in? When I rest in perfect humility, when I burn with pure love, what can Calvin or Swedenborg say?

It makes no difference whether the appeal is to numbers or to one. The faith that stands on authority is not faith. The reliance on authority measures the decline of religion, the withdrawal of the soul. The position men have given to Jesus, now for many centuries of history, is a position of authority. It characterizes themselves. It cannot alter the eternal facts. Great is the soul, and plain. It is no flatterer, it is no follower; it never appeals from itself. It believes in itself. Before the immense possibilities of man all mere experience, all past biography, however spotless and sainted, shrinks away. Before that heaven which our presentiments foreshow us, we cannot easily praise any form of life we have seen or read of. We not only affirm that we have few great men, but, absolutely speaking, that we have none; that we have no history, no record of any character or mode of living that entirely contents us. The saints and demigods whom history worships we are constrained to accept with a grain of allowance. Though in our lonely hours we draw a new strength out of their memory, yet, pressed on our attention, as they are by the thoughtless and customary, they fatigue and invade. The soul gives itself, alone, original, and pure, to the Lonely, Original, and Pure, who, on that condition, gladly inhabits, leads, and speaks through it. Then is it glad, young, and nimble. It is not wise, but it sees through all things. It is not called religious, but it is innocent. It calls the light its own,

and feels that the grass grows and the stone falls by a law inferior to, and dependent on, its nature. Behold, it saith, I am born into the great, the universal mind. I, the imperfect, adore my own Perfect. I am somehow receptive of the great soul, and thereby I do overlook the sun and the stars and feel them to be the fair accidents and effects which change and pass. More and more the surges of everlasting nature enter into me, and I become public and human in my regards and actions. So come I to live in thoughts and act with energies which are immortal. Thus revering the soul, and learning, as the ancient said, that "its beauty is immense," man will come to see that the world is the perennial miracle which the soul worketh, and be less astonished at particular wonders; he will learn that there is no profane history; that all history is sacred; that the universe is represented in an atom, in a moment of time. He will weave no longer a spotted life of shreds and patches, but he will live with a divine unity. He will cease from what is base and frivolous in his life and be content with all places and with any service he can render. He will calmly front the morrow in the negligency of that trust which carries God with it and so hath already the whole future in the bottom of the heart.

ESSAYS, SECOND SERIES¹

VII. POLITICS

Gold and iron are good
To buy iron and gold;
All earth's fleece and food
For their like are sold.
Boded Merlin wise,
Proved Napoleon great,—
Nor kind nor coinage buys
Aught above its rate.
Fear, Craft, and Avarice
Cannot rear a State.
Out of dust to build
What is more than dust,—
Walls Amphion piled
Phœbus stablish must.
When the Muses nine
With the Virtues meet,
Find to their design

¹ This volume, published in 1844, contains eight essays: *The Poet, Experience, Character, Manners, Gifts, Nature, Politics, Nominalist and Realist*; and also a lecture, *New England Reformers*.

An Atlantic seat,
By green orchard boughs
Fended from the heat,
Where the statesman ploughs
Furrow for the wheat;
When the Church is social worth,
When the state-house is the hearth,
Then the perfect State is come,
The republican at home.

IN dealing with the State, we ought to remember that its institutions are not aboriginal, though they existed before we were born; that they are not superior to the citizen; that every one of them was once the act of a single man; every law and usage was a man's expedient to meet a particular case; that they all are imitable, all alterable; we may make as good, we may make better. Society is an illusion to the young citizen. It lies before him in rigid repose, with certain names, men, and institutions, rooted like oak-trees to the center, round which all arrange themselves the best they can. But the old statesman knows that society is fluid; there are no such roots and centers, but any particle may suddenly become the center of the movement and compel the system to gyrate round it; as every man of strong will, like Pisistratus or Cromwell, does for a time, and every man of truth, like Plato or Paul, does forever. But politics rest on necessary foundations, and cannot be treated with levity. Republics abound in young civilians who believe that the laws make the city, that grave modifications of the policy and modes of living and employments of the population, that commerce, education, and religion, may be voted in or out; and that any measure, though it were absurd, may be imposed on a people if only you can get sufficient voices to make it a law. But the wise know that foolish legislation is a rope of sand which perishes in the twisting; that the State must follow and not lead the character and progress of the citizen; the strongest usurper is quickly got rid of; and they only who build on Ideas, build for eternity; and that the form of government which prevails is the expression of what cultivation exists in the population which permits it. The law is only a memorandum. We are superstitious, and esteem the statute somewhat: so much life as it has in the character of living men is its force. The statute stands there to say,

Yesterday we agreed so and so, but how feel ye this article to-day? Our statute is a currency which we stamp with our own portrait: it soon becomes unrecognizable, and in process of time will return to the mint. Nature is not democratic, nor limited-monarchical, but despotic, and will not be fooled or abated of any jot of her authority by the pertest of her sons; and as fast as the public mind is opened to more intelligence, the code is seen to be brute and stammering. It speaks not articulately, and must be made to. Meantime the education of the general mind never stops. The reveries of the true and simple are prophetic. What the tender poetic youth dreams, and prays, and paints to-day, but shuns the ridicule of saying aloud, shall presently be the resolutions of public bodies; then shall be carried as grievance and bill of rights through conflict and war, and then shall be triumphant law and establishment for a hundred years, until it gives place in turn to new prayers and pictures. The history of the State sketches in coarse outline the progress of thought, and follows at a distance the delicacy of culture and of aspiration.

The theory of politics which has possessed the mind of men, and which they have expressed the best they could in their laws and in their revolutions, considers persons and property as the two objects for whose protection government exists. Of persons, all have equal rights, in virtue of being identical in nature. This interest, of course, with its whole power demands a democracy. Whilst the rights of all as persons are equal, in virtue of their access to reason, their rights in property are very unequal. One man owns his clothes, and another owns a county. This accident, depending primarily on the skill and virtue of the parties, of which there is every degree, and secondarily on patrimony, falls unequally, and its rights, of course, are unequal. Personal rights, universally the same, demand a government framed on the ratio of the census; property demands a government framed on the ratio of owners and of owning. Laban, who has flocks and herds, wishes them looked after by an officer on the frontiers, lest the Midianites shall drive them off; and pays a tax to that end. Jacob has no flocks or herds and no fear of the Midianites, and pays no tax to the officer.

It seemed fit that Laban and Jacob should have equal rights to elect the officer who is to defend their persons, but that Laban and not Jacob should elect the officer who is to guard the sheep and cattle. And, if question arise whether additional officers or watch-towers should be provided, must not Laban and Isaac, and those who must sell part of their herds to buy protection for the rest, judge better of this, and with more right, than Jacob, who, because he is a youth and a traveler, eats their bread and not his own?

In the earliest society the proprietors made their own wealth, and so long as it comes to the owners in the direct way, no other opinion would arise in any equitable community than that property should make the law for property, and persons the law for persons.

But property passes through donation or inheritance to those who do not create it. Gift, in one case, makes it as really the new owner's, as labor made it the first owner's; in the other case, of patrimony, the law makes an ownership which will be valid in each man's view according to the estimate which he sets on the public tranquillity.

It was not, however, found easy to embody the readily-admitted principle that property should make law for property, and persons for persons; since persons and property mixed themselves in every transaction. At last it seemed settled that the rightful distinction was that the proprietors should have more elective franchise than non-proprietors, on the Spartan principle of "calling that which is just, equal; not that which is equal, just."

That principle no longer looks so self-evident as it appeared in former times, partly because doubts have arisen whether too much weight had not been allowed in the laws to property, and such a structure given to our usages as allowed the rich to encroach on the poor, and to keep them poor; but mainly because there is an instinctive sense, however obscure and yet inarticulate, that the whole constitution of property, on its present tenures, is injurious, and its influence on persons deteriorating and degrading; that truly the only interest for the consideration of the State is persons; that property will always follow persons; that the highest end of government is the culture of men; and that if

men can be educated, the institutions will share their improvement and the moral sentiment will write the law of the land.

If it be not easy to settle the equity of this question, the peril is less when we take note of our natural defenses. We are kept by better guards than the vigilance of such magistrates as we commonly elect. Society always consists in greatest part of young and foolish persons. The old, who have seen through the hypocrisy of courts and statesmen, die and leave no wisdom to their sons. They believe their own newspaper, as their fathers did at their age. With such an ignorant and deceivable majority, States would soon run to ruin, but that there are limitations beyond which the folly and ambition of governors cannot go. Things have their laws, as well as men; and things refuse to be trifled with. Property will be protected. Corn will not grow unless it is planted and manured; but the farmer will not plant or hoe it unless the chances are a hundred to one that he will cut and harvest it. Under any forms, persons and property must and will have their just sway. They exert their power, as steadily as matter its attraction. Cover up a pound of earth never so cunningly, divide and subdivide it; melt it to liquid, convert it to gas; it will always weigh a pound; it will always attract and resist other matter by the full virtue of one pound weight:—and the attributes of a person, his wit and his moral energy, will exercise, under any law or extinguishing tyranny, their proper force,—if not overtly, then covertly; if not for the law, then against it; if not wholesomely, then poisonously; with right, or by might.

The boundaries of personal influence it is impossible to fix, as persons are organs of moral or supernatural force. Under the dominion of an idea which possesses the minds of multitudes, as civil freedom, or the religious sentiment, the powers of persons are no longer subjects of calculation. A nation of men unanimously bent on freedom or conquest can easily confound the arithmetic of statist, and achieve extravagant actions, out of all proportion to their means; as the Greeks, the Saracens, the Swiss, the Americans, and the French have done.

In like manner, to every particle of property belongs its own attraction. A cent

is the representative of a certain quantity of corn or other commodity. Its value is in the necessities of the animal man. It is so much warmth, so much bread, so much water, so much land. The law may do what it will with the owner of property; its just power will still attach to the cent. The law may in a mad freak say that all shall have power except the owners of property; they shall have no vote. Nevertheless, by a higher law, the property will, year after year, write every statute that respects property. The non-proprietor will be the scribe of the proprietor. What the owners wish to do, the whole power of property will do, either through the law or else in defiance of it. Of course I speak of all the property, not merely of the great estates. When the rich are outvoted, as frequently happens, it is the joint treasury of the poor which exceeds their accumulations. Every man owns something, if it is only a cow, or a wheelbarrow, or his arms, and so has that property to dispose of.

The same necessity which secures the rights of person and property against the malignity or folly of the magistrate, determines the form and methods of governing, which are proper to each nation and to its habit of thought, and nowise transferable to other states of society. In this country we are very vain of our political institutions, which are singular in this, that they sprung, within the memory of living men, from the character and condition of the people, which they still express with sufficient fidelity,—and we ostentatiously prefer them to any other in history. They are not better, but only fitter for us. We may be wise in asserting the advantage in modern times of the democratic form, but to other states of society, in which religion consecrated the monarchical, that and not this was expedient. Democracy is better for us, because the religious sentiment of the present time accords better with it. Born democrats, we are nowise qualified to judge of monarchy, which, to our fathers living in the monarchical idea, was also relatively right. But our institutions, though in coincidence with the spirit of the age, have not any exemption from the practical defects which have discredited other forms. Every actual State is corrupt. Good men must not obey the laws too well. What satire on government

can equal the severity of censure conveyed in the word *politic*, which now for ages has signified *cunning*, intimating that the State is a trick?

The same benign necessity and the same practical abuse appear in the parties, into which each State divides itself, of opponents and defenders of the administration of the government. Parties are also founded on instincts, and have better guides to their own humble aims than the sagacity of their leaders. They have nothing perverse in their origin, but rudely mark some real and lasting relation. We might as wisely reprove the east wind or the frost, as a political party, whose members, for the most part, could give no account of their position, but stand for the defense of those interests in which they find themselves. Our quarrel with them begins when they quit this deep natural ground at the bidding of some leader and, obeying personal considerations, throw themselves into the maintenance and defense of points nowise belonging to their system. A party is perpetually corrupted by personality. Whilst we absolve the association from dishonesty, we cannot extend the same charity to their leaders. They reap the rewards of the docility and zeal of the masses which they direct. Ordinarily our parties are parties of circumstance, and not of principle; as the planting interest in conflict with the commercial; the party of capitalists and that of operatives: parties which are identical in their moral character, and which can easily change ground with each other in the support of many of their measures. Parties of principle, as, religious sects, or the party of free-trade, of universal suffrage, of abolition of slavery, of abolition of capital punishment, degenerate into personalities, or would inspire enthusiasm. The vice of our leading parties in this country (which may be cited as a fair specimen of these societies of opinion) is that they do not plant themselves on the deep and necessary grounds to which they are respectively entitled, but lash themselves to fury in the carrying of some local and momentary measure, nowise useful to the commonwealth. Of the two great parties which at this hour almost share the nation between them, I should say that one has the best cause, and the other contains the best men. The philosopher, the poet, or

the religious man, will of course wish to cast his vote with the democrat, for free-trade, for wide suffrage, for the abolition of legal cruelties in the penal code, and for facilitating in every manner the access of the young and the poor to the sources of wealth and power. But he can rarely accept the persons whom the so-called popular party propose to him as representatives of these liberalities. They have not at heart the ends which give to the name of democracy what hope and virtue are in it. The spirit of our American radicalism is destructive and aimless: it is not loving; it has no ulterior and divine ends, but is destructive only out of hatred and selfishness. On the other side, the conservative party, composed of the most moderate, able, and cultivated part of the population, is timid, and merely defensive of property. It vindicates no right, it aspires to no real good, it brands no crime, it proposes no generous policy; it does not build, nor write, nor cherish the arts, nor foster religion, nor establish schools, nor encourage science, nor emancipate the slave, nor befriend the poor, or the Indian, or the immigrant. From neither party, when in power, has the world any benefit to expect in science, art, or humanity, at all commensurate with the resources of the nation.

I do not for these defects despair of our republic. We are not at the mercy of any waves of chance. In the strife of ferocious parties, human nature always finds itself cherished, as the children of the convicts at Botany Bay are found to have as healthy a moral sentiment as other children. Citizens of feudal states are alarmed at our democratic institutions lapsing into anarchy, and the older and more cautious among ourselves are learning from Europeans to look with some terror at our turbulent freedom. It is said that in our license of construing the Constitution, and in the despotism of public opinion, we have no anchor; and one foreign observer thinks he has found the safeguard in the sanctity of Marriage among us; and another thinks he has found it in our Calvinism. Fisher Ames expressed the popular security more wisely, when he compared a monarchy and a republic, saying that a monarchy is a merchantman, which sails well, but will sometimes strike on a rock and go to the bottom; whilst a republic is a raft,

which would never sink, but then your feet are always in water. No forms can have any dangerous importance whilst we are befriended by the laws of things. It makes no difference how many tons weight of atmosphere presses on our heads, so long as the same pressure resists it within the lungs. Augment the mass a thousandfold, it cannot begin to crush us, as long as reaction is equal to action. The fact of two poles, of two forces, centripetal and centrifugal, is universal, and each force by its own activity develops the other. Wild liberty develops iron conscience. Want of liberty, by strengthening law and decorum, stupefies conscience. "Lynch-law" prevails only where there is greater hardihood and self-subsistency in the leaders. A mob cannot be a permanency; everybody's interest requires that it should not exist, and only justice satisfies all.

We must trust infinitely to the beneficent necessity which shines through all laws. Human nature expresses itself in them as characteristically as in statues, or songs, or railroads; and an abstract of the codes of nations would be a transcript of the common conscience. Governments have their origin in the moral identity of men. Reason for one is seen to be reason for another, and for every other. There is a middle measure which satisfies all parties, be they never so many or so resolute for their own. Every man finds a sanction for his simplest claims and deeds in decisions of his own mind, which he calls Truth and Holiness. In these decisions all the citizens find a perfect agreement, and only in these; not in what is good to eat, good to wear, good use of time, or what amount of land or of public aid each is entitled to claim. This truth and justice men presently endeavor to make application of to the measuring of land, the apportionment of service, the protection of life and property. Their first endeavors, no doubt, are very awkward. Yet absolute right is the first governor; or, every government is an impure theocracy. The idea after which each community is aiming to make and mend its law, is the will of the wise man. The wise man it cannot find in nature, and it makes awkward but earnest efforts to secure his government by contrivance; as by causing the entire people to give their voices on every

measure; or by a double choice to get the representation of the whole; or by a selection of the best citizens; or to secure the advantages of efficiency and internal peace by confiding the government to one, who may himself select his agents. All forms of government symbolize an immortal government, common to all dynasties and independent of numbers, perfect where two men exist, perfect where there is only one man.

Every man's nature is a sufficient advertisement to him of the character of his fellows. My right and my wrong is their right and their wrong. Whilst I do what is fit for me, and abstain from what is unfit, my neighbor and I shall often agree in our means, and work together for a time to one end. But whenever I find my dominion over myself not sufficient for me, and undertake the direction of him also, I overstep the truth, and come into false relations to him. I may have so much more skill or strength than he that he cannot express adequately his sense of wrong, but it is a lie, and hurts like a lie both him and me. Love and nature cannot maintain the assumption; it must be executed by a practical lie, namely, by force. This undertaking for another is the blunder which stands in colossal ugliness in the governments of the world. It is the same thing in numbers, as in a pair, only not quite so intelligible. I can see well enough a great difference between my setting myself down to a self-control, and my going to make somebody else act after my views; but when a quarter of the human race assume to tell me what I must do, I may be too much disturbed by the circumstances to see so clearly the absurdity of their command. Therefore all public ends look vague and quixotic beside private ones. For any laws but those which men make for themselves, are laughable. If I put myself in the place of my child, and we stand in one thought and see that things are thus or thus, that perception is law for him and me. We are both there, both act. But if, without carrying him into the thought, I look over into his plot, and, guessing how it is with him, ordain this or that, he will never obey me. This is the history of governments,—one man does something which is to bind another. A man who cannot be acquainted with me, taxes me; looking from afar at me, ordains that a part

of my labor shall go to this or that whimsical end,—not as I, but as he happens to fancy. Behold the consequence. Of all debts men are least willing to pay the taxes. What a satire is this on government! Everywhere they think they get their money's worth, except for these.

Hence the less government we have the better,—the fewer laws, and the less confided power. The antidote to this abuse of formal Government is the influence of private character, the growth of the Individual; the appearance of the principal to supersede the proxy; the appearance of the wise man; of whom the existing government is, it must be owned, but a shabby imitation. That which all things tend to educe; which freedom, cultivation, intercourse, revolutions, go to form and deliver, is character; that is the end of Nature, to reach unto this coronation of her king. To educate the wise man the State exists, and with the appearance of the wise man the State expires. The appearance of character makes the State unnecessary. The wise man is the State. He needs no army, fort, or navy,—he loves men too well; no bribe, or feast, or palace, to draw friends to him; no vantage ground, no favorable circumstance. He needs no library, for he has not done thinking; no church, for he is a prophet; no statute book, for he has the lawgiver; no money, for he is value; no road, for he is at home where he is; no experience, for the life of the creator shoots through him, and looks from his eyes. He has no personal friends, for he who has the spell to draw the prayer and piety of all men unto him needs not husband and educate a few to share with him a select and poetic life. His relation to men is angelic; his memory is myrrh to them; his presence, frankincense and flowers.

We think our civilization near its meridian, but we are yet only at the cock-crowing and the morning star. In our barbarous society the influence of character is in its infancy. As a political power, as the rightful lord who is to tumble all rulers from their chairs, its presence is hardly yet suspected. Malthus and Ricardo quite omit it; the *Annals Register* is silent; in the *Conversations' Lexicon* it is not set down; the President's Message, the Queen's Speech, have not mentioned it; and yet it is never nothing.

Every thought which genius and piety throw into the world, alters the world. The gladiators in the lists of power feel, through all their frocks of force and simulation, the presence of worth. I think the very strife of trade and ambition is confession of this divinity; and successes in those fields are the poor amends, the fig-leaf with which the shamed soul attempts to hide its nakedness. I find the like unwilling homage in all quarters. It is because we know how much is due from us that we are impatient to show some petty talent as a substitute for worth. We are haunted by a conscience of this right to grandeur of character, and are false to it. But each of us has some talent, can do somewhat useful, or graceful, or formidable, or amusing, or lucrative. That we do, as an apology to others and to ourselves for not reaching the mark of a good and equal life. But it does not satisfy *us*, whilst we thrust it on the notice of our companions. It may throw dust in their eyes, but does not smooth our own brow, or give us the tranquillity of the strong when we walk abroad. We do penance as we go. Our talent is a sort of expiation, and we are constrained to reflect on our splendid moment with a certain humiliation, as somewhat too fine, and not as one act of many acts, a fair expression of our permanent energy. Most persons of ability meet in society with a kind of tacit appeal. Each seems to say, "I am not all here." Senators and presidents have climbed so high with pain enough, not because they think the place specially agreeable, but as an apology for real worth, and to vindicate their manhood in our eyes. This conspicuous chair is their compensation to themselves for being of a poor, cold, hard nature. They must do what they can. Like one class of forest animals, they have nothing but a prehensile tail; climb they must, or crawl. If a man found himself so rich-natured that he could enter into strict relations with the best persons and make life serene around him by the dignity and sweetness of his behavior, could he afford to circumvent the favor of the caucus and the press, and covet relations so hollow and pompous as those of a politician? Surely nobody would be a charlatan who could afford to be sincere.

The tendencies of the times favor the idea of self-government, and leave the individual,

for all code, to the rewards and penalties of his own constitution; which work with more energy than we believe whilst we depend on artificial restraints. The movement in this direction has been very marked in modern history. Much has been blind and discreditable, but the nature of the revolution is not affected by the vices of the revolvers; for this is a purely moral force. It was never adopted by any party in history, neither can be. It separates the individual from all party, and unites him at the same time to the race. It promises a recognition of higher rights than those of personal freedom, or the security of property. A man has a right to be employed, to be trusted, to be loved, to be revered. The power of love, as the basis of a State, has never been tried. We must not imagine that all things are lapsing into confusion if every tender protestant be not compelled to bear his part in certain social conventions; nor doubt that roads can be built, letters carried, and the fruit of labor secured, when the government of force is at an end. Are our methods now so excellent that all competition is hopeless? could not a nation of friends even devise better ways? On the other hand, let not the most conservative and timid fear anything from a premature surrender of the bayonet and the system of force. For, according to the order of nature, which is quite superior to our will, it stands thus: there will always be a government of force where men are selfish; and when they are pure enough to abjure the code of force they will be wise enough to see how these public ends of the post-office, of the highway, of commerce and the exchange of property, of museums and libraries, of institutions of art and science can be answered.

We live in a very low state of the world, and pay unwilling tribute to governments founded on force. There is not, among the most religious and instructed men of the most religious and civil nations, a reliance on the moral sentiment and a sufficient belief in the unity of things to persuade them that society can be maintained without artificial restraints, as well as the solar system; or that the private citizen might be reasonable and a good neighbor, without the hint of a jail or a confiscation. What is strange too, there never was in any man sufficient faith

in the power of rectitude to inspire him with the broad design of renovating the State on the principle of right and love. All those who have pretended this design have been partial reformers, and have admitted in some manner the supremacy of the bad State. I do not call to mind a single human being who has steadily denied the authority of the laws, on the simple ground of his own moral nature. Such designs, full of genius and full of faith as they are, are not entertained except avowedly as air-pictures. If the individual who exhibits them dare to think them practicable, he disgusts scholars and churchmen; and men of talent and women of superior sentiments cannot hide their contempt. Not the less does nature continue to fill the heart of youth with suggestions of this enthusiasm, and there are now men,—if indeed I can speak in the plural number,—more exactly, I will say, I have just been conversing with one man, to whom no weight of adverse experience will make it for a moment appear impossible that thousands of human beings might exercise towards each other the grandest and simplest sentiments, as well as a knot of friends, or a pair of lovers.

REPRESENTATIVE MEN¹

VI. NAPOLEON; OR, THE MAN OF THE WORLD

AMONG the eminent persons of the nineteenth century, Bonaparte is far the best known and the most powerful; and owes his predominance to the fidelity with which he expresses the tone of thought and belief, the aims of the masses of active and cultivated men. It is Swedenborg's theory that every organ is made up of homogeneous particles; or as it is sometimes expressed, every whole is made of similars; that is, the lungs are composed of infinitely small lungs; the liver, of infinitely small livers; the kidney, of little kidneys, *etc.* Following this analogy, if any man is found to carry with him the power and affections of vast numbers, if Napoleon is France, if Napoleon is Europe, it is be-

¹ This volume was published in 1850. It contains seven lectures: *Uses of Great Men*; *Plato, or, The Philosopher*; *Swedenborg, or, The Mystic*; *Montaigne, or, The Skeptic*; *Shakespeare, or, The Poet*; *Napoleon, or, The Man of the World*; and *Goethe, or, The Writer*.

cause the people whom he sways are little Napoleons.

In our society there is a standing antagonism between the conservative and the democratic classes; between those who have made their fortunes, and the young and the poor who have fortunes to make; between the interests of dead labor,—that is, the labor of hands long ago still in the grave, which labor is now entombed in money stocks, or in land and buildings owned by idle capitalists,—and the interests of living labor, which seeks to possess itself of land and buildings and money stocks. The first class is timid, selfish, illiberal, hating innovation, and continually losing numbers by death. The second class is selfish also, encroaching, bold, self-relying, always outnumbering the other and recruiting its numbers every hour by births. It desires to keep open every avenue to the competition of all, and to multiply avenues: the class of business men in America, in England, in France and throughout Europe; the class of industry and skill. Napoleon is its representative. The instinct of active, brave, able men, throughout the middle class everywhere, has pointed out Napoleon as the incarnate Democrat. He had their virtues and their vices; above all, he had their spirit or aim. That tendency is material, pointing at a sensual success and employing the richest and most various means to that end; conversant with mechanical powers, highly intellectual, widely and accurately learned and skillful, but subordinating all intellectual and spiritual forces into means to a material success. To be the rich man is the end. "God has granted," says the Koran, "to every people a prophet in its own tongue." Paris and London and New York, the spirit of commerce, of money and material power, were also to have their prophet; and Bonaparte was qualified and sent.

Every one of the million readers of anecdotes or memoirs or lives of Napoleon delights in the page, because he studies in it his own history. Napoleon is thoroughly modern, and, at the highest point of his fortunes, has the very spirit of the newspapers. He is no saint,—to use his own word, "no capuchin," and he is no hero, in the high sense. The man in the street finds in him the qualities and powers of other men in

the street. He finds him, like himself, by birth a citizen, who, by very intelligible merits, arrived at such a commanding position that he could indulge all those tastes which the common man possesses but is obliged to conceal and deny: good society, good books, fast traveling, dress, dinners, servants without number, personal weight, the execution of his ideas, the standing in the attitude of a benefactor to all persons about him, the refined enjoyments of pictures, statues, music, palaces, and conventional honors,—precisely what is agreeable to the heart of every man in the nineteenth century, this powerful man possessed.

It is true that a man of Napoleon's truth of adaptation to the mind of the masses around him, becomes not merely representative but actually a monopolizer and usurper of other minds. Thus Mirabeau plagiarized every good thought, every good word that was spoken in France. Dumont relates that he sat in the gallery of the Convention and heard Mirabeau make a speech. It struck Dumont that he could fit it with a peroration, which he wrote in pencil immediately, and showed it to Lord Elgin, who sat by him. Lord Elgin approved it, and Dumont, in the evening, showed it to Mirabeau. Mirabeau read it, pronounced it admirable, and declared he would incorporate it into his harangue to-morrow, to the Assembly. "It is impossible," said Dumont, "as, unfortunately, I have shown it to Lord Elgin." "If you have shown it to Lord Elgin, and to fifty persons beside, I shall still speak it to-morrow": and he did speak it, with much effect, at the next day's session. For Mirabeau, with his overpowering personality, felt that these things which his presence inspired were as much his own as if he had said them, and that his adoption of them gave them their weight. Much more absolute and centralizing was the successor to Mirabeau's popularity and to much more than his predominance in France. Indeed, a man of Napoleon's stamp almost ceases to have a private speech and opinion. He is so largely receptive, and is so placed, that he comes to be a bureau for all the intelligence, wit, and power of the age and country. He gains the battle; he makes the code; he makes the system of weights and measures; he levels the Alps; he builds

the road. All distinguished engineers, savans, statistes, report to him: so likewise do all good heads in every kind: he adopts the best measures, sets his stamp on them, and not these alone, but on every happy and memorable expression. Every sentence spoken by Napoleon and every line of his writing, deserves reading, as it is the sense of France.

Bonaparte was the idol of common men because he had in transcendent degree the qualities and powers of common men. There is a certain satisfaction in coming down to the lowest ground of politics, for we get rid of cant and hypocrisy. Bonaparte wrought, in common with that great class he represented, for power and wealth,—but Bonaparte, specially, without any scruple as to the means. All the sentiments which embarrass men's pursuit of these objects, he set aside. The sentiments were for women and children. Fontanes, in 1804, expressed Napoleon's own sense, when in behalf of the Senate he addressed him,—“Sire, the desire of perfection is the worst disease that ever afflicted the human mind.” The advocates of liberty and of progress are “ideologists”;—a word of contempt often in his mouth;—“Necker is an ideologist”: “Lafayette is an ideologist.”

An Italian proverb, too well known, declares that “if you would succeed, you must not be too good.” It is an advantage, within certain limits, to have renounced the dominion of the sentiments of piety, gratitude, and generosity; since what was an impassable bar to us, and still is to others, becomes a convenient weapon for our purposes; just as the river which was a formidable barrier, winter transforms into the smoothest of roads.

Napoleon renounced, once for all, sentiments and affections, and would help himself with his hands and his head. With him is no miracle and no magic. He is a worker in brass, in iron, in wood, in earth, in roads, in buildings, in money and in troops, and a very consistent and wise master-workman. He is never weak and literary, but acts with the solidity and the precision of natural agents. He has not lost his native sense and sympathy with things. Men give way before such a man, as before natural events. To be sure there are men enough who are

immersed in things, as farmers, smiths, sailors, and mechanics generally; and we know how real and solid such men appear in the presence of scholars and grammarians: but these men ordinarily lack the power of arrangement, and are like hands without a head. But Bonaparte superadded to this mineral and animal force, insight and generalization, so that men saw in him combined the natural and the intellectual power, as if the sea and land had taken flesh and begun to cipher. Therefore the land and sea seem to presuppose him. He came unto his own and they received him. This ciphering operative knows what he is working with and what is the product. He knew the properties of gold and iron, of wheels and ships, of troops and diplomatists, and required that each should do after its kind.

The art of war was the game in which he exerted his arithmetic. It consisted, according to him, in having always more forces than the enemy, on the point where the enemy is attacked, or where he attacks: and his whole talent is strained by endless maneuver and evolution, to march always on the enemy at an angle, and destroy his forces in detail. It is obvious that a very small force, skillfully and rapidly maneuvering, so as always to bring two men against one at the point of engagement, will be an overmatch for a much larger body of men.

The times, his constitution, and his early circumstances combined to develop this pattern democrat. He had the virtues of his class and the conditions for their activity. That common-sense which no sooner respects any end than it finds the means to effect it; the delight in the use of means; in the choice, simplification, and combining of means; the directness and thoroughness of his work; the prudence with which all was seen and the energy with which all was done, make him the natural organ and head of what I may almost call, from its extent, the *modern* party.

Nature must have far the greatest share in every success, and so in his. Such a man was wanted, and such a man was born; a man of stone and iron, capable of sitting on horseback sixteen or seventeen hours, of going many days together without rest or food except by snatches, and with the speed and spring of a tiger in action; a man not

embarrassed by any scruples; compact, instant, selfish, prudent, and of a perception which did not suffer itself to be balked or misled by any pretenses of others, or any superstition, or any heat or haste of his own. "My hand of iron," he said, "was not at the extremity of my arm, it was immediately connected with my head." He respected the power of nature and fortune, and ascribed to it his superiority, instead of valuing himself, like inferior men, on his opinionativeness, and waging war with nature. His favorite rhetoric lay in allusion to his star; and he pleased himself, as well as the people, when he styled himself the "Child of Destiny." "They charge me," he said, "with the commission of great crimes: men of my stamp do not commit crimes. Nothing has been more simple than my elevation, 'tis in vain to ascribe it to intrigue or crime; it was owing to the peculiarity of the times and to my reputation of having fought well against the enemies of my country. I have always marched with the opinion of great masses and with events. Of what use then would crimes be to me?" Again he said, speaking of his son, "My son cannot replace me; I could not replace myself. I am the creature of circumstances."

He had a directness of action never before combined with so much comprehension. He is a realist, terrific to all talkers and confused truth-obscuring persons. He sees where the matter hinges, throws himself on the precise point of resistance, and slights all other considerations. He is strong in the right manner, namely, by insight. He never blundered into victory, but won his battles in his head before he won them on the field. His principal means are in himself. He asks counsel of no other. In 1796 he writes to the Directory: "I have conducted the campaign without consulting any one. I should have done no good if I had been under the necessity of conforming to the notions of another person. I have gained some advantages over superior forces and when totally destitute of every thing, because, in the persuasion that your confidence was reposed in me, my actions were as prompt as my thoughts."

History is full, down to this day, of the imbecility of kings and governors. They are a class of persons much to be pitied, for they

know not what they should do. The weavers strike for bread, and the king and his ministers, not knowing what to do, meet them with bayonets. But Napoleon understood his business. Here was a man who in each moment and emergency knew what to do next. It is an immense comfort and refreshment to the spirits, not only of kings, but of citizens. Few men have any next; they live from hand to mouth, without plan, and are ever at the end of their line, and after each action wait for an impulse from abroad. Napoleon had been the first man of the world, if his ends had been purely public. As he is, he inspires confidence and vigor by the extraordinary unity of his action. He is firm, sure, self-denying, self-postponing, sacrificing every thing,—money, troops, generals, and his own safety also, to his aim; not misled, like common adventurers, by the splendor of his own means. "Incidents ought not to govern policy," he said, "but policy, incidents." "To be hurried away by every event is to have no political system at all." His victories were only so many doors, and he never for a moment lost sight of his way onward, in the dazzle and uproar of the present circumstance. He knew what to do, and he flew to his mark. He would shorten a straight line to come at his object. Horrible anecdotes may no doubt be collected from his history, of the price at which he bought his successes; but he must not therefore be set down as cruel, but only as one who knew no impediment to his will; not bloodthirsty, not cruel,—but woe to what thing or person stood in his way! Not bloodthirsty, but not sparing of blood,—and pitiless. He saw only the object: the obstacle must give way. "Sire, General Clarke cannot combine with General Junot, for the dreadful fire of the Austrian battery."—"Let him carry the battery."—"Sire, every regiment that approaches the heavy artillery is sacrificed: Sire, what orders?"—"Forward, forward!" Seruzier, a colonel of artillery, gives in his *Military Memoirs* the following sketch of a scene after the battle of Austerlitz:—"At the moment in which the Russian army was making its retreat, painfully, but in good order, on the ice of the lake, the Emperor Napoleon came riding at full speed toward the artillery. 'You are losing time,' he cried; 'fire upon those masses; they must be

engulfed: fire upon the ice!" The order remained unexecuted for ten minutes. In vain several officers and myself were placed on the slope of a hill to produce the effect: their balls and mine rolled upon the ice without breaking it up. Seeing that, I tried a simple method of elevating light howitzers. The almost perpendicular fall of the heavy projectiles produced the desired effect. My method was immediately followed by the adjoining batteries, and in less than no time we buried" some¹ "thousands of Russians and Austrians under the waters of the lake."

In the plenitude of his resources, every obstacle seemed to vanish. "There shall be no Alps," he said; and he built his perfect roads, climbing by graded galleries their steepest precipices, until Italy was as open to Paris as any town in France. He laid his bones to, and wrought for his crown. Having decided what was to be done, he did that with might and main. He put out all his strength. He risked every thing and spared nothing, neither ammunition, nor money, nor troops, nor generals, nor himself.

We like to see every thing do its office after its kind, whether it be a milch-cow or a rattle-snake; and if fighting be the best mode of adjusting national differences (as large majorities of men seem to agree), certainly Bonaparte was right in making it thorough. The grand principle of war, he said, was that an army ought always to be ready, by day and by night and at all hours, to make all the resistance it is capable of making. He never economized his ammunition, but, on a hostile position, rained a torrent of iron,—shells, balls, grape-shot,—to annihilate all defense. On any point of resistance he concentrated squadron on squadron in overwhelming numbers until it was swept out of existence. To a regiment of horse-chasseurs at Lobenstein, two days before the battle of Jena, Napoleon said, "My lads, you must not fear death; when soldiers brave death, they drive him into the enemy's ranks." In the fury of assault, he no more spared himself. He went to the edge of his possibility. It is plain that in Italy he did what he could, and all that he could. He came, several times, within an inch of ruin; and his own person was all but

lost. He was flung into the marsh at Arcola. The Austrians were between him and his troops, in the *mêlée*, and he was brought off with desperate efforts. At Lonato, and at other places, he was on the point of being taken prisoner. He fought sixty battles. He had never enough. Each victory was a new weapon. "My power would fall, were I not to support it by new achievements. Conquest has made me what I am, and conquest must maintain me." He felt, with every wise man, that as much life is needed for conservation as for creation. We are always in peril, always in a bad plight, just on the edge of destruction and only to be saved by invention and courage.

This vigor was guarded and tempered by the coldest prudence and punctuality. A thunderbolt in the attack, he was found invulnerable in his entrenchments. His very attack was never the inspiration of courage, but the result of calculation. His idea of the best defense consists in being still the attacking party. "My ambition," he says, "was great, but was of a cold nature." In one of his conversations with Las Casas, he remarked, "As to moral courage, I have rarely met with the two-o'clock-in-the-morning kind: I mean unprepared courage; that which is necessary on an unexpected occasion, and which, in spite of the most unforeseen events, leaves full freedom of judgment and decision": and he did not hesitate to declare that he was himself eminently endowed with this two-o'clock-in-the-morning courage, and that he had met with few persons equal to himself in this respect.

Every thing depended on the nicety of his combinations, and the stars were not more punctual than his arithmetic. His personal attention descended to the smallest particulars. "At Montebello, I ordered Kellermann to attack with eight hundred horse, and with these he separated the six thousand Hungarian grenadiers, before the very eyes of the Austrian cavalry. This cavalry was half a league off, and required a quarter of an hour to arrive on the field of action, and I have observed that it is always these quarters of an hour that decide the fate of a battle." "Before he fought a battle, Bonaparte thought little about what he should do in case of success, but a great deal about what he should do in case of a reverse of fortune."

¹ As I quote at second hand, and cannot procure Seruzier, I dare not adopt the high figure I find. (Emerson's note.)

The same prudence and good sense mark all his behavior. His instructions to his secretary at the Tuileries are worth remembering. "During the night, enter my chamber as seldom as possible. Do not awake me when you have any good news to communicate; with that there is no hurry. But when you bring bad news, rouse me instantly, for then there is not a moment to be lost." It was a whimsical economy of the same kind which dictated his practice, when general in Italy, in regard to his burdensome correspondence. He directed Bourrienne to leave all letters unopened for three weeks, and then observed with satisfaction how large a part of the correspondence had thus disposed of itself and no longer required an answer. His achievement of business was immense, and enlarges the known powers of man. There have been many working kings, from Ulysses to William of Orange, but none who accomplished a tithe of this man's performance.

To these gifts of nature, Napoleon added the advantage of having been born to a private and humble fortune. In his later days he had the weakness of wishing to add to his crowns and badges the prescription of aristocracy; but he knew his debt to his austere education, and made no secret of his contempt for the born kings, and for "the hereditary asses," as he coarsely styled the Bourbons. He said that "in their exile they had learned nothing, and forgot nothing." Bonaparte had passed through all the degrees of military service, but also was citizen before he was emperor, and so has the key to citizenship. His remarks and estimates discover the information and justness of measurement of the middle class. Those who had to deal with him found that he was not to be imposed upon, but could cipher as well as another man. This appears in all parts of his *Memoirs*, dictated at St. Helena. When the expenses of the empress, of his household, of his palaces, had accumulated great debts, Napoleon examined the bills of the creditors himself, detected overcharges and errors, and reduced the claims by considerable sums.

His grand weapon, namely the millions whom he directed, he owed to the representative character which clothed him. He interests us as he stands for France and for Europe; and he exists as captain and king

only as far as the Revolution, or the interest of the industrious masses, found an organ and a leader in him. In the social interests, he knew the meaning and value of labor, and threw himself naturally on that side. I like an incident mentioned by one of his biographers at St. Helena. "When walking with Mrs. Balcombe, some servants, carrying heavy boxes, passed by on the road, and Mrs. Balcombe desired them, in rather an angry tone, to keep back. Napoleon interfered, saying, 'Respect the burden, Madam.'" In the time of the empire he directed attention to the improvement and embellishment of the markets of the capital. "The marketplace," he said, "is the Louvre of the common people." The principal works that have survived him are his magnificent roads. He filled the troops with his spirit, and a sort of freedom and companionship grew up between him and them, which the forms of his court never permitted between the officers and himself. They performed, under his eye, that which no others could do. The best document of his relation to his troops is the order of the day on the morning of the battle of Austerlitz, in which Napoleon promises the troops that he will keep his person out of reach of fire. This declaration, which is the reverse of that ordinarily made by generals and sovereigns on the eve of a battle, sufficiently explains the devotion of the army to their leader.

But though there is in particulars this identity between Napoleon and the mass of the people, his real strength lay in their conviction that he was their representative in his genius and aims, not only when he courted, but when he controlled, and even when he decimated them by his conscriptions. He knew as well as any Jacobin in France, how to philosophize on liberty and equality; and when allusion was made to the precious blood of centuries, which was spilled by the killing of the Duc d'Enghien, he suggested, "Neither is my blood ditch-water." The people felt that no longer the throne was occupied and the land sucked of its nourishment, by a small class of legitimates, secluded from all community with the children of the soil, and holding the ideas and superstitions of a long-forgotten state of society. Instead of that vampyre, a man of themselves held, in the Tuileries, knowledge and ideas like

their own, opening of course to them and their children all places of power and trust. The day of sleepy, selfish policy, ever narrowing the means and opportunities of young men, was ended, and a day of expansion and demand was come. A market for all the powers and productions of man was opened; brilliant prizes glittered in the eyes of youth and talent. The old, iron-bound, feudal France was changed into a young Ohio or New York; and those who smarted under the immediate rigors of the new monarch, pardoned them as the necessary severities of the military system which had driven out the oppressor. And even when the majority of the people had begun to ask whether they had really gained any thing under the exhausting levies of men and money of the new master, the whole talent of the country, in every rank and kindred, took his part and defended him as its natural patron. In 1814, when advised to rely on the higher classes, Napoleon said to those around him, "Gentlemen, in the situation in which I stand, my only nobility is the rabble of the Faubourgs."

Napoleon met this natural expectation. The necessity of his position required a hospitality to every sort of talent, and its appointment to trusts; and his feeling went along with this policy. Like every superior person, he undoubtedly felt a desire for men and compeers, and a wish to measure his power with other masters, and an impatience of fools and underlings. In Italy, he sought for men and found none. "Good God!" he said, "how rare men are! There are eighteen millions in Italy, and I have with difficulty found two,—Dandolo and Melzi." In later years, with larger experience, his respect for mankind was not increased. In a moment of bitterness he said to one of his oldest friends, "Men deserve the contempt with which they inspire me. I have only to put some gold lace on the coat of my virtuous republicans and they immediately become just what I wish them." This impatience at levity was, however, an oblique tribute of respect to those able persons who commanded his regard not only when he found them friends and coadjutors but also when they resisted his will. He could not confound Fox and Pitt, Carnot, Lafayette, and Bernadotte, with the dangles of his court; and in spite of the detraction which

his systematic egotism dictated towards the great captains who conquered with and for him, ample acknowledgments are made by him to Lannes, Duroc, Kleber, Dessaix, Massena, Murat, Ney, and Augereau. If he felt himself their patron and the founder of their fortunes, as when he said, "I made my generals out of mud," he could not hide his satisfaction in receiving from them a seconding and support commensurate with the grandeur of his enterprise. In the Russian campaign he was so much impressed by the courage and resources of Marshal Ney, that he said, "I have two hundred millions in my coffers, and I would give them all for Ney." The characters which he has drawn of several of his marshals are discriminating, and though they did not content the insatiable vanity of French officers, are no doubt substantially just. And in fact every species of merit was sought and advanced under his government. "I know," he said, "the depth and draught of water of every one of my generals." Natural power was sure to be well received at his court. Seventeen men in his time were raised from common soldiers to the rank of king, marshal, duke, or general; and the crosses of his Legion of Honor were given to personal valor, and not to family connection. "When soldiers have been baptized in the fire of a battle-field, they have all one rank in my eyes."

When a natural king becomes a titular king, everybody is pleased and satisfied. The Revolution entitled the strong populace of the Faubourg St. Antoine, and every horse-boy and powder-monkey in the army, to look on Napoleon as flesh of his flesh and the creature of *his* party: but there is something in the success of grand talent which enlists an universal sympathy. For in the prevalence of sense and spirit over stupidity and malversation, all reasonable men have an interest; and as intellectual beings we feel the air purified by the electric shock, when material force is overthrown by intellectual energies. As soon as we are removed out of the reach of local and accidental partialities, Man feels that Napoleon fights for him; these are honest victories; this strong steam-engine does our work. Whatever appeals to the imagination by transcending the ordinary limits of human ability, wonderfully encourages and liberates us. This capacious head, re-

volving and disposing sovereignly trains of affairs, and animating such multitudes of agents; this eye, which looked through Europe; this prompt invention; this inexhaustible resource:—what events! what romantic pictures! what strange situations!—when spying the Alps, by a sunset in the Sicilian sea; drawing up his army for battle in sight of the Pyramids, and saying to his troops, “From the tops of those pyramids, forty centuries look down on you”; fording the Red Sea; wading in the gulf of the Isthmus of Suez. On the shore of Ptolemais, gigantic projects agitated him. “Had Acre fallen, I should have changed the face of the world.” His army, on the night of the battle of Austerlitz, which was the anniversary of his inauguration as Emperor, presented him with a bouquet of forty standards taken in the fight. Perhaps it is a little puerile, the pleasure he took in making these contrasts glaring; as when he pleased himself with making kings wait in his antechambers, at Tilsit, at Paris, and at Erfurt.

We cannot, in the universal imbecility, indecision, and indolence of men, sufficiently congratulate ourselves on this strong and ready actor, who took occasion by the beard, and showed us how much may be accomplished by the mere force of such virtues as all men possess in less degrees; namely, by punctuality, by personal attention, by courage, and thoroughness. “The Austrians,” he said, “do not know the value of time.” I should cite him, in his earlier years, as a model of prudence. His power does not consist in any wild or extravagant force; in any enthusiasm like Mahomet’s, or singular power of persuasion; but in the exercise of common-sense on each emergency, instead of abiding by rules and customs. The lesson he teaches is that which vigor always teaches;—that there is always room for it. To what heaps of cowardly doubts is not that man’s life an answer! When he appeared it was the belief of all military men that there could be nothing new in war; as it is the belief of men to-day that nothing new can be undertaken in politics, or in church, or in letters, or in trade, or in farming, or in our social manners and customs; and as it is at all times the belief of society that the world is used up. But Bonaparte knew better than society; and, moreover, knew that he knew better. I

think all men know better than they do; know that the institutions we so volubly commend are go-carts and baubles; but they dare not trust their presentiments. Bonaparte relied on his own sense, and did not care a bean for other people’s. The world treated his novelties just as it treats everybody’s novelties,—made infinite objection, mustered all the impediments; but he snapped his finger at their objections. “What creates great difficulty,” he remarks, “in the profession of the land-commander, is the necessity of feeding so many men and animals. If he allows himself to be guided by the commissaries he will never stir, and all his expeditions will fail.” An example of his common-sense is what he says of the passage of the Alps in winter, which all writers, one repeating after the other, had described as impracticable. “The winter,” says Napoleon, “is not the most unfavorable season for the passage of lofty mountains. The snow is then firm, the weather settled, and there is nothing to fear from avalanches, the real and only danger to be apprehended in the Alps. On those high mountains, there are often very fine days in December, of a dry cold, with extreme calmness in the air.” Read his account, too, of the way in which battles are gained. “In all battles a moment occurs when the bravest troops, after having made the greatest efforts, feel inclined to run. That terror proceeds from a want of confidence in their own courage, and it only requires a slight opportunity, a pretense, to restore confidence to them. The art is, to give rise to the opportunity and to invent the pretense. At Arcola, I won the battle with twenty-five horsemen. I seized that moment of lassitude, gave every man a trumpet, and gained the day with this handful. You see that two armies are two bodies which meet and endeavor to frighten each other; a moment of panic occurs, and that moment must be turned to advantage. When a man has been present in many actions, he distinguishes that moment without difficulty: it is as easy as casting up an addition.”

This deputy of the nineteenth century added to his gifts a capacity for speculation on general topics. He delighted in running through the range of practical, of literary, and of abstract questions. His opinion is always original and to the purpose. On the voyage

to Egypt he liked, after dinner, to fix on three or four persons to support a proposition, and as many to oppose it. He gave a subject, and the discussions turned on questions of religion, the different kinds of government, and the art of war. One day he asked whether the planets were inhabited? On another, what was the age of the world? Then he proposed to consider the probability of the destruction of the globe, either by water or by fire: at another time, the truth or fallacy of sentiments, and the interpretation of dreams. He was very fond of talking of religion. In 1806 he conversed with Fournier, bishop of Montpellier, on matters of theology. There were two points on which they could not agree, *viz.*, that of hell, and that of salvation out of the pale of the church. The Emperor told Josephine that he disputed like a devil on these two points, on which the bishop was inexorable. To the philosophers he readily yielded all that was proved against religion as the work of men and time, but he would not hear of materialism. One fine night, on deck, amid a clatter of materialism, Bonaparte pointed to the stars, and said, "You may talk as long as you please, gentlemen, but who made all that?" He delighted in the conversation of men of science, particularly of Monge and Berthollet; but the men of letters he slighted; they were "manufacturers of phrases." Of medicine too he was fond of talking, and with those of its practitioners whom he most esteemed,—with Corvisart at Paris, and with Antonomarchi at St. Helena. "Believe me," he said to the last, "we had better leave off all these remedies: life is a fortress which neither you nor I know anything about. Why throw obstacles in the way of its defense? Its own means are superior to all the apparatus of your laboratories. Corvisart candidly agreed with me that all your filthy mixtures are good for nothing. Medicine is a collection of uncertain prescriptions, the results of which, taken collectively, are more fatal than useful to mankind. Water, air, and cleanliness are the chief articles in my pharmacopœia."

His memoirs, dictated to Count Montholon and General Gourgaud at St. Helena, have great value, after all the deduction that it seems is to be made from them on account of his known disingenuousness. He has the good-nature of strength and conscious su-

periority. I admire his simple, clear narrative of his battles;—good as Cæsar's; his good-natured and sufficiently respectful account of Marshal Wurmser and his other antagonists; and his own equality as a writer to his varying subject. The most agreeable portion is the Campaign in Egypt.

He had hours of thought and wisdom. In intervals of leisure, either in the camp or the palace, Napoleon appears as a man of genius directing on abstract questions the native appetite for truth and the impatience of words he was wont to show in war. He could enjoy every play of invention, a romance, a *bon mot*, as well as a stratagem in a campaign. He delighted to fascinate Josephine and her ladies, in a dim-lighted apartment, by the terrors of a fiction to which his voice and dramatic power lent every addition.

I call Napoleon the agent or attorney of the middle class of modern society; of the throng who fill the markets, shops, counting-houses, manufactories, ships, of the modern world, aiming to be rich. He was the agitator, the destroyer of prescription, the internal improver, the liberal, the radical, the inventor of means, the opener of doors and markets, the subverter of monopoly and abuse. Of course the rich and aristocratic did not like him. England, the center of capital, and Rome and Austria, centers of tradition and genealogy, opposed him. The consternation of the dull and conservative classes, the terror of the foolish old men and old women of the Roman conclave, who in their despair took hold of any thing, and would cling to red-hot iron,—the vain attempts of statist to amuse and deceive him, of the emperor of Austria to bribe him; and the instinct of the young, ardent, and active men everywhere, which pointed him out as the giant of the middle class, make his history bright and commanding. He had the virtues of the masses of his constituents: he had also their vices. I am sorry that the brilliant picture has its reverse. But that is the fatal quality which we discover in our pursuit of wealth, that it is treacherous, and is bought by the breaking or weakening of the sentiments; and it is inevitable that we should find the same fact in the history of this champion, who proposed to himself simply a brilliant career, without any stipulation or scruple concerning the means.

Bonaparte was singularly destitute of generous sentiments. The highest-placed individual in the most cultivated age and population of the world,—he has not the merit of common truth and honesty. He is unjust to his generals; egotistic and monopolizing; meanly stealing the credit of their great actions from Kellermann, from Bernadotte; intriguing to involve his faithful Junot in hopeless bankruptcy, in order to drive him to a distance from Paris, because the familiarity of his manners offends the new pride of his throne. He is a boundless liar. The official paper, his *Moniteur*, and all his bulletins, are proverbs for saying what he wished to be believed; and worse,—he sat, in his premature old age, in his lonely island, coldly falsifying facts and dates and characters, and giving to history a theatrical *éclat*. Like all Frenchmen he has a passion for stage effect. Every action that breathes of generosity is poisoned by this calculation. His star, his love of glory, his doctrine of the immortality of the soul, are all French. “I must dazzle and astonish. If I were to give the liberty of the press, my power could not last three days.” To make a great noise is his favorite design. “A great reputation is a great noise: the more there is made, the farther off it is heard. Laws, institutions, monuments, nations, all fall; but the noise continues, and resounds in after ages.” His doctrine of immortality is simply fame. His theory of influence is not flattering. “There are two levers for moving men,—interest and fear. Love is a silly infatuation, depend upon it. Friendship is but a name. I love nobody. I do not even love my brothers: perhaps Joseph a little, from habit, and because he is my elder; and Duroc, I love him too; but why?—because his character pleases me: he is stern and resolute, and I believe the fellow never shed a tear. For my part I know very well that I have no true friends. As long as I continue to be what I am, I may have as many pretended friends as I please. Leave sensibility to women; but men should be firm in heart and purpose, or they should have nothing to do with war and government.” He was thoroughly unscrupulous. He would steal, slander, assassinate, drown, and poison, as his interest dictated. He had no generosity, but mere vulgar hatred; he was intensely selfish; he was perfidious; he cheated at

cards; he was a prodigious gossip, and opened letters, and delighted in his infamous police, and rubbed his hands with joy when he had intercepted some morsel of intelligence concerning the men and women about him, boasting that “he knew everything”; and interfered with the cutting the dresses of the women; and listened after the burrahs and the compliments of the street, incognito. His manners were coarse. He treated women with low familiarity. He had the habit of pulling their ears and pinching their cheeks when he was in good humor, and of pulling the ears and whiskers of men, and of striking and horse-play with them, to his last days. It does not appear that he listened at keyholes, or at least that he was caught at it. In short, when you have penetrated through all the circles of power and splendor, you were not dealing with a gentleman, at last; but with an impostor and a rogue; and he fully deserves the epithet of *Jupiter Scapin*, or a sort of Scamp Jupiter.

In describing the two parties into which modern society divides itself,—the democrat and the conservative,—I said, Bonaparte represents the Democrat, or the party of men of business, against the stationary or conservative party. I omitted then to say, what is material to the statement, namely, that these two parties differ only as young and old. The democrat is a young conservative; the conservative is an old democrat. The aristocrat is the democrat ripe and gone to seed;—because both parties stand on the one ground of the supreme value of property, which one endeavors to get, and the other to keep. Bonaparte may be said to represent the whole history of this party, its youth and its age; yes, and with poetic justice its fate, in his own. The counter-revolution, the counter-party, still waits for its organ and representative, in a lover and a man of truly public and universal aims.

Here was an experiment, under the most favorable conditions, of the powers of intellect without conscience. Never was such a leader so endowed and so weaponed; never leader found such aids and followers. And what was the result of this vast talent and power, of these immense armies, burned cities, squandered treasures, immolated millions of men, of this demoralized Europe? It

came to no result. All passed away like the smoke of his artillery, and left no trace. He left France smaller, poorer, feebler, than he found it; and the whole contest for freedom was to be begun again. The attempt was in principle suicidal. France served him with life and limb and estate, as long as it could identify its interest with him; but when men saw that after victory was another war; after the destruction of armies, new conscriptions; and they who had toiled so desperately were never nearer to the reward,—they could not spend what they had earned, nor repose on their down-beds, nor strut in their chateaux,—they deserted him. Men found that his absorbing egotism was deadly to all other men. It resembled the torpedo, which inflicts a succession of shocks on any one who takes hold of it, producing spasms which contract the muscles of the hand, so that the man cannot open his fingers; and the animal inflicts new and more violent shocks, until he paralyzes and kills his victim. So this exorbitant egotist narrowed, impoverished, and absorbed the power and existence of those who served him; and the universal cry of France and of Europe in 1814, was "Enough of him"; *Assez de Bonaparte*.

It was not Bonaparte's fault. He did all that in him lay to live and thrive without moral principle. It was the nature of things, the eternal law of man and of the world which balked and ruined him; and the result, in a million experiments, will be the same. Every experiment, by multitudes or by individuals, that has a sensual and selfish aim, will fail. The pacific Fourier will be as inefficient as the pernicious Napoleon. As long as our civilization is essentially one of property, of fences, of exclusiveness, it will be mocked by delusions. Our riches will leave us sick; there will be bitterness in our laughter, and our wine will burn our mouth. Only that good profits which we can taste with all doors open and which serves all men.

THE CONDUCT OF LIFE¹

VII. CONSIDERATIONS BY THE WAY

Hear what British Merlin sung,
Of keenest eye and truest tongue.
Say not, the chiefs who first arrive
Usurp the seats for which all strive;

The forefathers this land who found
Failed to plant the vantage-ground;
Ever from one who comes to-morrow
Men wait their good and truth to borrow.
But wilt thou measure all thy road,
See thou lift the lightest load.
Who has little, to him who has less, can spare,
And thou, Cyndyllan's son! beware
Ponderous gold and stuffs to bear,
To falter ere thou thy task fulfill,—
Only the light-armed climb the hill.
The richest of all lords is Use,
And ruddy Health the loftiest Muse.
Live in the sunshine, swim the sea,
Drink the wild air's salubrity:
Where the star Canope shines in May,
Shepherds are thankful, and nations gay.
The music that can deepest reach,
And cure all ill, is cordial speech:
Mask thy wisdom with delight,
Toy with the bow, yet hit the white.
Of all wit's uses, the main one
Is to live well with who has none.
Cleave to thine acre; the round year
Will fetch all fruits and virtues here.
Fool and foe may harmless roam,
Loved and lovers bide at home.
A day for toil, an hour for sport,
But for a friend is life too short.

ALTHOUGH this garrulity of advising is born with us, I confess that life is rather a subject of wonder than of didactics. So much fate, so much irresistible dictation from temperament and unknown inspiration enters into it, that we doubt we can say anything out of our own experience whereby to help each other. All the professions are timid and expectant agencies. The priest is glad if his prayers or his sermon meet the condition of any soul; if of two, if of ten, 'tis a signal success. But he walked to the church without any assurance that he knew the disorder, or could heal it. The physician prescribes hesitatingly out of his few resources the same tonic or sedative to this new and peculiar constitution which he has applied with various success to a hundred men before.

Fate, Power, Wealth, Culture, Behavior, Worship, Considerations by the Way, Beauty, and Illusions.

In 1856 *English Traits* had been published. Later volumes were: *Society and Solitude* (1870) and *Letters and Social Aims* (1876). Two posthumously published volumes are: *Miscellanies* (1884) and the *Natural History of Intellect and Other Papers* (1893). A volume entitled *Uncollected Writings* was published in 1912. Emerson's *Journals* have been published in 10 volumes, 1909-1914.

¹ Published 1860. The volume contains nine essays:

If the patient mends he is glad and surprised. The lawyer advises the client, and tells his story to the jury and leaves it with them, and is as gay and as much relieved as the client if it turns out that he has a verdict. The judge weighs the arguments and puts a brave face on the matter, and, since there must be a decision, decides as he can, and hopes he has done justice and given satisfaction to the community; but is only an advocate after all. And so is all life a timid and unskillful spectator. We do what we must, and call it by the best names. We like very well to be praised for our action, but our conscience says, "Not unto us." 'Tis little we can do for each other. We accompany the youth with sympathy and manifold old sayings of the wise to the gate of the arena, but 'tis certain that not by strength of ours, or of the old sayings, but only on strength of his own, unknown to us or to any, he must stand or fall. That by which a man conquers in any passage is a profound secret to every other being in the world, and it is only as he turns his back on us and on all men and draws on this most private wisdom, that any good can come to him. What we have therefore to say of life, is rather description, or if you please, celebration, than available rules.

Yet vigor is contagious, and whatever makes us either think or feel strongly, adds to our power and enlarges our field of action. We have a debt to every great heart, to every fine genius; to those who have put life and fortune on the cast of an act of justice; to those who have added new sciences; to those who have refined life by elegant pursuits. 'Tis the fine souls who serve us, and not what is called fine society. Fine society is only a self-protection against the vulgarities of the street and the tavern. Fine society, in the common acceptation, has neither ideas nor aims. It renders the service of a perfumery or a laundry, not of a farm or factory. 'Tis an exclusion and a precinct. Sydney Smith said, "A few yards in London cement or dissolve friendship." It is an unprincipled decorum; an affair of clean linen and coaches, of gloves, cards, and elegance in trifles. There are other measures of self-respect for a man than the number of clean shirts he puts on every day. Society wishes to be amused. I do not wish to be amused. I wish that life should not be cheap, but sacred. I

wish the days to be as centuries, loaded, fragrant. Now we reckon them as bank-days, by some debt which is to be paid us or which we are to pay, or some pleasure we are to taste. Is all we have to do to draw the breath in and blow it out again? Porphyry's definition is better: "Life is that which holds matter together." The babe in arms is a channel through which the energies we call fate, love, and reason, visibly stream. See what a cometary train of auxiliaries man carries with him, of animals, plants, stones, gases, and imponderable elements. Let us infer his ends from this pomp of means. Mirabeau said, "Why should we feel ourselves to be men, unless it be to succeed in everything, everywhere. You must say of nothing, *That is beneath me*, nor feel that anything can be out of your power. Nothing is impossible to the man who can will. *Is that necessary? That shall be*:—this is the only law of success." Whoever said it, this is in the right key. But this is not the tone and genius of the men in the street. In the streets we grow cynical. The men we meet are coarse and torpid. The finest wits have their sediment. What quantities of fribbles, paupers, invalids, epicures, antiquaries, politicians, thieves, and triflers of both sexes, might be advantageously spared! Mankind divides itself into two classes,—benefactors and malefactors. The second class is vast, the first a handful. A person seldom falls sick but the bystanders are animated with a faint hope that he will die:—quantities of poor lives, of distressing invalids, of cases for a gun. Franklin said, "Mankind are very superficial and dastardly: they begin upon a thing, but, meeting with a difficulty, they fly from it discouraged; but they have capacities, if they would employ them." Shall we then judge a country by the majority, or by the minority? By the minority, surely. 'Tis pedantry to estimate nations by the census, or by square miles of land, or other than by their importance to the mind of the time.

Leave this hypocritical prating about the masses. Masses are rude, lame, unmade, pernicious in their demands and influence, and need not to be flattered but to be schooled. I wish not to concede anything to them, but to tame, drill, divide and break them up, and draw individuals out of them. The worst of

charity is that the lives you are asked to preserve are not worth preserving. Masses! the calamity is the masses. I do not wish any mass at all, but honest men only, lovely, sweet, accomplished women only, and no shovel-handed, narrow-brained, gin-drinking million stockingers or lazzaroni at all. If government knew how, I should like to see it check, not multiply the population. When it reaches its true law of action, every man that is born will be hailed as essential. Away with this hurrah of masses, and let us have the considerate vote of single men spoken on their honor and their conscience. In old Egypt it was established law that the vote of a prophet be reckoned equal to a hundred hands. I think it was much under-estimated. "Clay and clay differ in dignity," as we discover by our preferences every day. What a vicious practice is this of our politicians at Washington pairing off! as if one man who votes wrong, going away, could excuse you, who mean to vote right, for going away; or as if your presence did not tell in more ways than in your vote. Suppose the three hundred heroes at Thermopylæ had paired off with three hundred Persians: would it have been all the same to Greece, and to history? Napoleon was called by his men *Cent Mille*. Add honesty to him, and they might have called him Hundred Million.

Nature makes fifty poor melons for one that is good, and shakes down a tree full of gnarled, wormy, unripe crabs, before you can find a dozen dessert apples; and she scatters nations of naked Indians and nations of clothed Christians, with two or three good heads among them. Nature works very hard, and only hits the white once in a million throws. In mankind she is contented if she yields one master in a century. The more difficulty there is in creating good men, the more they are used when they come. I once counted in a little neighborhood and found that every able-bodied man had, say, from twelve to fifteen persons dependent on him for material aid, —to whom he is to be for spoon and jug, for backer and sponsor, for nursery and hospital and many functions beside: nor does it seem to make much difference whether he is bachelor or patriarch; if he do not violently decline the duties that fall to him, this amount of helpfulness will in one way or another be brought home to him. This is the tax

which his abilities pay. The good men are employed for private centers of use, and for larger influence. All revelations, whether of mechanical or intellectual or moral science, are made, not to communities, but to single persons. All the marked events of our day, all the cities, all the colonizations, may be traced back to their origin in a private brain. All the feats which make our civility were the thoughts of a few good heads.

Meantime this spawning productivity is not noxious or needless. You would say this rabble of nations might be spared. But no, they are all counted and depended on. Fate keeps everything alive so long as the smallest thread of public necessity holds it on to the tree. The coxcomb and bully and thief class are allowed as proletaries, every one of their vices being the excess or acridity of a virtue. The mass are animal, in pupilage, and near chimpanzee. But the units whereof this mass is composed, are neuters, every one of which may be grown to a queen-bee. The rule is, we are used as brute atoms until we think: then we use all the rest. Nature turns all malfeasance to good. Nature provided for real needs. No sane man at last distrusts himself. His existence is a perfect answer to all sentimental cavils. If he is, he is wanted, and has the precise properties that are required. That we are here, is proof we ought to be here. We have as good right, and the same sort of right to be here, as Cape Cod or Sandy Hook have to be there.

To say then, the majority are wicked, means no malice, no bad heart in the observer, but simply that the majority are unripe, and have not yet come to themselves, do not yet know their opinion. *That*, if they knew it, is an oracle for them and for all. But in the passing moment the quadruped interest is very prone to prevail; and this beast-force, whilst it makes the discipline of the world, the school of heroes, the glory of martyrs, has provoked in every age the satire of wits and the tears of good men. They find the journals, the clubs, the governments, the churches, to be in the interest and the pay of the devil. And wise men have met this obstruction in their times, like Socrates, with his famous irony; like Bacon, with life-long dissimulation; like Erasmus, with his book *The Praise of Folly*; like Rabelais, with his satire rending the nations.

"They were the fools who cried against me, you will say," wrote the Chevalier de Boufflers to Grimm; "aye, but the fools have the advantage of numbers, and 'tis that which decides. It is of no use for us to make war with them; we shall not weaken them; they will always be the masters. There will not be a practice or an usage introduced, of which they are not the authors."

In front of these sinister facts, the first lesson of history is the good of evil. Good is a good doctor but Bad is sometimes a better. The oppressions of William the Norman, savage forest-laws and crushing despotism made possible the inspirations of *Magna Charta* under John. Edward I wanted money, armies, castles, and as much as he could get. It was necessary to call the people together by shorter, swifter ways,—and the House of Commons arose. To obtain subsidies, he paid in privileges. In the twenty-fourth year of his reign he decreed "that no tax should be levied without consent of Lords and Commons";—which is the basis of the English Constitution. Plutarch affirms that the cruel wars which followed the march of Alexander introduced the civility, language, and arts of Greece into the savage East; introduced marriage; built seventy cities; and united hostile nations under one government. The barbarians who broke up the Roman empire did not arrive a day too soon. Schiller says the Thirty Years' War made Germany a nation. Rough, selfish despots serve men immensely, as Henry VIII in the contest with the Pope; as the infatuations no less than the wisdom of Cromwell; as the ferocity of the Russian czars; as the fanaticism of the French regicides of 1789. The frost which kills the harvest of a year, saves the harvests of a century, by destroying the weevil or the locust. Wars, fires, plagues, break up immovable routine, clear the ground of rotten races and dens of distemper, and open a fair field to new men. There is a tendency in things to right themselves, and the war or revolution or bankruptcy that shatters a rotten system, allows things to take a new and natural order. The sharpest evils are bent into that periodicity which makes the errors of planets and the fevers and distempers of men, self-limiting. Nature is upheld by antagonism. Passions, resistance, danger, are educators. We acquire the

strength we have overcome. Without war, no soldiers; without enemies, no hero. The sun were insipid, if the universe were not opaque. And the glory of character is in affronting the horrors of depravity to draw thence new nobilities of power; as Art lives and thrills in new use and combining of contrasts, and mining into the dark evermore for blacker pits of night. What would painter do, or what would poet or saint, but for crucifixions and hells? And evermore in the world is this marvelous balance of beauty and disgust, magnificence and rats. Not Antoninus, but a poor washer woman, said, "The more trouble, the more lion; that's my principle."

I do not think very respectfully of the designs or the doings of the people who went to California in 1849. It was a rush and a scramble of needy adventurers, and, in the western country, a general jail-delivery of all the rowdies of the rivers. Some of them went with honest purposes, some with very bad ones, and all of them with the very commonplace wish to find a short way to wealth. But nature watches over all, and turns this malfeasance to good. California gets peopled and subdued, civilized in this immoral way, and on this fiction a real prosperity is rooted and grown. 'Tis a decoy-duck; 'tis tubs thrown to amuse the whale; but real ducks, and whales that yield oil, are caught. And out of Sabine rapes, and out of robbers' forays, real Romes and their heroism come in fullness of time.

In America, the geography is sublime but the men are not: the inventions are excellent but the inventors one is sometimes ashamed of. The agencies by which events so grand as the opening of California, of Texas, of Oregon, and the junction of the two oceans, are affected, are paltry,—coarse selfishness, fraud, and conspiracy; and most of the great results of history are brought about by discreditable means.

The benefaction derived in Illinois and the great West from railroads is inestimable, and vastly exceeding any intentional philanthropy on record. What is the benefit done by a good King Alfred, or by a Howard, or Pestalozzi, or Elizabeth Fry, or Florence Nightingale, or any lover, less or larger, compared with the involuntary blessing wrought on nations by the selfish capitalists

who built the Illinois, Michigan, and the network of the Mississippi-valley roads, which have evoked not only all the wealth of the soil, but the energy of millions of men. It is a sentence of ancient wisdom that "God hangs the greatest weights on the smallest wires."

What happens thus to nations, befalls every day in private houses. When the friends of a gentleman brought to his notice the follies of his sons, with many hints of their danger, he replied that he knew so much mischief when he was a boy, and had turned out on the whole so successfully, that he was not alarmed by the dissipation of boys; 'twas dangerous water, but he thought they would soon touch bottom; and then swim to the top. This is bold practice, and there are many failures to a good escape. Yet one would say that a good understanding would suffice as well as moral sensibility to keep one erect; the gratifications of the passions are so quickly seen to be damaging, and—what men like least—seriously lowering them in social rank. Then all talent sinks with character.

"*Croyez moi, l'erreur aussi a son mérite,*" said Voltaire. We see those who surmount, by dint of some egotism or infatuation, obstacles from which the prudent recoil. The right partisan is a heady narrow man, who, because he does not see many things, sees some one thing with heat and exaggeration, and if he falls among other narrow men, or on objects which have a brief importance, as some trade or politics of the hour, he prefers it to the universe, and seems inspired and a godsend to those who wish to magnify the matter and carry a point. Better, certainly, if we could secure the strength and fire which rude, passionate men bring into society, quite clear of their vices. But who dares draw out the linchpin from the wagon-wheel? 'Tis so manifest that there is no moral deformity but is a good passion out of place; that there is no man who is not indebted to his foibles; that, according to the old oracle, "the Furies are the bonds of men"; that the poisons are our principal medicines, which kill the disease and save the life. In the high prophetic phrase, *He causes the wrath of man to praise him*, and twists and wrenches our evil to our good. Shakespeare wrote,—
 "'Tis said, best men are molded of their faults";

and great educators and lawgivers, and especially generals and leaders of colonies, mainly rely on this stuff, and esteem men of irregular and passionate force the best timber. A man of sense and energy, the late head of the Farm School in Boston Harbor, said to me, "I want none of your good boys,—give me the bad ones." And this is the reason, I suppose, why, as soon as the children are good, the mothers are scared, and think they are going to die. Mirabeau said, "There are none but men of strong passions capable of going to greatness; none but such capable of meriting the public gratitude." Passion, though a bad regulator, is a powerful spring. Any absorbing passion has the effect to deliver from the little coils and cares of every day: 'tis the heat which sets our human atoms spinning, overcomes the friction of crossing thresholds and first addresses in society, and gives us a good start and speed, easy to continue when once it is begun. In short there is no man who is not at some time indebted to his vices, as no plant that is not fed from manures. We only insist that the man meliorate, and that the plant grow upward and convert the base into the better nature.

The wise workman will not regret the poverty or the solitude which brought out his working talents. The youth is charmed with the fine air and accomplishments of the children of fortune. But all great men come out of the middle classes. 'Tis better for the head; 'tis better for the heart. Marcus Antoninus says that Fronto told him that "the so-called high-born are for the most part heartless"; whilst nothing is so indicative of deepest culture as a tender consideration of the ignorant. Charles James Fox said of England, "The history of this country proves that we are not to expect from men in affluent circumstances the vigilance, energy, and exertion without which the House of Commons would lose its greatest force and weight. Human nature is prone to indulgence, and the most meritorious public services have always been performed by persons in a condition of life removed from opulence." And yet what we ask daily, is to be conventional. Supply, most kind gods! this defect in my address, in my form, in my fortunes, which puts me a little out of the ring: supply it, and let me be like the rest

whom I admire, and on good terms with them. But the wise gods say, No, we have better things for thee. By humiliations, by defeats, by loss of sympathy, by gulfs of disparity, learn a wider truth and humanity than that of a fine gentleman. A Fifth-Avenue landlord, a West-end householder, is not the highest style of man; and though good hearts and sound minds are of no condition, yet he who is to be wise for many must not be protected. He must know the huts where poor men lie, and the chores which poor men do. The first-class minds, Æsop, Socrates, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Franklin, had the poor man's feeling and mortification. A rich man was never insulted in his life; but this man must be stung. A rich man was never in danger from cold, or hunger, or war, or ruffians,—and you can see he was not, from the moderation of his ideas. 'Tis a fatal disadvantage to be cockered and to eat too much cake. What tests of manhood could he stand? Take him out of his protections. He is a good book-keeper; or he is a shrewd adviser in the insurance office; perhaps he could pass a college examination, and take his degrees; perhaps he can give wise counsel in a court of law. Now plant him down among farmers, firemen, Indians, and emigrants. Set a dog on him; set a highwayman on him; try him with a course of mobs; send him to Kansas, to Pike's Peak, to Oregon; and, if he have true faculty, this may be the element he wants, and he will come out of it with broader wisdom and manly power. Æsop, Saadi, Cervantes, Regnard, have been taken by corsairs, left for dead, sold for slaves, and know the realities of human life.

Bad times have a scientific value. These are occasions a good learner would not miss. As we go gladly to Faneuil Hall to be played upon by the stormy winds and strong fingers of enraged patriotism, so is a fanatical persecution, civil war, national bankruptcy or revolution more rich in the central tones than languid years of prosperity. What had been, ever since our memory, solid continent, yawns apart and discloses its composition and genesis. We learn geology the morning after the earthquake, on ghastly diagrams of cloven mountains, upheaved plains, and the dry bed of the sea.

In our life and culture everything is

worked up and comes in use,—passion, war, revolt, bankruptcy, and not less, folly and blunders, insult, ennui, and bad company. Nature is a rag-merchant, who works up every shred and ort and end into new creations; like a good chemist whom I found the other day in his laboratory, converting his old shirts into pure white sugar. Life is a boundless privilege, and when you pay for your ticket and get into the car, you have no guess what good company you shall find there. You buy much that is not rendered in the bill. Men achieve a certain greatness unawares, when working to another aim.

If now in this connection of discourse we should venture on laying down the first obvious rules of life, I will not here repeat the first rule of economy, already propounded once and again, that every man shall maintain himself,—but I will say, get health. No labor, pains, temperance, poverty, nor exercise, that can gain it, must be grudged. For sickness is a cannibal which eats up all the life and youth it can lay hold of, and absorbs its own sons and daughters. I figure it as a pale, wailing, distracted phantom, absolutely selfish, heedless of what is good and great, attentive to its sensations, losing its soul, and afflicting other souls with meanness and mopings and with ministration to its voracity of trifles. Dr. Johnson said severely, "Every man is a rascal as soon as he is sick." Drop the cant, and treat it sanely. In dealing with the drunken, we do not affect to be drunk. We must treat the sick with the same firmness, giving them of course every aid,—but withholding ourselves. I once asked a clergyman in a retired town, who were his companions? what men of ability he saw? He replied that he spent his time with the sick and the dying. I said he seemed to me to need quite other company, and all the more that he had this; for if people were sick and dying to any purpose, we would leave all and go to them, but as far as I had observed they were as frivolous as the rest, and sometimes much more frivolous. Let us engage our companions not to spare us. I knew a wise woman who said to her friends, "When I am old, rule me." And the best part of health is fine disposition. It is more essential than talent, even in the works of talent. Nothing will supply the want of sunshine to peaches, and to make

knowledge valuable, you must have the cheerfulness of wisdom. Whenever you are sincerely pleased, you are nourished. The joy of the spirit indicates its strength. All healthy things are sweet-tempered. Genius works in sport, and goodness smiles to the last; and for the reason that whoever sees the law which distributes things, does not despond, but is animated to great desires and endeavors. He who desponds betrays that he has not seen it.

'Tis a Dutch proverb that "paint costs nothing," such are its preserving qualities in damp climates. Well, sunshine costs less, yet is finer pigment. And so of cheerfulness, or a good temper, the more it is spent, the more of it remains. The latent heat of an ounce of wood or stone is inexhaustible. You may rub the same chip of pine to the point of kindling a hundred times; and the power of happiness of any soul is not to be computed or drained. It is observed that a depression of spirits develops the germs of a plague in individuals and nations.

It is an old commendation of right behavior, "*Aliis latus, sapiens sibi*," which our English proverb translates, "Be merry and wise." I know how easy it is to men of the world to look grave and sneer at your sanguine youth and its glittering dreams. But I find the gayest castles in the air that were ever piled, far better for comfort and for use than the dungeons in the air that are daily dug and caverned out by grumbling, discontented people. I know those miserable fellows, and I hate them, who see a black star always riding through the light and colored clouds in the sky overhead: waves of light pass over and hide it for a moment, but the black star keeps fast in the zenith. But power dwells with cheerfulness; hope puts us in a working mood, whilst despair is no muse, and untunes the active powers. A man should make life and Nature happier to us, or he had better never been born. When the political economist reckons up the unproductive classes, he should put at the head this class of pitiers of themselves, cravers of sympathy, bewailing imaginary disasters. An old French verse runs, in my translation:—

Some of your griefs you have cured,
And the sharpest you still have survived;
But what torments of pain you endured
From evils that never arrived!

There are three wants which never can be satisfied: that of the rich, who wants something more; that of the sick, who wants something different; and that of the traveler, who says, "Anywhere but here." The Turkish *cadi* said to Layard, "After the fashion of thy people, thou hast wandered from one place to another, until thou art happy and content in none." My countrymen are not less infatuated with the *rococo* toy of Italy. All America seems on the point of embarking for Europe. But we shall not always traverse seas and lands with light purposes, and for pleasure, as we say. One day we shall cast out the passion for Europe by the passion for America. Culture will give gravity and domestic rest to those who now travel only as not knowing how else to spend money. Already, who provoke pity like that excellent family party just arriving in their well-appointed carriage, as far from home and any honest end as ever? Each nation has asked successively, "What are they here for?" until at last the party are shamefaced, and anticipate the question at the gates of each town.

Genial manners are good, and power of accommodation to any circumstance; but the high prize of life, the crowning fortune of a man, is to be born with a bias to some pursuit which finds him in employment and happiness,—whether it be to make baskets, or broadswords, or canals, or statues, or songs. I doubt not this was the meaning of Socrates, when he pronounced artists the only truly wise, as being actually, not apparently so.

In childhood we fancied ourselves walled in by the horizon, as by a glass bell, and doubted not by distant travel we should reach the baths of the descending sun and stars. On experiment the horizon flies before us and leaves us on an endless common, sheltered by no glass bell. Yet 'tis strange how tenaciously we cling to that bell-astronomy of a protecting domestic horizon. I find the same illusion in the search after happiness which I observe every summer recommenced in this neighborhood, soon after the pairing of the birds. The young people do not like the town, do not like the sea-shore, they will go inland; find a dear cottage deep in the mountains, secret as their hearts. They set forth on their travels in

search of a home: they reach Berkshire; they reach Vermont; they look at the farms;—good farms, high mountain-sides; but where is the seclusion? The farm is near this, 'tis near that; they have got far from Boston, but 'tis near Albany, or near Burlington, or near Montreal. They explore a farm, but the house is small, old, thin; discontented people lived there, and are gone;—there's too much sky, too much out-doors; too public. The youth aches for solitude. When he comes to the house he passes through the house. That does not make the deep recess he sought. "Ah! now I perceive," he says, "it must be deep with persons; friends only can give depth." Yes, but there is a great dearth, this year, of friends; hard to find, and hard to have when found: they are just going away; they too are in the whirl of the flitting world, and have engagements and necessities. They are just starting for Wisconsin; have letters from Bremen;—see you again, soon. Slow, slow to learn the lesson that there is but one depth, but one interior, and that is—his purpose. When joy or calamity or genius shall show him it, then woods, then farms, then city shopmen and cab-drivers, indifferently with prophet or friend, will mirror back to him its unfathomable heaven, its populous solitude.

The uses of travel are occasional, and short; but the best fruit it finds, when it finds it, is conversation; and this is a main function of life. What a difference in the hospitality of minds! Inestimable is he to whom we can say what we cannot say to ourselves. Others are involuntarily hurtful to us and bereave us of the power of thought, impound and imprison us. As, when there is sympathy, there needs but one wise man in a company and all are wise, so a blockhead makes a blockhead of his companion. Wonderful power to benumb possesses this brother. When he comes into the office or public room, the society dissolves; one after another slips out, and the apartment is at his disposal. What is incurable but a frivolous habit? A fly is as untamable as a hyena. Yet folly in the sense of fun, fooling, or dawdling can easily be borne; as Talleyrand said, "I find nonsense singularly refreshing"; but a virulent, aggressive fool taints the reason of a household. I have seen a whole

family of quiet, sensible people unhinged and beside themselves, victims of such a rogue. For the steady wrongheadedness of one perverse person irritates the best; since we must withstand absurdity. But resistance only exasperates the acrid fool, who believes that Nature and gravitation are quite wrong, and he only is right. Hence all the dozen inmates are soon perverted, with whatever virtues and industries they have, into contradictors, accusers, explainers, and repairers of this one malefactor; like a boat about to be upset, or a carriage run away with,—not only the foolish pilot or driver, but everybody on board is forced to assume strange and ridiculous attitudes, to balance the vehicle and prevent the upsetting. For remedy, whilst the case is yet mild, I recommend phlegm and truth: let all the truth that is spoken or done be at the zero of indifferency, or truth itself will be folly. But when the case is seated and malignant, the only safety is in amputation; as seamen say, you shall cut and run. How to live with unfit companions?—for with such, life is for the most part spent; and experience teaches little better than our earliest instinct of self-defense, namely, not to engage, not to mix yourself in any manner with them, but let their madness spend itself unopposed.

Conversation is an art in which a man has all mankind for his competitors, for it is that which all are practicing every day while they live. Our habit of thought,—take men as they rise,—is not satisfying; in the common experience I fear it is poor and squalid. The success which will content them is a bargain, a lucrative employment, an advantage gained over a competitor, a marriage, a patrimony, a legacy, and the like. With these objects, their conversation deals with surfaces: politics, trade, personal defects, exaggerated bad news, and the rain. This is forlorn, and they feel sore and sensitive. Now if one comes who can illuminate this dark house with thoughts, show them their native riches, what gifts they have, how indispensable each is, what magical powers over nature and men; what access to poetry, religion, and the powers which constitute character,—he wakes in them the feeling of worth, his suggestions require new ways of living, new books, new men, new arts and sciences;—then we come out of our egg-

shell existence into the great dome, and see the zenith over and the nadir under us. Instead of the tanks and buckets of knowledge to which we are daily confined, we come down to the shore of the sea, and dip our hands in its miraculous waves. 'Tis wonderful the effect on the company. They are not the men they were. They have all been to California and all have come back millionaires. There is no book and no pleasure in life comparable to it. Ask what is best in our experience, and we shall say, a few pieces of plain-dealing with wise people. Our conversation once and again has apprised us that we belong to better circles than we have yet beheld; that a mental power invites us whose generalizations are more worth for joy and for effect than anything that is now called philosophy or literature. In excited conversation we have glimpses of the Universe, hints of power native to the soul, far-darting lights and shadows of an Andes landscape, such as we can hardly attain in lone meditation. Here are oracles sometimes profusely given, to which the memory goes back in barren hours.

Add the consent of will and temperament, and there exists the covenant of friendship. Our chief want in life is somebody who shall make us do what we can. This is the service of a friend. With him we are easily great. There is a sublime attraction in him to whatever virtue is in us. How he flings wide the doors of existence! What questions we ask of him! what an understanding we have! how few words are needed! It is the only real society. An Eastern poet, Ali Ben Abu Taleb, writes with sad truth:—

He who has a thousand friends has not a friend
to spare,
And he who has one enemy shall meet him every-
where.

But few writers have said anything better to this point than Hafiz who indicates this relation as the test of mental health: "Thou learnest no secret until thou knowest friendship, since to the unsound no heavenly knowledge enters." Neither is life long enough for friendship. That is a serious and majestic affair, like a royal presence, or a religion, and not a postilion's dinner to be eaten on the run. There is a pudency about friendship as about love, and though fine

souls never lose sight of it, yet they do not name it. With the first class of men our friendship or good understanding goes quite behind all accidents of estrangement, of condition, of reputation. And yet we do not provide for the greatest good of life. We take care of our health; we lay up money; we make our roof tight, and our clothing sufficient; but who provides wisely that he shall not be wanting in the best property of all,—friends? We know that all our training is to fit us for this, and we do not take the step towards it. How long shall we sit and wait for these benefactors?

It makes no difference, in looking back five years, how you have been dieted or dressed; whether you have been lodged on the first floor or the attic; whether you have had gardens and baths, good cattle and horses, have been carried in a neat equipage, or in a ridiculous truck: these things are forgotten so quickly, and leave no effect. But it counts much whether we have had good companions in that time,—almost as much as what we have been doing. And see the overpowering importance of neighborhood in all association. As it is marriage, fit or unfit, that makes our home, so it is who lives near us of equal social degree,—a few people at convenient distance, no matter how bad company,—these, and these only, shall be your life's companions; and all those who are native, congenial, and by many an oath of the heart sacramented to you, are gradually and totally lost. You cannot deal systematically with this fine element of society, and one may take a good deal of pains to bring people together and to organize clubs and debating societies, and yet no result come of it. But it is certain that there is a great deal of good in us that does not know itself, and that a habit of union and competition brings people up and keeps them up to their highest point; that life would be twice or ten times life if spent with wise and fruitful companions. The obvious inference is, a little useful deliberation and preconcert when one goes to buy house and land.

But we live with people on other platforms; we live with dependents; not only with the young whom we are to teach all we know and clothe with the advantages we have earned, but also with those who serve us directly, and for money. Yet the old rules

hold good. Let not the tie be mercenary, though the service is measured by money. Make yourself necessary to somebody. Do not make life hard to any. This point is acquiring new importance in American social life. Our domestic service is usually a foolish fracas of unreasonable demand on one side and shirking on the other. A man of wit was asked, in the train, what was his errand in the city? He replied, "I have been sent to procure an angel to do cooking." A lady complained to me that of her two maidens, one was absent-minded and the other was absent-bodied. And the evil increases from the ignorance and hostility of every ship-load of the immigrant population swarming into houses and farms. Few people discern that it rests with the master or the mistress what service comes from the man or the maid; that this identical hussy was a tutelar spirit in one house and a haridan in the other. All sensible people are selfish, and nature is tugging at every contract to make the terms of it fair. If you are proposing only your own, the other party must deal a little hardly by you. If you deal generously, the other, though selfish and unjust, will make an exception in your favor, and deal truly with you. When I asked an iron-master about the slag and cinder in railroad iron,—“Oh,” he said, “there’s always good iron to be had: if there’s cinder in the iron it is because there was cinder in the pay.”

But why multiply these topics, and their illustrations, which are endless? Life brings to each his task, and whatever art you select, algebra, planting, architecture, poems, commerce, politics,—all are attainable, even to the miraculous triumphs, on the same terms of selecting that for which you are apt; begin at the beginning, proceed in order, step by step. ’Tis as easy to twist iron anchors and braid cannons, as to braid straw; to boil granite as to boil water, if you take all the steps in order. Wherever there is failure, there is some giddiness, some superstition about luck, some step omitted, which nature never pardons. The happy conditions of life may be had on the same terms. Their attraction for you is the pledge that they are within your reach. Our

prayers are prophets. There must be fidelity, and there must be adherence. How respectable the life that clings to its objects! Youthful aspirations are fine things, your theories and plans of life are fair and commendable:—but will you stick? Not one, I fear, in that Common full of people, or, in a thousand, but one: and when you tax them with treachery, and remind them of their high resolutions, they have forgotten that they made a vow. The individuals are fugitive, and in the act of becoming something else, and irresponsible. The race is great, the ideal fair, but the men whiffing and unsure. The hero is he who is immovably centered. The main difference between people seems to be that one man can come under obligations on which you can rely,—is obligable; and another is not. As he has not a law within him, there’s nothing to tie him to.

It is inevitable to name particulars of virtue and of condition, and to exaggerate them. But all rests at last on that integrity which dwarfs talent, and can spare it. Sanity consists in not being subdued by your means. Fancy prices are paid for position and for the culture of talent, but to the grand interests, superficial success is of no account. The man,—it is his attitude,—not feats, but forces,—not on set days and public occasions, but at all hours, and in repose alike as in energy, still formidable and not to be disposed of. The populace says, with Horne Tooke, “If you would be powerful, pretend to be powerful.” I prefer to say, with the old prophet, “Seekest thou great things? seek them not”:—or, what was said of a Spanish prince, “The more you took from him, the greater he looked.” *Plus on lui ôte, plus il est grand.*

The secret of culture is to learn that a few great points steadily reappear, alike in the poverty of the obscurest farm and in the miscellany of metropolitan life, and that these few are alone to be regarded;—the escape from all false ties; courage to be what we are, and love of what is simple and beautiful; independence and cheerful relation, these are the essentials,—these, and the wish to serve, to add somewhat to the well-being of men.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817-1862)

Thoreau was descended on his father's side from a family living in the island of Jersey. His mother was of Scotch extraction, the daughter of a Concord clergyman. He was born in Concord on 12 July, 1817, the third of his parents' four children, and was christened David Henry, though he later reversed the order of these names. While Thoreau was a young child the family removed to Chelmsford, and then to Boston, but returned to Concord in 1823. Thoreau's father was a mechanic and maker of lead-pencils, who always remained poor, but the boy, nevertheless, managed to prepare himself for college and to complete a course at Harvard, whence he was graduated in 1837. For a while after this he taught school in Concord, with his brother John. But neither school-teaching nor any other bread-winning employment which he later undertook was to him more than a means to his real work. From the beginning of manhood he kept a journal in which he stored up the fruits of his observation, reading, and reflection, and it was as a man of letters that he really lived and worked. About this there can be no doubt; he early knew that he had something to say to the world, and he constantly endeavored after the achievement of his purpose. Yet, at the same time, he was in no hurry. He was so intensely concerned with the fine and right expression of the truth he knew, and so little concerned over the immediate winning of public favor, that one who considered only the outward events of his life might excusably regard him as little better than an aimless ne'er-do-well.

In 1839 Thoreau took, with his brother John, the excursion which later served as a framework for the volume entitled *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, but this volume was not actually completed until 1847, and was not published until 1849. Meanwhile Thoreau had led a varied existence. He had long since begun writing poems and short prose pieces, and his earliest published piece, the poem entitled *Sympathy*, had appeared in the first number of *The Dial*, in 1840. This poem, it may be mentioned, is a disguised confession of Thoreau's love for Miss Ellen Sewall, daughter of a clergyman at that time living in Scituate. Miss Sewall was loved also by Thoreau's brother John, but she married neither of them. As far as is known, Thoreau never again was in love. He contributed other poems and prose essays to later issues of *The Dial*, and in April, 1841, he went to the home of one of *The Dial's* editors, Emerson, to live, until May, 1843, in a position rather difficult to define—apparently one which combined the duties of a "hired man" with the privileges of a disciple and friend. During the remainder of this year he lived on Staten Island, New York, acting as a tutor in the family of Emerson's brother William. In 1844 he was back in Concord, helping his father to manufacture lead-pencils. It was at this time that he devised such improvements in the process of manufacture that the family's pencils became the best then made in America. However, instead of pursuing this success, Thoreau, in 1845, left the business, saying that he could not further improve the product and "that his life was too valuable to him to put what remained of it into pencils." And in July of this year he took up his residence at Walden, where he remained until September, 1847. During the year following he again lived at the Emerson house, while Emerson himself was in England.

In subsequent years Thoreau lived at his father's house, earning in various ways the small amount of money he needed, sometimes by manual labor, sometimes by surveying land, sometimes by lecturing, and occasionally by writing for periodicals. *Walden* was published in 1854. In the winter of 1860 Thoreau was brought down with a cold—the result of undue exposure—which developed into tuberculosis. Late in the following spring he journeyed to Minnesota, hoping to be benefited by the dry climate there. The hope was, however, vain. After his return he gradually became weaker and weaker, until his death on 21 March, 1862.

As yet he remained practically unknown. Many fellow-townsmen set him down simply as an eccentric of pernicious example—a man who unaccountably refused to make money when he could have done so, lazy, selfish, unpatriotic, irreligious. But there was at least one friend who, while he could extend the list of Thoreau's negations, or renunciations, could also give a reason for them. Emerson wrote: "He was bred to no profession; he never married; he lived alone; he never went to church; he never voted; he refused to pay a tax to the State; he ate no flesh, he drank no wine, he never knew the use of tobacco; and, though a naturalist, he used neither trap nor gun. He chose . . . to be the bachelor of thought and Nature." And why? "He was a born protestant. He declined to give up his large ambition of knowledge and action for any narrow craft or profession,

aiming at a much more comprehensive calling, the art of living well. If he slighted and defied the opinions of others, it was only that he was more intent to reconcile his practice with his own belief." His aim was resolutely to cut off life's excrescences, its haphazard outgrowths, so that by these exclusions he might at length come upon bright reality itself, the essential, unalloyed truth of our being. The aim might be chimerical and, worse, the method wrong. Nevertheless, readers of *A Week*, *Walden*, and several shorter pieces have found themselves confronted not merely with an unusual and gifted naturalist, but, above that, with a man great in his intense conviction of the high possibilities of life, and profoundly challenging in his stabs at our littleness and weakness, our grossness, and our conventionality. And Thoreau has not been long in winning full recognition as an American classic. The author (M. Van Doren) of a recent critical study concludes: "There can be little doubt that the spirit of *Walden* has pervaded the American consciousness, stiffened the American lip, steadied the American nerve, in a ponderable degree. By creating a classic image of the cynic hermit in ideal solitude Thoreau has demonstrated some of the meannesses of the demands of Time and Matter, and furnished the spirit and will for social criticism; he has made men acute critics, if not sensible shepherds, of their own sentiments."

SYMPATHY¹

LATELY, alas, I knew a gentle boy,
Whose features all were cast in Virtue's mold,
As one she had designed for Beauty's toy,
But after manned him for her own strong-
hold.

On every side he open was as day,
That you might see no lack of strength
within,
For walls and ports do only serve alway
For a pretense to feebleness and sin.

Say not that Cæsar was victorious,
With toil and strife who stormed the House
of Fame: 10

In other sense this youth was glorious,
Himself a kingdom whereso'er he came.

No strength went out to get him victory,
When all was income of its own accord;
For where he went none other was to see,
But all were parcel of their noble lord.

He forayed like the subtle haze of summer,—
That stilly shows fresh landscapes to our
eyes,

And revolutions works without a murmur,
Or rustling of a leaf beneath the skies. 20

So was I taken unawares by this,
I quite forgot my homage to confess;

Yet now am forced to know, though hard it
is,

I might have loved him, had I loved him less.

Each moment, as we nearer drew to each,
A stern respect withheld us farther yet,
So that we seemed beyond each other's reach,
And less acquainted than when first we met.

We two were one while we did sympathize,
So could we not the simplest bargain drive;
And what avails it now that we are wise, 31
If absence doth this doubleness contrive?

Eternity may not the chance repeat,
But I must tread my single way alone,
In sad remembrance that we once did meet,
And know that bliss irrevocably gone.

The spheres henceforth my elegy shall sing,
For elegy has other subject none;
Each strain of music in my ears shall ring
Knell of departure from that other one. 40

Make haste and celebrate my tragedy;
With fitting strain resound ye woods and
fields;

Sorrow is dearer in such case to me
Than all the joys other occasion yields.

Is't then too late the damage to repair?
Distance, forsooth, from my weak grasp hath
reft

The empty husk, and clutched the useless
tare,

But in my hands the wheat and kernel left.

But if I love that virtue which he is,
Though it be scented in the morning air, 50
Still shall we be truest acquaintances,
Nor mortals know a sympathy more rare.

¹ Following its publication in *The Dial* this poem was included in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, Wednesday.

The selections from Thoreau's writings here reprinted are used by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

SIC VITA¹

I AM a parcel of vain strivings tied
 By a chance bond together,
 Dangling this way and that, their links
 Were made so loose and wide,
 Methinks,
 For milder weather.

A bunch of violets without their roots,
 And sorrel intermixed,
 Encircled by a wisp of straw
 Once coiled about their shoots, 10
 The law
 By which I'm fixed.

A nosegay which Time clutched from out
 Those fair Elysian fields,
 With weeds and broken stems, in haste,
 Doth make the rabble rout
 That waste
 The day he yields.

And here I bloom for a short hour unseen,
 Drinking my juices up, 20
 With no root in the land
 To keep my branches green,
 But stand
 In a bare cup.

Some tender buds were left upon my stem
 In mimicry of life,
 But ah! the children will not know
 Till time has withered them,
 The woe
 With which they're rife. 30

But now I see I was not plucked for nought,
 And after in life's vase
 Of glass set while I might survive,
 But by a kind hand brought
 Alive
 To a strange place.

That stock thus thinned will soon redeem its
 hours,
 And by another year
 Such as God knows, with freer air,
 More fruits and fair flowers 40
 Will bear,
 While I droop here.

¹ First published in *The Dial*, July, 1841; later included in *A Week*, Friday. M. Van Doren (in *Thoreau, A Critical Study*) has pointed out Thoreau's indebtedness in this poem to George Herbert, particularly Herbert's *Employment* and *Denial*.

INDEPENDENCE²

MY LIFE more civil is and free
 Than any civil polity.

Ye princes, keep your realms
 And circumscribèd power,
 Not wide as are my dreams,
 Nor rich as is this hour.

What can ye give which I have not?
 What can ye take which I have got?
 Can ye defend the dangerless?
 Can ye inherit nakedness? 10

To all true wants Time's ear is deaf,
 Penurious States lend no relief
 Out of their pelf:
 But a free soul—thank God—
 Can help itself.

Be sure your fate
 Doth keep apart its state,—
 Not linked with any band,
 Even the noblest in the land.

In tented fields with cloth of gold 20
 No place doth hold,
 But is more chivalrous than they are,
 And sigheth for a nobler war;
 A finer strain its trumpet rings,
 A brighter gleam its armor flings.
 The life that I aspire to live,
 No man proposeth me;
 No trade upon the street
 Wears its emblazonry.

WALDEN

OR

LIFE IN THE WOODS³II. WHERE I LIVED, AND WHAT I
LIVED FOR

AT a certain season of our life we are accustomed to consider every spot as the possible site of a house. I have thus surveyed the country on every side within a

² Published in *Boston Commonwealth*, 30 October, 1863. The last 14 lines had earlier been published (*Dial*, October, 1842) under the title, *The Black Knight*, and are reprinted with the same title in *Miscellanies*.

³ The volume contains 18 essays, or chapters, as follows: Economy; Where I Lived, and What I Lived For; Reading; Sounds; Solitude; Visitors; The Bean-Field; The Village; The Ponds; Baker Farm;

dozen miles of where I live. In imagination I have bought all the farms in succession, for all were to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked over each farmer's premises, tasted his wild apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging it to him in my mind; even put a higher price on it,—took everything but a deed of it,—took his word for his deed, for I dearly love to talk,—cultivated it, and him too to some extent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed it long enough, leaving him to carry it on. This experience entitled me to be regarded as a sort of real-estate broker by my friends. Wherever I sat, there I might live, and the landscape radiated from me accordingly. What is a house but a *sedes*, a seat?—better if a country seat. I discovered many a site for a house not likely to be soon improved, which some might have thought too far from the village, but to my eyes the village was too far from it. Well, there I might live, I said; and there I did live, for an hour, a summer and a winter life; saw how I could let the years run off, buffet the winter through, and see the spring come in. The future inhabitants of this region, wherever

Higher Laws; Brute Neighbors; House-Warming; Former Inhabitants, and Winter Visitors; Winter Animals; The Pond in Winter; Spring; Conclusion.

Thoreau's opening words in the first chapter are: "When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again.

"I should not obtrude my affairs so much on the notice of my readers if very particular inquiries had not been made by my townsmen concerning my mode of life, which some would call impertinent, though they do not appear to me at all impertinent, but, considering the circumstances, very natural and pertinent. Some have asked what I got to eat; if I did not feel lonesome; if I was not afraid; and the like. Others have been curious to learn what portion of my income I devoted to charitable purposes; and some, who have large families, how many poor children I maintained. I will therefore ask those of my readers who feel no particular interest in me to pardon me if I undertake to answer some of these questions in this book. In most books, the *I*, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience."

they may place their houses, may be sure that they have been anticipated. An afternoon sufficed to lay out the land into orchard, wood-lot, and pasture, and to decide what fine oaks or pines should be left to stand before the door, and whence each blasted tree could be seen to the best advantage; and then I let it lie, fallow perchance, for a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.

My imagination carried me so far that I even had the refusal of several farms,—the refusal was all I wanted,—but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. The nearest that I came to actual possession was when I bought the Hollowell place, and had begun to sort my seeds, and collected materials with which to make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with; but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his wife—every man has such a wife—changed her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous, I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it, and, as he was not a rich man, made him a present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents, and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left. I found thus that I had been a rich man without any damage to my poverty. But I retained the landscape, and I have since annually carried off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With respect to landscapes,—

I am monarch of all I *survey*,
My right there is none to dispute.

I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed that he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rhyme, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.

The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to me, were: its complete retirement, being

about two miles from the village, half a mile from the nearest neighbor, and separated from the highway by a broad field; its bounding on the river, which the owner said protected it by its fogs from frosts in the spring, though that was nothing to me; the gray color and ruinous state of the house and barn, and the dilapidated fences, which put such an interval between me and the last occupant; the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees, gnawed by rabbits, showing what kind of neighbors I should have; but above all, the recollection I had of it from my earliest voyages up the river, when the house was concealed behind a dense grove of red maples, through which I heard the house-dog bark. I was in haste to buy it, before the proprietor finished getting out some rocks, cutting down the hollow apple trees, and grubbing up some young birches which had sprung up in the pasture, or, in short, had made any more of his improvements. To enjoy these advantages I was ready to carry it on; like Atlas, to take the world on my shoulders,—I never heard what compensation he received for that,—and do all those things which had no other motive or excuse but that I might pay for it and be unmolested in my possession of it; for I knew all the while that it would yield the most abundant crop of the kind I wanted, if I could only afford to let it alone. But it turned out as I have said.

All that I could say, then, with respect to farming on a large scale—I have always cultivated a garden—was, that I had had my seeds ready. Many think that seeds improve with age. I have no doubt that time discriminates between the good and the bad; and when at last I shall plant, I shall be less likely to be disappointed. But I would say to my fellows, once for all, As long as possible live free and uncommitted. It makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the county jail.

Old Cato, whose *De Re Rustica* is my *Cultivator*, says,—and the only translation I have seen makes sheer nonsense of the passage,—“When you think of getting a farm turn it thus in your mind, not to buy greedily; nor spare your pains to look at it, and do not think it enough to go round it once. The oftener you go there the more it will please you, if it is good.” I think I shall

not buy greedily, but go round and round it as long as I live, and be buried in it first, that it may please me the more at last.

The present was my next experiment of this kind, which I purpose to describe more at length, for convenience putting the experience of two years into one. As I have said,¹ I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up.

When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defense against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited a year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a traveling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat,² was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter

¹ The words which follow are printed, in the fashion of a motto, at the beginning of the book.

² The boat of his own making which he and his brother John had used in their excursion on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers. Thoreau sold this boat to Nathaniel Hawthorne.

about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go outdoors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within-doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The *Harivansa*¹ says, "An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning." Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager,—the wood thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field sparrow, the whip-poor-will, and many others.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain-storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this

is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hill-top near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land*.

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. "There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,"—said Damodara,² when his herds required new and larger pastures.

Both place and time were changed, and I

¹ A Sanskrit poem, part of the sacred literature of the Hindoos.

² *I.e.*, Krishna, divinity in Hindoo mythology.

dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair, then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such was that part of creation where I had squatted;—

There was a shepherd that did live,
And held his thoughts as high
As were the mounts whereon his flocks
Did hourly feed him by.

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshiper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of King Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in

us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air—to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say, "All intelligences awake with the morning." Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness, they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the

unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor.¹ It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *some-what hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."²

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men;³ like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout,

¹ Thoreau was fond of quoting these lines from Samuel Daniel's poem *To the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland*:

"Unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how poor a thing is man."

² The assertion is to be found in the *Westminster Catechism*.

³ Cf. *A Week* (Sunday): "According to fable, when the island of Ægina was depopulated by sickness, at the instance of Æacus, Jupiter turned the ants into men, that is, as some think, he made men of the inhabitants who lived meanly like ants."

and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb-nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy, made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way, are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it, as for them, is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our *lives* to improve *them*, who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they

are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again.

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow. As for *work*, we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus' dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell,¹ there is hardly a man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound, not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more, see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set it on fire,—or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely; yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half-hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, "What's the news?" as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half-hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night's sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. "Pray tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe,"—and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out

this morning on the Wachito River; never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

For my part, I could easily do without the post-office. I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak critically, I never received more than one or two letters in my life—I wrote this some years ago—that were worth the postage. The penny-post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest. And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in a newspaper. If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter,—we never need read of another. One is enough. If you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for a myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all *news*, as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure,—news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelvemonth, or twelve years, beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As for Spain, for instance, if you know how to throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to time in the right proportions,—they may have changed the names a little since I saw the papers,—and serve up a bull-fight when other entertainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and give us as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid reports under this head in the newspapers: and as for England, almost the last significant scrap of news from that quarter was the revolution of 1649; and if you have learned the history of her crops for an average year, you never need attend to that thing again, unless your speculations are of a merely pecuniary character. If one may judge who rarely looks into the

¹ *I.e.*, give a few slight pulls at the rope, obtaining rapid taps of the clapper, instead of pulling the rope until the bell is turned over with its mouth pointing upward.

newspapers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts, a French revolution not excepted.

What news! how much more important to know what that is which was never old! "Kieou-he-yu (great dignitary of the state of Wei) sent a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news. Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated near him, and questioned him in these terms: What is your master doing? The messenger answered with respect: My master desires to diminish the number of his faults, but he cannot come to the end of them. The messenger being gone, the philosopher remarked: What a worthy messenger! What a worthy messenger!" The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at the end of the week,—for Sunday is the fit conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the fresh and brave beginning of a new one,—with this one other draggle-tail of a sermon, should shout with thundering voice, "Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?"

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. Children, who play life, discern its true law and relations more clearly than men, who fail to live it worthily, but who think that they are wiser by experience, that is, by failure. I have read in a Hindoo book, that "there was a king's son, who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and, growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the bar-

barous race with which he lived. One of his father's ministers having discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed, and he knew himself to be a prince. So soul," continues the Hindoo philosopher, "from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be *Brahme*." I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that that *is* which *appears* to be. If a man should walk through this town and see only the reality, where, think you, would the "Mill-dam"¹ go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there, we should not recognize the place in his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house, or a jail, or a shop, or a dwelling-house, and say what that thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us. The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving then. The poet or the artist never yet had so fair and noble a design but some of his posterity at least could accomplish it.

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and let company go, let the bells ring and the children cry,—determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that

¹ Concord's favorite gossiping-place.

terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner, situated in the meridian shallows. Weather this danger and you are safe, for the rest of the way is down hill. With unrelaxed nerves, with morning vigor, sail by it, looking another way, tied to the mast like Ulysses.¹ If the engine whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its pains. If the bell rings, why should we run? We will consider what kind of music they are like. Let us settle ourselves, and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that alluvion which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston and Concord, through Church and State, through poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we can call *reality*, and say, This is, and no mistake; and then begin, having a *point d'appui*, below freshet and frost and fire, a place where you might found a wall or a state, or set a lamp-post safely, or perhaps a gauge, not a Nilometer, but a Realometer, that future ages might know how deep a freshet of shams and appearances had gathered from time to time. If you stand right fronting and face to face to a fact, you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a scimitar, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow, and so you will happily conclude your mortal career. Be it life or death, we crave only reality. If we are really dying, let us hear the rattle in our throats and feel cold in the extremities; if we are alive, let us go about our business.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver; it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that

my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and fore paws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining-rod and thin rising vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.

III. READING

WITH a little more deliberation in the choice of their pursuits, all men would perhaps become essentially students and observers, for certainly their nature and destiny are interesting to all alike. In accumulating property for ourselves or our posterity, in founding a family or a state, or acquiring fame even, we are mortal; but in dealing with truth we are immortal, and need fear no change nor accident. The oldest Egyptian or Hindoo philosopher raised a corner of the veil from the statue of the divinity; and still the trembling robe remains raised, and I gaze upon as fresh a glory as he did, since it was I in him that was then so bold, and it is he in me that now reviews the vision. No dust has settled on that robe; no time has elapsed since that divinity was revealed. That time which we really improve, or which is improvable, is neither past, present, nor future.

My residence was more favorable, not only to thought, but to serious reading, than a university; and though I was beyond the range of the ordinary circulating library, I had more than ever come within the influence of those books which circulate round the world, whose sentences were first written on bark, and are now merely copied from time to time on to linen paper. Says the poet Mir Camar Uddin Mast, "Being seated, to run through the region of the spiritual world; I have had this advantage in books. To be intoxicated by a single glass of wine; I have experienced this pleasure when I have drunk the liquor of the esoteric doctrines." I kept Homer's *Iliad* on my table through the summer, though I looked at his page only now and then. Incessant labor with my hands, at first, for I had my house to finish and my beans to hoe at the same time, made more study impossible. Yet I sustained myself by the prospect of such reading in future. I read one or two shallow books of travel in

¹ When his vessel passed by the Sirens.

the intervals of my work, till that employment made me ashamed of myself, and I asked where it was then that *I* lived.

The student may read Homer or Æschylus in the Greek without danger of dissipation or luxuriousness, for it implies that he in some measure emulate their heroes, and consecrate morning hours to their pages. The heroic books, even if printed in the character of our mother tongue, will always be in a language dead to degenerate times; and we must laboriously seek the meaning of each word and line, conjecturing a larger sense than common use permits out of what wisdom and valor and generosity we have. The modern cheap and fertile press, with all its translations, has done little to bring us nearer to the heroic writers of antiquity. They seem as solitary, and the letter in which they are printed as rare and curious, as ever. It is worth the expense of youthful days and costly hours, if you learn only some words of an ancient language, which are raised out of the trivialness of the street, to be perpetual suggestions and provocations. It is not in vain that the farmer remembers and repeats the few Latin words which he has heard. Men sometimes speak as if the study of the classics would at length make way for more modern and practical studies; but the adventurous student will always study classics, in whatever language they may be written and however ancient they may be. For what are the classics but the noblest recorded thoughts of man? They are the only oracles which are not decayed, and there are such answers to the most modern inquiry into them as Delphi and Dodona never gave. We might as well omit to study Nature because she is old. To read well, that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent, the steady intention almost of the whole life to this object. Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written. It is not enough even to be able to speak the language of that nation by which they are written, for there is a memorable interval between the spoken and the written language, the language heard and the language read. The one is commonly transitory, a sound, a

tongue, a dialect merely, almost brutish, and we learn it unconsciously, like the brutes, of our mothers. The other is the maturity and experience of that; if that is our mother tongue, this is our father tongue, a reserved and select expression, too significant to be heard by the ear, which we must be born again in order to speak. The crowds of men who merely *spoke* the Greek and Latin tongues in the Middle Ages were not entitled by the accident of birth to *read* the works of genius written in those languages; for these were not written in that Greek or Latin which they knew, but in the select language of literature. They had not learned the nobler dialects of Greece and Rome, but the very materials on which they were written were waste paper to them, and they prized instead a cheap contemporary literature. But when the several nations of Europe had acquired distinct though rude written languages of their own, sufficient for the purposes of their rising literatures, then first learning revived, and scholars were enabled to discern from that remoteness the treasures of antiquity. What the Roman and Grecian multitude could not *hear*, after the lapse of ages a few scholars *read*, and a few scholars only are still reading it.

However much we may admire the orator's occasional bursts of eloquence, the noblest written words are commonly as far behind or above the fleeting spoken language as the firmament with its stars is behind the clouds. *There* are the stars, and they who can may read them. The astronomers forever comment on and observe them. They are not exhalations like our daily colloquies and vaporous breath. What is called eloquence in the forum is commonly found to be rhetoric in the study. The orator yields to the inspiration of a transient occasion, and speaks to the mob before him, to those who can *hear* him; but the writer, whose more equable life is his occasion, and who would be distracted by the event and the crowd which inspire the orator, speaks to the intellect and heart of mankind, to all in any age who can *understand* him.

No wonder that Alexander carried the *Iliad* with him on his expeditions in a precious casket. A written word is the choicest of relics. It is something at once more intimate with us and more universal than any

other work of art. It is the work of art nearest to life itself. It may be translated into every language, and not only be read but actually breathed from all human lips;—not be represented on canvas or in marble only, but be carved out of the breath of life itself. The symbol of an ancient man's thought becomes a modern man's speech. Two thousand summers have imparted to the monuments of Grecian literature, as to her marbles, only a maturer golden and autumnal tint, for they have carried their own serene and celestial atmosphere into all lands to protect them against the corrosion of time. Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations. Books, the oldest and the best, stand naturally and rightfully on the shelves of every cottage. They have no cause of their own to plead, but while they enlighten and sustain the reader his common sense will not refuse them. Their authors are a natural and irresistible aristocracy in every society, and, more than kings or emperors, exert an influence on mankind. When the illiterate and perhaps scornful trader has earned by enterprise and industry his coveted leisure and independence, and is admitted to the circles of wealth and fashion, he turns inevitably at last to those still higher but yet inaccessible circles of intellect and genius, and is sensible only of the imperfection of his culture and the vanity and insufficiency of all his riches, and further proves his good sense by the pains which he takes to secure for his children that intellectual culture whose want he so keenly feels; and thus it is that he becomes the founder of a family.

Those who have not learned to read the ancient classics in the language in which they were written must have a very imperfect knowledge of the history of the human race; for it is remarkable that no transcript of them has ever been made into any modern tongue, unless our civilization itself may be regarded as such a transcript. Homer has never yet been printed in English, nor Æschylus, nor Virgil even,—works as refined, as solidly done, and as beautiful almost as the morning itself; for later writers, say what we will of their genius, have rarely, if ever, equaled the elaborate beauty and finish and the lifelong and heroic literary labors of the ancients. They only talk of forgetting them

who never knew them. It will be soon enough to forget them when we have the learning and the genius which will enable us to attend to and appreciate them. That age will be rich indeed when those relics which we call Classics, and the still older and more than classic but even less known Scriptures of the nations, shall have still further accumulated, when the Vaticans shall be filled with Vedas and Zendavestas and Bibles, with Homers and Dantes and Shakespeares, and all the centuries to come shall have successively deposited their trophies in the forum of the world. By such a pile we may hope to scale heaven at last.

The works of the great poets have never yet been read by mankind, for only great poets can read them. They have only been read as the multitude read the stars, at most astrologically, not astronomically. Most men have learned to read to serve a paltry convenience, as they have learned to cipher in order to keep accounts and not be cheated in trade; but of reading as a noble intellectual exercise they know little or nothing; yet this only is reading, in a high sense, not that which lulls us as a luxury and suffers the nobler faculties to sleep the while, but what we have to stand on tip-toe to read and devote our most alert and wakeful hours to.

I think that having learned our letters we should read the best that is in literature, and not be forever repeating our a-b-abs, and words of one syllable, in the fourth or fifth classes, sitting on the lowest and foremost form all our lives.¹ Most men are satisfied if they read or hear read, and perchance have been convicted by the wisdom of one good book, the Bible, and for the rest of their lives vegetate and dissipate their faculties in what is called easy reading. There is a work in several volumes in our Circulating Library entitled *Little Reading*, which I thought referred to a town of that name which I had not been to. There are those who, like cormorants and ostriches, can digest all sorts of this, even after the fullest dinner of meats and vegetables, for they suffer nothing to be

¹ "Read the best books first, or you may not have a chance to read them at all. . . . Certainly, we do not need to be soothed and entertained always like children. He who resorts to the easy novel, because he is languid, does no better than if he took a nap."—*A Week*, Sunday.

wasted. If others are the machines to provide this provender, they are the machines to read it. They read the nine thousandth tale about Zebulon and Sophronia, and how they loved as none had ever loved before, and neither did the course of their true love run smooth,—at any rate, how it did run and stumble, and get up again and go on! how some poor unfortunate got up on to a steeple, who had better never have gone up as far as the belfry; and then, having needlessly got him up there, the happy novelist rings the bell for all the world to come together and hear, O dear! how he did get down again! For my part, I think that they had better metamorphose all such aspiring heroes of universal noveldom into man weather-cocks, as they used to put heroes among the constellations, and let them swing round there till they are rusty, and not come down at all to bother honest men with their pranks. The next time the novelist rings the bell I will not stir though the meeting-house burn down. “*The Skip of the Tip-Toe-Hop*, a Romance of the Middle Ages, by the celebrated author of *Tittle-Tol-Tan*, to appear in monthly parts; a great rush; don’t all come together.” All this they read with saucer eyes, and erect and primitive curiosity, and with unwearied gizzard, whose corrugations even yet need no sharpening, just as some little four-year-old benchman his two-cent gilt-covered edition of *Cinderella*,—without any improvement, that I can see, in the pronunciation, or accent, or emphasis, or any more skill in extracting or inserting the moral. The result is dullness of sight, a stagnation of the vital circulations, and a general deliquium and sloughing off of all the intellectual faculties. This sort of gingerbread is baked daily and more sedulously than pure wheat or rye-and-Indian in almost every oven, and finds a surer market.

The best books are not read even by those who are called good readers. What does our Concord culture amount to? There is in this town, with a very few exceptions, no taste for the best or for very good books even in English literature, whose words all can read and spell. Even the college-bred and so-called liberally educated men here and elsewhere have really little or no acquaintance with the English classics; and as for the recorded wisdom of mankind, the ancient

classics and Bibles, which are accessible to all who will know of them, there are the feeblest efforts anywhere made to become acquainted with them. I know a wood-chopper, of middle age, who takes a French paper, not for news as he says, for he is above that, but to “keep himself in practice,” he being a Canadian by birth; and when I ask him what he considers the best thing he can do in this world, he says, beside this, to keep up and add to his English.¹ This is about as much as the college-bred generally do or aspire to do, and they take an English paper for the purpose. One who has just come from reading perhaps one of the best English books will find how many with whom he can converse about it? Or suppose he comes from reading a Greek or Latin classic in the original, whose praises are familiar even to the so-called illiterate; he will find nobody at all to speak to, but must keep silence about it. Indeed, there is hardly the professor in our colleges, who, if he has mastered the difficulties of the language, has proportionally mastered the difficulties of the wit and poetry of a Greek poet, and has any sympathy to impart to the alert and heroic reader; and as for the sacred Scriptures, or Bibles of mankind, who in this town can tell me even their titles? Most men do not know that any nation but the Hebrews have had a scripture. A man, any man, will go considerably out of his way to pick up a silver dollar; but here are golden words, which the wisest men of antiquity have uttered, and whose worth the wise of every succeeding age have assured us of;—and yet we learn to read only as far as Easy Reading, the primers and class-books, and when we leave school, the *Little Reading*, and story-books, which are for boys and beginners; and our reading, our conversation and thinking, are all on a very low level, worthy only of pygmies and manikins.

I aspire to be acquainted with wiser men than this our Concord soil has produced, whose names are hardly known here. Or shall I hear the name of Plato and never read his book? As if Plato were my townsman and I never saw him,—my next neigh-

¹ There is more about this woodchopper in the chapter entitled *Visitors* (not reprinted here). His name was Alek Therien.

bor and I never heard him speak or attended to the wisdom of his words. But how actually is it? His *Dialogues*, which contain what was immortal in him, lie on the next shelf, and yet I never read them. We are underbred and low-lived and illiterate; and in this respect I confess I do not make any very broad distinction between the illiterateness of my townsman who cannot read at all and the illiterateness of him who has learned to read only what is for children and feeble intellects. We should be as good as the worthies of antiquity, but partly by first knowing how good they were. We are a race of tit-men, and soar but little higher in our intellectual flights than the columns of the daily paper.

It is not all books that are as dull as their readers. There are probably words addressed to our condition exactly, which, if we could really hear and understand, would be more salutary than the morning or the spring to our lives, and possibly put a new aspect on the face of things for us. How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book! The book exists for us, perchance, which will explain our miracles and reveal new ones. The at present unutterable things we may find somewhere uttered. These same questions that disturb and puzzle and confound us have in their turn occurred to all the wise men; not one has been omitted; and each has answered them, according to his ability, by his words and his life. Moreover, with wisdom we shall learn liberality. The solitary hired man on a farm in the outskirts of Concord, who has had his second birth and peculiar religious experience, and is driven as he believes into silent gravity and exclusiveness by his faith, may think it is not true; but Zoroaster, thousands of years ago, traveled the same road and had the same experience; but he, being wise, knew it to be universal, and treated his neighbors accordingly, and is even said to have invented and established worship among men. Let him humbly commune with Zoroaster then, and through the liberalizing influence of all the worthies, with Jesus Christ himself, and let "our church" go by the board.

We boast that we belong to the Nineteenth Century and are making the most rapid strides of any nation. But consider how

little this village does for its own culture. I do not wish to flatter my townsmen, nor to be flattered by them, for that will not advance either of us. We need to be provoked,—goaded like oxen, as we are, into a trot. We have a comparatively decent system of common schools, schools for infants only; but excepting the half-starved Lyceum in the winter, and latterly the puny beginning of a library suggested by the State, no school for ourselves. We spend more on almost any article of bodily aliment or ailment than on our mental aliment. It is time that we had uncommon schools, that we did not leave off our education when we begin to be men and women. It is time that villages were universities, and their elder inhabitants the fellows of universities, with leisure—if they are, indeed, so well off—to pursue liberal studies the rest of their lives. Shall the world be confined to one Paris or one Oxford forever? Cannot students be boarded here and get a liberal education under the skies of Concord? Can we not hire some Abélard to lecture to us? Alas! what with foddering the cattle and tending the store, we are kept from school too long, and our education is sadly neglected. In this country, the village should in some respects take the place of the nobleman of Europe. It should be the patron of the fine arts. It is rich enough. It wants only the magnanimity and refinement. It can spend money enough on such things as farmers and traders value, but it is thought Utopian to propose spending money for things which more intelligent men know to be of far more worth. This town has spent seventeen thousand dollars on a town-house, thank fortune or politics, but probably it will not spend so much on living wit, the true meat to put into that shell, in a hundred years. The one hundred and twenty-five dollars annually subscribed for a Lyceum in the winter is better spent than any other equal sum raised in the town. If we live in the Nineteenth Century, why should we not enjoy the advantages which the Nineteenth Century offers? Why should our life be in any respect provincial? If we will read newspapers, why not skip the gossip of Boston and take the best newspaper in the world at once?—not be sucking the pap of "neutral family" papers, or browsing *Olive-*

*Branches*¹ here in New England. Let the reports of all the learned societies come to us, and we will see if they know anything. Why should we leave it to Harper and Brothers and Redding and Co.² to select our reading? As the nobleman of cultivated taste surrounds himself with whatever conduces to his culture,—genius—learning—wit—books—paintings—statuary—music—philosophical instruments, and the like; so let the village do,—not stop short at a pedagogue, a parson, a sexton, a parish library, and three selectmen, because our Pilgrim forefathers got through a cold winter once on a bleak rock with these. To act collectively is according to the spirit of our institutions; and I am confident that, as our circumstances are more flourishing, our means are greater than the nobleman's. New England can hire all the wise men in the world to come and teach her, and board them round the while, and not be provincial at all. That is the *uncommon* school we want. Instead of noblemen, let us have noble villages of men. If it is necessary, omit one bridge over the river, go round a little there, and throw one arch at least over the darker gulf of ignorance which surrounds us.

IV. SOUNDS

BUT while we are confined to books, though the most select and classic, and read only particular written languages, which are themselves but dialects and provincial, we are in danger of forgetting the language which all things and events speak without metaphor, which alone is copious and standard. Much is published, but little printed. The rays which stream through the shutter will be no longer remembered when the shutter is wholly removed. No method nor discipline can supersede the necessity of being forever on the alert. What is a course of history or philosophy, or poetry, no matter how well selected, or the best society, or the most admirable routine of life, compared with the discipline of looking always at what is to be seen? Will you be a reader, a student merely, or a seer? Read your fate, see what is before you, and walk on into futurity.

¹ Methodist weekly journal, formerly published in Boston.

² Boston firm of booksellers flourishing at the time when this volume was written.

I did not read books the first summer; I hoed beans. Nay, I often did better than this. There were times when I could not afford to sacrifice the bloom of the present moment to any work, whether of the head or hands. I love a broad margin to my life. Sometimes, in a summer morning, having taken my accustomed bath, I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon, rapt in a revery, amidst the pines and hickories and sumacs, in undisturbed solitude and stillness, while the birds sang around or flitted noiseless through the house, until by the sun falling in at my west window, or the noise of some traveler's wagon on the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time. I grew in those seasons like corn in the night, and they were far better than any work of the hands would have been. They were not time subtracted from my life, but so much over and above my usual allowance. I realized what the Orientals mean by contemplation and the forsaking of works. For the most part, I minded not how the hours went. The day advanced as if to light some work of mine; it was morning, and lo, now it is evening, and nothing memorable is accomplished. Instead of singing like the birds, I silently smiled at my incessant good fortune. As the sparrow had its trill, sitting on the hickory before my door, so had I my chuckle or suppressed warble which he might hear out of my nest. My days were not days of the week, bearing the stamp of any heathen deity, nor were they minced into hours and fretted by the ticking of a clock; for I lived like the Puri Indians, of whom it is said that "for yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow they have only one word, and they express the variety of meaning by pointing backward for yesterday, forward for to-morrow, and overhead for the passing day." This was sheer idleness to my fellow-townsmen, no doubt; but if the birds and flowers had tried me by their standard, I should not have been found wanting. A man must find his occasions in himself, it is true. The natural day is very calm, and will hardly reprove his indolence.

I had this advantage, at least, in my mode of life, over those who were obliged to look abroad for amusement, to society and the theater, that my life itself was become my amusement and never ceased to be novel. It

was a drama of many scenes and without an end. If we were always, indeed, getting our living, and regulating our lives according to the last and best mode we had learned, we should never be troubled with ennui. Follow your genius closely enough, and it will not fail to show you a fresh prospect every hour. Housework was a pleasant pastime. When my floor was dirty, I rose early, and, setting all my furniture out of doors on the grass, bed and bedstead making but one budget, dashed water on the floor, and sprinkled white sand from the pond on it, and then with a broom scrubbed it clean and white; and by the time the villagers had broken their fast the morning sun had dried my house sufficiently to allow me to move in again, and my meditations were almost uninterrupted. It was pleasant to see my whole household effects out on the grass, making a little pile like a gypsy's pack, and my three-legged table, from which I did not remove the books and pen and ink, standing amid the pines and hickories. They seemed glad to get out themselves, and as if unwilling to be brought in. I was sometimes tempted to stretch an awning over them and take my seat there. It was worth the while to see the sun shine on these things, and hear the free wind blow on them; so much more interesting most familiar objects look out of doors than in the house. A bird sits on the next bough, life-everlasting grows under the table, and blackberry vines run round its legs; pine cones, chestnut burs, and strawberry leaves are strewn about. It looked as if this was the way these forms came to be transferred to our furniture, to tables, chairs, and bedsteads,—because they once stood in their midst.

My house was on the side of a hill, immediately on the edge of the larger wood, in the midst of a young forest of pitch pines and hickories, and half a dozen rods from the pond, to which a narrow footpath led down the hill. In my front yard grew the strawberry, blackberry, and life-everlasting, johnswort and goldenrod, shrub oaks and sand cherry, blueberry and groundnut. Near the end of May, the sand cherry (*Cerasus pumila*) adorned the sides of the path with its delicate flowers arranged in umbels cylindrically about its short stems, which last, in the fall, weighed down with good-

sized and handsome cherries, fell over in wreaths like rays on every side. I tasted them out of compliment to Nature, though they were scarcely palatable. The sumac (*Rhus glabra*) grew luxuriantly about the house, pushing up through the embankment which I had made, and growing five or six feet the first season. Its broad pinnate tropical leaf was pleasant though strange to look on. The large buds, suddenly pushing out late in the spring from dry sticks which had seemed to be dead, developed themselves as by magic into graceful green and tender boughs, an inch in diameter; and sometimes, as I sat at my window, so heedlessly did they grow and tax their weak joints, I heard a fresh and tender bough suddenly fall like a fan to the ground, when there was not a breath of air stirring, broken off by its own weight. In August, the large masses of berries, which, when in flower, had attracted many wild bees, gradually assumed their bright velvety crimson hue, and by their weight again bent down and broke the tender limbs.

As I sit at my window this summer afternoon, hawks are circling about my clearing; the tantivy of wild pigeons, flying by twos and threes athwart my view, or perching restless on the white pine boughs behind my house, gives a voice to the air; a fish hawk dimples the glassy surface of the pond and brings up a fish; a mink steals out of the marsh before my door and seizes a frog by the shore; the sedge is bending under the weight of the reed-birds flitting hither and thither; and for the last half-hour I have heard the rattle of railroad cars, now dying away and then reviving like the beat of a partridge, conveying travelers from Boston to the country. For I did not live so out of the world as that boy who, as I hear, was put out to a farmer in the east part of the town, but ere long ran away and came home again, quite down at the heel and homesick. He had never seen such a dull and out-of-the-way place; the folks were all gone off; why, you couldn't even hear the whistle! I doubt if there is such a place in Massachusetts now:—

In truth, our village has become a butt
For one of those fleet railroad shafts, and o'er
Our peaceful plain its soothing sound is—Concord.

The Fitchburg Railroad touches the pond about a hundred rods south of where I dwell. I usually go to the village along its causeway, and am, as it were, related to society by this link. The men on the freight trains, who go over the whole length of the road, bow to me as to an old acquaintance, they pass me so often, and apparently they take me for an employee; and so I am. I too would fain be a track-repairer somewhere in the orbit of the earth.

The whistle of the locomotive penetrates my woods summer and winter, sounding like the scream of a hawk sailing over some farmer's yard, informing me that many restless city merchants are arriving within the circle of the town, or adventurous country traders from the other side. As they come under one horizon, they shout their warning to get off the track to the other, heard sometimes through the circles of two towns. Here come your groceries, country; your rations, countrymen! Nor is there any man so independent on his farm that he can say them nay. And here's your pay for them! screams the countryman's whistle; timber like long battering-rams going twenty miles an hour against the city's walls, and chairs enough to seat all the weary and heavy-laden that dwell within them. With such huge and lumbering civility the country hands a chair to the city. All the Indian huckleberry hills are stripped, all the cranberry meadows are raked into the city. Up comes the cotton, down goes the woven cloth; up comes the silk, down goes the woollen; up come the books, but down goes the wit that writes them.

When I meet the engine with its train of cars moving off with planetary motion,—or, rather, like a comet, for the beholder knows not if with that velocity and with that direction it will ever revisit this system, since its orbit does not look like a returning curve,—with its steam cloud like a banner streaming behind in golden and silver wreaths, like many a downy cloud which I have seen, high in the heavens, unfolding its masses to the light,—as if this traveling demigod, this cloud-compeller, would ere long take the sunset sky for the livery of his train; when I hear the iron horse make the hills echo with his snort like thunder, shaking the earth with his feet, and breathing

fire and smoke from his nostrils (what kind of winged horse or fiery dragon they will put into the new Mythology I don't know), it seems as if the earth had got a race now worthy to inhabit it. If all were as it seems, and men made the elements their servants for noble ends! If the cloud that hangs over the engine were the perspiration of heroic deeds, or as beneficent as that which floats over the farmer's fields, then the elements and Nature herself would cheerfully accompany men on their errands and be their escort.

I watch the passage of the morning cars with the same feeling that I do the rising of the sun, which is hardly more regular. Their train of clouds stretching far behind and rising higher and higher, going to heaven while the cars are going to Boston, conceals the sun for a minute and casts my distant field into the shade, a celestial train beside which the petty train of cars which hugs the earth is but the barb of the spear. The stabler of the iron horse was up early this winter morning by the light of the stars amid the mountains, to fodder and harness his steed. Fire, too, was awakened thus early to put the vital heat in him and get him off. If the enterprise were as innocent as it is early! If the snow lies deep, they strap on his snowshoes, and, with the giant plow, plow a furrow from the mountains to the seaboard, in which the cars, like a following drill-barrow, sprinkle all the restless men and floating merchandise in the country for seed. All day the fire-steed flies over the country, stopping only that his master may rest, and I am awakened by his tramp and defiant snort at midnight, when in some remote glen in the woods he fronts the elements incased in ice and snow; and he will reach his stall only with the morning star, to start once more on his travels without rest or slumber. Or perchance, at evening, I hear him in his stable blowing off the superfluous energy of the day, that he may calm his nerves and cool his liver and brain for a few hours of iron slumber. If the enterprise were as heroic and commanding as it is protracted and unwearied!

Far through unfrequented woods on the confines of towns, where once only the hunter penetrated by day, in the darkest night dart these bright saloons without the knowledge

of their inhabitants; this moment stopping at some brilliant station-house in town or city, where a social crowd is gathered, the next in the Dismal Swamp, scaring the owl and fox. The startings and arrivals of the cars are now the epochs in the village day. They go and come with such regularity and precision, and their whistle can be heard so far, that the farmers set their clocks by them, and thus one well-conducted institution regulates a whole country. Have not men improved somewhat in punctuality since the railroad was invented? Do they not talk and think faster in the depot than they did in the stage-office? There is something electrifying in the atmosphere of the former place. I have been astonished at the miracles it has wrought; that some of my neighbors, who, I should have prophesied, once for all, would never get to Boston by so prompt a conveyance, are on hand when the bell rings. To do things "railroad fashion" is now the byword; and it is worth the while to be warned so often and so sincerely by any power to get off its track. There is no stopping to read the riot act, no firing over the heads of the mob, in this case. We have constructed a fate, an *Atropos*, that never turns aside. (Let that be the name of your engine.) Men are advertised that at a certain hour and minute these bolts will be shot toward particular points of the compass; yet it interferes with no man's business, and the children go to school on the other track. We live the steadier for it. We are all educated thus to be sons of Tell. The air is full of invisible bolts. Every path but your own is the path of fate. Keep on your own track, then.

What recommends commerce to me is its enterprise and bravery. It does not clasp its hands and pray to Jupiter. I see these men every day go about their business with more or less courage and content, doing more even than they suspect, and perchance better employed than they could have consciously devised. I am less affected by their heroism who stood up for half an hour in the front line at Buena Vista,¹ than by the steady and cheerful valor of the men who inhabit the snow-plow for their winter quarters; who

have not merely the three-o'clock-in-the-morning courage,² which Bonaparte thought was the rarest, but whose courage does not go to rest so early, who go to sleep only when the storm sleeps or the sinews of their iron steed are frozen. On this morning of the Great Snow, perchance, which is still raging and chilling men's blood, I hear the muffled tone of their engine bell from out the fog bank of their chilled breath, which announces that the cars *are coming*, without long delay, notwithstanding the veto of a New England northeast snow-storm, and I behold the plowmen covered with snow and rime, their heads peering above the mold-board which is turning down other than daisies and the nests of field mice,³ like boulders of the Sierra Nevada, that occupy an outside place in the universe.

Commerce is unexpectedly confident and serene, alert, adventurous, and unwearied. It is very natural in its methods withal, far more so than many fantastic enterprises and sentimental experiments, and hence its singular success. I am refreshed and expanded when the freight train rattles past me, and I smell the stores which go dispensing their odors all the way from Long Wharf⁴ to Lake Champlain, reminding me of foreign parts, of coral reefs, and Indian oceans, and tropical climes, and the extent of the globe. I feel more like a citizen of the world at the sight of the palm-leaf which will cover so many flaxen New England heads the next summer, the Manilla hemp and cocoanut husks, the old junk, gunny bags, scrap iron, and rusty nails. This carload of torn sails is more legible and interesting now than if they should be wrought into paper and printed books. Who can write so graphically the history of the storms they have weathered as these rents have done? They are proof-sheets which need no correction. Here goes lumber from the Maine woods, which did not go out to sea in the last freshet, risen four dollars on the thousand because of what did go out or was split up; pine, spruce, cedar,—first, second, third, and fourth qualities, so lately all of one quality, to wave

² Actually it was two-o'clock-in-the-morning courage which Napoleon said he had found very rare.

³ In allusion to Burns's poems, *To a Mountain Daisy* and *To a Mouse*.

⁴ I.e., Boston.

¹ The battle of this name was fought against a superior Mexican force on 22 and 23 February, 1847.

over the bear, and moose, and caribou. Next rolls Thomaston lime, a prime lot, which will get far among the hills before it gets slacked. These rags in bales, of all hues and qualities, the lowest condition to which cotton and linen descend, the final result of dress,—of patterns which are now no longer cried up, unless it be in Milwaukee, as those splendid articles, English, French, or American prints, gingham, muslins, *etc.*, gathered from all quarters both of fashion and poverty, going to become paper of one color or a few shades only, on which, forsooth, will be written tales of real life, high and low, and founded on fact! This closed car smells of salt fish, the strong New England and commercial scent, reminding me of the Grand Banks and the fisheries. Who has not seen a salt fish, thoroughly cured for this world, so that nothing can spoil it, and putting the perseverance of the saints to the blush? with which you may sweep or pave the streets, and split your kindlings, and the teamster shelter himself and his lading against sun, wind, and rain behind it,—and the trader, as a Concord trader once did,¹ hang it up by his door for a sign when he commences business, until at last his oldest customer cannot tell surely whether it be animal, vegetable, or mineral, and yet it shall be as pure as a snowflake, and if it be put into a pot and boiled, will come out an excellent dun-fish for a Saturday's dinner. Next Spanish hides, with the tails still preserving their twist and the angle of elevation they had when the oxen that wore them were careering over the pampas of the Spanish Main,—a type of all obstinacy, and evincing how almost hopeless and incurable are all constitutional vices. I confess that, practically speaking, when I have learned a man's real disposition, I have no hopes of changing it for the better or worse in this state of existence. As the Orientals say, "A cur's tail may be warmed, and pressed, and bound round with ligatures, and after a twelve years' labor bestowed

¹ "Deacon Parkman, Thoreau tells, lived in the house he now occupies and kept a store close by. He hung out a salt fish for a sign, and it hung so long, and grew so hard and black and deformed that the deacon forgot what thing it was, and nobody in town knew, but being examined chemically it proved to be salt fish. But duly every morning the deacon hung it on its peg."—Emerson's *Journal*.

upon it, still it will retain its natural form." The only effectual cure for such inveteracies as these tails exhibit is to make glue of them, which I believe is what is usually done with them, and then they will stay put and stick. Here is a hogshead of molasses or of brandy directed to John Smith, Cuttingsville, Vermont, some trader among the Green Mountains, who imports for the farmers near his clearing, and now perchance stands over his bulkhead and thinks of the last arrivals on the coast, how they may affect the price for him, telling his customers this moment, as he has told them twenty times before this morning, that he expects some by the next train of prime quality. It is advertised in the *Cuttingsville Times*.

While these things go up other things come down. Warned by the whizzing sound, I look up from my book and see some tall pine, hewn on far northern hills, which has winged its way over the Green Mountains and the Connecticut, shot like an arrow through the township within ten minutes, and scarce another eye beholds it; going

to be the mast
Of some great ammiral.

And hark! here comes the cattle-train bearing the cattle of a thousand hills, sheepcots, stables, and cow-yards in the air, drovers with their sticks, and shepherd boys in the midst of their flocks, all but the mountain pastures, whirled along like leaves blown from the mountains by the September gales. The air is filled with the bleating of calves and sheep, and the hustling of oxen, as if a pastoral valley were going by. When the old bell-wether at the head rattles his bell, the mountains do indeed skip like rams and the little hills like lambs.² A carload of drovers, too, in the midst, on a level with their droves now, their vocation gone, but still clinging to their useless sticks as their badge of office. But their dogs, where are they? It is a stampede to them; they are quite thrown out; they have lost the scent. Methinks I hear them barking behind the Peterboro' Hills, or panting up the western slope of the Green Mountains. They will not be in at the death. Their vocation, too, is gone. Their fidelity and sagacity are below

² Psalm cxiv, 4.

par now. They will slink back to their kennels in disgrace, or perchance run wild and strike a league with the wolf and the fox. So is your pastoral life whirled past and away. But the bell rings, and I must get off the track and let the cars go by;—

What's the railroad to me?
I never go to see
Where it ends.
It fills a few hollows,
And makes banks for the swallows,
It sets the sand a-blowing,
And the blackberries a-growing,

but I cross it like a cart-path in the woods. I will not have my eyes put out and my ears spoiled by its smoke and steam and hissing.

Now that the cars are gone by and all the restless world with them, and the fishes in the pond no longer feel their rumbling, I am more alone than ever. For the rest of the long afternoon, perhaps, my meditations are interrupted only by the faint rattle of a carriage or team along the distant highway.

Sometimes, on Sundays, I heard the bells, the Lincoln, Acton, Bedford, or Concord bell, when the wind was favorable, a faint, sweet, and, as it were, natural melody, worth importing into the wilderness. At a sufficient distance over the woods this sound acquires a certain vibratory hum, as if the pine needles in the horizon were the strings of a harp which it swept. All sound heard at the greatest possible distance produces one and the same effect, a vibration of the universal lyre, just as the intervening atmosphere makes a distant ridge of earth interesting to our eyes by the azure tint it imparts to it. There came to me in this case a melody which the air had strained, and which had conversed with every leaf and needle of the wood, that portion of the sound which the elements had taken up and modulated and echoed from vale to vale. The echo is, to some extent, an original sound, and therein is the magic and charm of it. It is not merely a repetition of what was worth repeating in the bell, but partly the voice of the wood; the same trivial words and notes sung by a wood-nymph.

At evening, the distant lowing of some cow in the horizon beyond the woods sounded sweet and melodious, and at first I would

mistake it for the voices of certain minstrels by whom I was sometimes serenaded, who might be straying over hill and dale; but soon I was not unpleasantly disappointed when it was prolonged into the cheap and natural music of the cow. I do not mean to be satirical, but to express my appreciation of those youths' singing, when I state that I perceived clearly that it was akin to the music of the cow, and they were at length one articulation of Nature.

Regularly at half-past seven, in one part of the summer, after the evening train had gone by, the whip-poor-wills chanted their vespers for half an hour, sitting on a stump by my door, or upon the ridge-pole of the house. They would begin to sing almost with as much precision as a clock, within five minutes of a particular time, referred to the setting of the sun, every evening. I had a rare opportunity to become acquainted with their habits. Sometimes I heard four or five at once in different parts of the wood, by accident one a bar behind another, and so near me that I distinguished not only the cluck after each note, but often that singular buzzing sound like a fly in a spider's web, only proportionally louder. Sometimes one would circle round and round me in the woods a few feet distant as if tethered by a string, when probably I was near its eggs. They sang at intervals throughout the night, and were again as musical as ever just before and about dawn.

When other birds are still, the screech owls take up the strain, like mourning women their ancient u-lu-lu. Their dismal scream is truly Ben Jonsonian.¹ Wise midnight hags! It is no honest and blunt tu-whit tu-who of the poets, but, without jesting, a most solemn graveyard ditty, the mutual consolations of suicide lovers remembering the pangs and the delights of supernal love in the infernal groves. Yet I love to hear their wailing, their doleful responses, trilled along the woodside; reminding me sometimes of music and singing birds; as if it were the dark and tearful side of music, the regrets and sighs that would fain be sung. They are the spirits, the low spirits and melancholy forebodings, of fallen souls that

¹ F. H. Allen suggests that Thoreau probably had in mind the witches' scene in Jonson's *Masque of Queens*.

once in human shape night-walked the earth and did the deeds of darkness, now expiating their sins with their wailing hymns or threnodies in the scenery of their transgressions. They give me a new sense of the variety and capacity of that nature which is our common dwelling. *Oh-o-o-o-o that I never had been bor-r-r-r-n!* sighs one on this side of the pond, and circles with the restlessness of despair to some new perch on the gray oaks. Then—*that I never had been bor-r-r-r-n!* echoes another on the farther side with tremulous sincerity, and—*bor-r-r-r-n!* comes faintly from far in the Lincoln woods.

I was also serenaded by a hooting owl. Near at hand you could fancy it the most melancholy sound in Nature, as if she meant by this to stereotype and make permanent in her choir the dying moans of a human being,—some poor weak relic of mortality who has left hope behind, and howls like an animal, yet with human sobs, on entering the dark valley, made more awful by a certain gurgling melodiousness,—I find myself beginning with the letters *gl* when I try to imitate it,—expressive of a mind which has reached the gelatinous, mildewy stage in the mortification of all healthy and courageous thought. It reminded me of ghouls and idiots and insane howlings. But now one answers from far woods in a strain made really melodious by distance,—*Hoo hoo hoo, hoorer hoo;* and indeed for the most part it suggested only pleasing associations, whether heard by day or night, summer or winter.

I rejoice that there are owls. Let them do the idiotic and maniacal hooting for men. It is a sound admirably suited to swamps and twilight woods which no day illustrates, suggesting a vast and undeveloped nature which men have not recognized. They represent the stark twilight and unsatisfied thoughts which all have. All day the sun has shone on the surface of some savage swamp, where the single spruce stands hung with usnea lichens, and small hawks circulate above, and the chickadee lisps amid the evergreens, and the partridge and rabbit skulk beneath; but now a more dismal and fitting day dawns, and a different race of creatures awakes to express the meaning of Nature there.

Late in the evening I heard the distant rumbling of wagons over bridges,—a sound

heard farther than almost any other at night,—the baying of dogs, and sometimes again the lowing of some disconsolate cow in a distant barn-yard. In the meanwhile all the shore rang with the trump of bullfrogs, the sturdy spirits of ancient winebibbers and wassailers, still unrepentant, trying to sing a catch in their Stygian lake,—if the Walden nymphs will pardon the comparison, for though there are almost no weeds, there are frogs there,—who would fain keep up the hilarious rules of their old festal tables, though their voices have waxed hoarse and solemnly grave, mocking at mirth, and the wine has lost its flavor, and become only liquor to distend their paunches, and sweet intoxication never comes to drown the memory of the past, but mere saturation and waterloggedness and distention. The most aldermanic, with his chin upon a heart-leaf, which serves for a napkin to his drooling chaps, under this northern shore quaffs a deep draught of the once scorned water, and passes round the cup with the ejaculation *tr-r-r-oonk, tr-r-r-oonk, tr-r-r-oonk!* and straightway comes over the water from some distant cove the same password repeated, where the next in seniority and girth has gulped down to his mark; and when this observance has made the circuit of the shores, then ejaculates the master of ceremonies, with satisfaction, *tr-r-r-oonk!* and each in his turn repeats the same down to the least distended, leakiest, and flabbiest paunched, that there be no mistake; and then the bowl goes round again and again, until the sun disperses the morning mist, and only the patriarch is not under the pond, but vainly bellowing *troonk* from time to time, and pausing for a reply.

I am not sure that I ever heard the sound of cock-crowing from my clearing, and I thought that it might be worth the while to keep a cockerel for his music merely, as a singing bird. The note of this once wild Indian pheasant is certainly the most remarkable of any bird's, and if they could be naturalized without being domesticated, it would soon become the most famous sound in our woods, surpassing the clangor of the goose and the hooting of the owl; and then imagine the cackling of the hens to fill the pauses when their lords' clarions rested! No wonder that man added this bird to his

tame stock,—to say nothing of the eggs and drumsticks. To walk in a winter morning in a wood where these birds abounded, their native woods, and hear the wild cockerels crow on the trees, clear and shrill for miles over the resounding earth, drowning the feebler notes of other birds,—think of it! It would put nations on the alert. Who would not be early to rise, and rise earlier and earlier every successive day of his life, till he became unspeakably healthy, wealthy, and wise? This foreign bird's note is celebrated by the poets of all countries along with the notes of their native songsters. All climates agree with brave Chanticleer. He is more indigenous even than the natives. His health is ever good, his lungs are sound, his spirits never flag. Even the sailor on the Atlantic and Pacific is awakened by his voice; but its shrill sound never roused me from my slumbers. I kept neither dog, cat, cow, pig, nor hens, so that you would have said there was a deficiency of domestic sounds; neither the churn, nor the spinning-wheel, nor even the singing of the kettle, nor the hissing of the urn, nor children crying, to comfort one. An old-fashioned man would have lost his senses or died of ennui before this. Not even rats in the wall, for they were starved out, or rather were never baited in,—only squirrels on the roof and under the floor, a whip-poor-will on the ridge-pole, a blue jay screaming beneath the window, a hare or woodchuck under the house, a screech owl or a cat owl behind it, a flock of wild geese or a laughing loon on the pond, and a fox to bark in the night. Not even a lark or an oriole, those mild plantation birds, ever visited my clearing. No cockerels to crow nor hens to cackle in the yard. No yard! but unfenced nature reaching up to your very sills. A young forest growing up under your windows, and wild sumacs and blackberry vines breaking through into your cellar; sturdy pitch pines rubbing and creaking against the shingles for want of room, their roots reaching quite under the house. Instead of a scuttle or a blind blown off in the gale,—a pine tree snapped off or torn up by the roots behind your house for fuel. Instead of no path to the front-yard gate in the Great Snow,—no gate—no front-yard,—and no path to the civilized world.

V. SOLITUDE

THIS is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibes delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself. As I walk along the stony shore of the pond in my shirt-sleeves, though it is cool as well as cloudy and windy, and I see nothing special to attract me, all the elements are unusually congenial to me. The bullfrogs trump to usher in the night, and the note of the whip-poor-will is borne on the rippling wind from over the water. Sympathy with the fluttering alder and poplar leaves almost takes away my breath; yet, like the lake, my serenity is rippled but not ruffled. These small waves raised by the evening wind are as remote from storm as the smooth reflecting surface. Though it is now dark, the wind still blows and roars in the wood, the waves still dash, and some creatures lull the rest with their notes. The repose is never complete. The wildest animals do not repose, but seek their prey now; the fox, and skunk, and rabbit, now roam the fields and woods without fear. They are Nature's watchmen,—links which connect the days of animated life.

When I return to my house I find that visitors have been there and left their cards, either a bunch of flowers, or a wreath of evergreen, or a name in pencil on a yellow walnut leaf or a chip. They who come rarely to the woods take some little piece of the forest into their hands to play with by the way, which they leave, either intentionally or accidentally. One has peeled a willow wand, woven it into a ring, and dropped it on my table. I could always tell if visitors had called in my absence, either by the bended twigs or grass, or the print of their shoes, and generally of what sex or age or quality they were by some slight trace left, as a flower dropped, or a bunch of grass plucked and thrown away, even as far off as the railroad, half a mile distant, or by the lingering odor of a cigar or pipe. Nay, I was frequently notified of the passage of a traveler along the highway sixty rods off by the scent of his pipe.

There is commonly sufficient space about us. Our horizon is never quite at our elbows. The thick wood is not just at our door, nor

the pond, but somewhat is always clearing, familiar and worn by us, appropriated and fenced in some way, and reclaimed from Nature. For what reason have I this vast range and circuit, some square miles of unfrequented forest, for my privacy, abandoned to me by men? My nearest neighbor is a mile distant, and no house is visible from any place but the hill-tops within half a mile of my own. I have my horizon bounded by woods all to myself; a distant view of the railroad where it touches the pond on the one hand, and of the fence which skirts the woodland road on the other. But for the most part it is as solitary where I live as on the prairies. It is as much Asia or Africa as New England. I have, as it were, my own sun and moon and stars, and a little world all to myself. At night there was never a traveler passed my house, or knocked at my door, more than if I were the first or last man; unless it were in the spring, when at long intervals some came from the village to fish for pouts,—they plainly fished much more in the Walden Pond of their own natures, and baited their hooks with darkness,—but they soon retreated, usually with light baskets, and left “the world to darkness and to me,” and the black kernel of the night was never profaned by any human neighborhood. I believe that men are generally still a little afraid of the dark, though the witches are all hung, and Christianity and candles have been introduced.

Yet I experienced sometimes that the most sweet and tender, the most innocent and encouraging society may be found in any natural object, even for the poor misanthrope and most melancholy man. There can be no very black melancholy to him who lives in the midst of nature and has his senses still. There was never yet such a storm but it was Æolian music to a healthy and innocent ear. Nothing can rightly compel a simple and brave man to a vulgar sadness. While I enjoy the friendship of the seasons I trust that nothing can make life a burden to me. The gentle rain which waters my beans and keeps me in the house to-day is not drear and melancholy, but good for me too. Though it prevents my hoeing them, it is of far more worth than my hoeing. If it should continue so long as to cause the seeds to rot in the ground and destroy the potatoes in the low

lands, it would still be good for the grass on the uplands, and, being good for the grass, it would be good for me. Sometimes, when I compare myself with other men, it seems as if I were more favored by the gods than they, beyond any deserts that I am conscious of; as if I had a warrant and surety at their hands which my fellows have not, and were especially guided and guarded. I do not flatter myself, but if it be possible they flatter me. I have never felt lonesome, or in the least oppressed by a sense of solitude, but once, and that was a few weeks after I came to the woods, when, for an hour, I doubted if the near neighborhood of man was not essential to a serene and healthy life. To be alone was something unpleasant. But I was at the same time conscious of a slight insanity in my mood, and seemed to foresee my recovery. In the midst of a gentle rain while these thoughts prevailed, I was suddenly sensible of such sweet and beneficent society in Nature, in the very pattering of the drops, and in every sound and sight around my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me, as made the fancied advantages of human neighborhood insignificant, and I have never thought of them since. Every little pine needle expanded and swelled with sympathy and befriended me. I was so distinctly made aware of the presence of something kindred to me, even in scenes which we are accustomed to call wild and dreary, and also that the nearest of blood to me and humanest was not a person nor a villager, that I thought no place could ever be strange to me again.—

Mourning untimely consumes the sad;
Few are their days in the land of the living,
Beautiful daughter of Toscar.¹

Some of my pleasantest hours were during the long rain-storms in the spring or fall, which confined me to the house for the afternoon as well as the forenoon, soothed by their ceaseless roar and pelting; when an early twilight ushered in a long evening in which many thoughts had time to take root and unfold themselves. In those driving north-east rains which tried the village houses so, when the maids stood ready with mop and

¹ Metrical version of a passage in James Macpherson's Ossianic prose-poem *Croma*.

pail in front entries to keep the deluge out, I sat behind my door in my little house, which was all entry, and thoroughly enjoyed its protection. In one heavy thunder-shower the lightning struck a large pitch pine across the pond, making a very conspicuous and perfectly regular spiral groove from top to bottom, an inch or more deep, and four or five inches wide, as you would groove a walking-stick. I passed it again the other day, and was struck with awe on looking up and beholding that mark, now more distinct than ever, where a terrific and resistless bolt came down out of the harmless sky eight years ago. Men frequently say to me, "I should think you would feel lonesome down there, and want to be nearer to folks, rainy and snowy days and nights especially." I am tempted to reply to such,—This whole earth which we inhabit is but a point in space. How far apart, think you, dwell the two most distant inhabitants of yonder star, the breath of whose disk cannot be appreciated by our instruments? Why should I feel lonely? is not our planet in the Milky Way? This which you put seems to me not to be the most important question. What sort of space is that which separates a man from his fellows and makes him solitary? I have found that no exertion of the legs can bring two minds much nearer to one another. What do we want most to dwell near to? Not to many men surely, the depot, the post-office, the bar-room, the meeting-house, the school-house, the grocery, Beacon Hill, or the Five Points,¹ where men most congregate, but to the perennial source of our life, whence in all our experience we have found that to issue, as the willow stands near the water and sends out its roots in that direction. This will vary with different natures, but this is the place where a wise man will dig his cellar. . . . I one evening overtook one of my townsmen, who has accumulated what is called "a handsome property,"—though I never got a *fair* view of it,—on the Walden road, driving a pair of cattle to market, who inquired of me how I could bring my mind to give up so many of the comforts of life. I answered that I was very sure I liked it pas-

sably well; I was not joking. And so I went home to my bed, and left him to pick his way through the darkness and the mud to Brighton,—or Bright-town,—which place he would reach some time in the morning.

Any prospect of awakening or coming to life to a dead man makes indifferent all times and places. The place where that may occur is always the same, and indescribably pleasant to all our senses. For the most part we allow only outlying and transient circumstances to make our occasions. They are, in fact, the cause of our distraction. Nearest to all things is that power which fashions their being. *Next* to us the grandest laws are continually being executed. *Next* to us is not the workman whom we have hired, with whom we love so well to talk, but the workman whose work we are.

"How vast and profound is the influence of the subtile powers of Heaven and of Earth!"

"We seek to perceive them, and we do not see them; we seek to hear them, and we do not hear them; identified with the substance of things, they cannot be separated from them."

"They cause that in all the universe men purify and sanctify their hearts, and clothe themselves in their holiday garments to offer sacrifices and oblations to their ancestors. It is an ocean of subtile intelligences. They are everywhere, above us, on our left, on our right; they environ us on all sides."

We are the subjects of an experiment which is not a little interesting to me. Can we not do without the society of our gossips a little while under these circumstances,—have our own thoughts to cheer us? Confucius says truly, "Virtue does not remain as an abandoned orphan; it must of necessity have neighbors."

With thinking we may be beside ourselves in a sane sense. By a conscious effort of the mind we can stand aloof from actions and their consequences; and all things, good and bad, go by us like a torrent. We are not wholly involved in Nature. I may be either the driftwood in the stream, or Indra² in the sky looking down on it. I *may* be affected by a theatrical exhibition; on the other hand, I *may not* be affected by an actual event which appears to concern me much more. I only

¹ Beacon Hill, crowned by the State House, was formerly the most desirable residential section of Boston, while the Five Points was formerly notorious as the most vicious section of the city of New York.

² Chief god of the air in Hindoo mythology.

know myself as a human entity; the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections; and am sensible of a certain doubleness by which I can stand as remote from myself as from another. However intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me, which, as it were, is not a part of me, but spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it, and that is no more I than it is you. When the play, it may be the tragedy, of life is over, the spectator goes his way. It was a kind of fiction, a work of the imagination only, so far as he was concerned. This doubleness may easily make us poor neighbors and friends sometimes.

I find it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time. To be in company, even with the best, is soon wearisome and dissipating. I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers. A man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will. Solitude is not measured by the miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows. The really diligent student in one of the crowded hives of Cambridge College is as solitary as a dervish in the desert. The farmer can work alone in the field or the woods all day, hoeing or chopping, and not feel lonesome, because he is employed; but when he comes home at night he cannot sit down in a room alone, at the mercy of his thoughts, but must be where he can "see the folks," and recreate, and, as he thinks, remunerate himself for his day's solitude; and hence he wonders how the student can sit alone in the house all night and most of the day without ennui and "the blues"; but he does not realize that the student, though in the house, is still at work in *his* field, and chopping in *his* woods, as the farmer in his, and in turn seeks the same recreation and society that the latter does, though it may be a more condensed form of it.

Society is commonly too cheap. We meet at very short intervals, not having had time to acquire any new value for each other. We meet at meals three times a day, and give each other a new taste of that old musty cheese that we are. We have had to agree on a certain set of rules, called etiquette and

politeness, to make this frequent meeting tolerable and that we need not come to open war. We meet at the post-office, and at the sociable, and about the fireside every night; we live thick and are in each other's way, and stumble over one another, and I think that we thus lose some respect for one another. Certainly less frequency would suffice for all important and hearty communications. Consider the girls in a factory,—never alone, hardly in their dreams. It would be better if there were but one inhabitant to a square mile, as where I live. The value of a man is not in his skin, that we should touch him.

I have heard of a man lost in the woods and dying of famine and exhaustion at the foot of a tree, whose loneliness was relieved by the grotesque visions with which, owing to bodily weakness, his diseased imagination surrounded him, and which he believed to be real. So also, owing to bodily and mental health and strength, we may be continually cheered by a like but more normal and natural society, and come to know that we are never alone.

I have a great deal of company in my house; especially in the morning, when nobody calls. Let me suggest a few comparisons, that some one may convey an idea of my situation. I am no more lonely than the loon in the pond that laughs so loud, or than Walden Pond itself. What company has that lonely lake, I pray? And yet it has not the blue devils, but the blue angels in it, in the azure tint of its waters. The sun is alone, except in thick weather, when there sometimes appear to be two, but one is a mock sun. God is alone,—but the devil, he is far from being alone; he sees a great deal of company; he is legion. I am no more lonely than a single mullein or dandelion in a pasture, or a bean leaf, or sorrel, or a horse-fly, or a humble-bee. I am no more lonely than the Mill Brook, or a weathercock, or the north star, or the south wind, or an April shower, or a January thaw, or the first spider in a new house.

I have occasional visits in the long winter evenings, when the snow falls fast and the wind howls in the wood, from an old settler and original proprietor,¹ who is reported to have dug Walden Pond, and stoned it, and

¹ Probably Pan is meant.

fringed it with pine woods; who tells me stories of old time and of new eternity; and between us we manage to pass a cheerful evening with social mirth and pleasant views of things, even without apples or cider,—a most wise and humorous friend, whom I love much, who keeps himself more secret than ever did Goffe or Whalley;¹ and though he is thought to be dead, none can show where he is buried. An elderly dame,² too, dwells in my neighborhood, invisible to most persons, in whose odorous herb garden I love to stroll sometimes, gathering simples and listening to her fables; for she has a genius of unequaled fertility, and her memory runs back farther than mythology, and she can tell me the original of every fable, and on what fact every one is founded, for the incidents occurred when she was young. A ruddy and lusty old dame, who delights in all weathers and seasons, and is likely to outlive all her children yet.

The indescribable innocence and beneficence of Nature,—of sun and wind and rain, of summer and winter,—such health, such cheer, they afford forever! and such sympathy have they ever with our race, that all Nature would be affected, and the sun's brightness fade, and the winds would sigh humanely, and the clouds rain tears, and the woods shed their leaves and put on mourning in midsummer, if any man should ever for a just cause grieve. Shall I not have intelligence with the earth? Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mold myself?

What is the pill which will keep us well, serene, contented? Not my or thy great-grandfather's, but our great-grandmother Nature's universal, vegetable, botanic medicines, by which she has kept herself young always, outlived so many old Parrs³ in her day, and fed her health with their decaying fatness. For my panacea, instead of one of those quack vials of a mixture dipped from Acheron and the Dead Sea, which come out of those long shallow black-schooner looking wagons which we sometimes see made to carry bottles, let me have a draught of undiluted morning air. Morning air! If men

will not drink of this at the fountain-head of the day, why, then, we must even bottle up some and sell it in the shops, for the benefit of those who have lost their subscription ticket to morning time in this world. But remember, it will not keep quite till noonday even in the coolest cellar, but drive out the stopples long ere that and follow westward the steps of Aurora. I am no worshiper of Hygeia, who was the daughter of that old herb-doctor Æsculapius, and who is represented on monuments holding a serpent in one hand, and in the other a cup out of which the serpent sometimes drinks; but rather of Hebe, cup-bearer to Jupiter, who was the daughter of Juno and wild lettuce, and who had the power of restoring gods and men to the vigor of youth. She was probably the only thoroughly sound-conditioned, healthy, and robust young lady that ever walked the globe, and wherever she came it was spring.

VII. THE BEAN-FIELD

MEANWHILE my beans, the length of whose rows, added together, was seven miles already planted, were impatient to be hoed, for the earliest had grown considerably before the latest were in the ground; indeed they were not easily to be put off. What was the meaning of this so steady and self-respecting, this small Herculean labor, I knew not. I came to love my rows, my beans, though so many more than I wanted. They attached me to the earth, and so I got strength like Antæus. But why should I raise them? Only Heaven knows. This was my curious labor all summer,—to make this portion of the earth's surface, which had yielded only cinquefoil, blackberries, johnswort, and the like, before, sweet wild fruits and pleasant flowers, produce instead this pulse. What shall I learn of beans or beans of me? I cherish them, I hoe them, early and late I have an eye to them; and this is my day's work. It is a fine broad leaf to look on. My auxiliaries are the dews and rains which water this dry soil, and what fertility is in the soil itself, which for the most part is lean and effete. My enemies are worms, cool days, and most of all woodchucks. The last have nibbled for me a quarter of an acre clean. But

¹ Puritan regicides who fled to New England and there lived in hiding.

² Dame Nature.

³ Thomas Parr died in London in 1635, reputed to be 152 years old.

what right had I to oust johnswort and the rest, and break up their ancient herb garden? Soon, however, the remaining beans will be too tough for them, and go forward to meet new foes.

When I was four years old, as I well remember, I was brought from Boston to this my native town, through these very woods and this field, to the pond. It is one of the oldest scenes stamped on my memory. And now to-night my flute has waked the echoes over that very water. The pines still stand here older than I; or, if some have fallen, I have cooked my supper with their stumps, and a new growth is rising all around, preparing another aspect for new infant eyes. Almost the same johnswort springs from the same perennial root in this pasture, and even I have at length helped to clothe that fabulous landscape of my infant dreams, and one of the results of my presence and influence is seen in these bean leaves, corn blades, and potato vines.

I planted about two acres and a half of upland; and as it was only about fifteen years since the land was cleared, and I myself had got out two or three cords of stumps, I did not give it any manure; but in the course of the summer it appeared by the arrowheads which I turned up in hoeing, that an extinct nation had anciently dwelt here and planted corn and beans ere white men came to clear the land, and so, to some extent, had exhausted the soil for this very crop.

Before yet any woodchuck or squirrel had run across the road, or the sun had got above the shrub oaks, while all the dew was on, though the farmers warned me against it,—I would advise you to do all your work if possible while the dew is on,—I began to level the ranks of haughty weeds in my bean-field and throw dust upon their heads. Early in the morning I worked barefooted, dabbling like a plastic artist in the dewy and crumbling sand, but later in the day the sun blistered my feet. There the sun lighted me to hoe beans, pacing slowly backward and forward over that yellow gravelly upland, between the long green rows, fifteen rods, the one end terminating in a shrub oak copse where I could rest in the shade, the other in a blackberry field where the green berries deepened their tints by the time I had made another bout. Removing the weeds, putting

fresh soil about the bean stems, and encouraging this weed which I had sown, making the yellow soil express its summer thought in bean leaves and blossoms rather than in wormwood and piper and millet grass, making the earth say beans instead of grass,—this was my daily work. As I had little aid from horses or cattle, or hired men or boys, or improved implements of husbandry, I was much slower, and became much more intimate with my beans than usual. But labor of the hands, even when pursued to the verge of drudgery, is perhaps never the worst form of idleness. It has a constant and imperishable moral, and to the scholar it yields a classic result. A very *agricola laboriosus* was I to travelers bound westward through Lincoln and Wayland to nobody knows where; they sitting at their ease in gigs, with elbows on knees, and reins loosely hanging in festoons; I the home-staying, laborious native of the soil. But soon my homestead was out of their sight and thought. It was the only open and cultivated field for a great distance on either side of the road, so they made the most of it; and sometimes the man in the field heard more of travelers' gossip and comment than was meant for his ear: "Beans so late! peas so late!"—for I continued to plant when others had begun to hoe,—the ministerial husbandman had not suspected it. "Corn, my boy, for fodder; corn for fodder." "Does he *live* there?" asks the black bonnet of the gray coat; and the hard-featured farmer reins up his grateful dobbin to inquire what you are doing where he sees no manure in the furrow, and recommends a little chip dirt, or any little waste stuff, or it may be ashes or plaster. But here were two acres and a half of furrows, and only a hoe for cart and two hands to draw it,—there being an aversion to other carts and horses,—and chip dirt far away. Fellow-travelers as they rattled by compared it aloud with the fields which they had passed, so that I came to know how I stood in the agricultural world. This was one field not in Mr. Colman's report.¹ And, by the way, who estimates the value of the crop which nature yields in the still wilder fields unimproved by man? The crop of *English* hay is

¹ Henry Colman (died 1849) was State Commissioner for the Agricultural Survey of Massachusetts.

carefully weighed, the moisture calculated, the silicates and the potash; but in all dells and pond-holes in the woods and pastures and swamps grows a rich and various crop only unreaped by man. Mine was, as it were, the connecting link between wild and cultivated fields; as some states are civilized, and others half-civilized, and others savage or barbarous, so my field was, though not in a bad sense, a half-cultivated field. They were beans cheerfully returning to their wild and primitive state that I cultivated, and my hoe played the *Ranz des Vaches*¹ for them.

Near at hand, upon the topmost spray of a birch, sings the brown thrasher—or red mavis, as some love to call him—all the morning, glad of your society, that would find out another farmer's field if yours were not here. While you are planting the seed, he cries,—“Drop it, drop it,—cover it up, cover it up,—pull it up, pull it up, pull it up.” But this was not corn, and so it was safe from such enemies as he. You may wonder what his rigmarole, his amateur Paganini² performances on one string or on twenty, have to do with your planting, and yet prefer it to leached ashes or plaster. It was a cheap sort of top dressing in which I had entire faith.

As I drew a still fresher soil about the rows with my hoe, I disturbed the ashes of unchronicled nations who in primeval years lived under these heavens, and their small implements of war and hunting were brought to the light of this modern day. They lay mingled with other natural stones, some of which bore the marks of having been burned by Indian fires, and some by the sun, and also bits of pottery and glass brought hither by the recent cultivators of the soil. When my hoe tinkled against the stones, that music echoed to the woods and the sky, and was an accompaniment to my labor which yielded an instant and immeasurable crop. It was no longer beans that I hoed, nor I that hoed beans; and I remembered with as much pity as pride, if I remembered at all, my acquaintances who had gone to the city to attend the oratorios. The nighthawk circled overhead in the sunny afternoons—for I sometimes

made a day of it—like a mote in the eye, or in heaven's eye, falling from time to time with a swoop and a sound as if the heavens were rent, torn at last to very rags and tatters, and yet a seamless cope remained; small imps that fill the air and lay their eggs on the ground on bare sand or rocks on the tops of hills, where few have found them; graceful and slender like ripples caught up from the pond, as leaves are raised by the wind to float in the heavens; such kindredship is in nature. The hawk is aerial brother of the wave which he sails over and surveys, those his perfect air-inflated wings answering to the elemental unfledged pinions of the sea. Or sometimes I watched a pair of hen-hawks circling high in the sky, alternately soaring and descending, approaching and leaving one another, as if they were the embodiment of my own thoughts. Or I was attracted by the passage of wild pigeons from this wood to that, with a slight quivering winnowing sound and carrier haste; or from under a rotten stump my hoe turned up a sluggish portentous and outlandish spotted salamander, a trace of Egypt and the Nile, yet our contemporary. When I paused to lean on my hoe, these sounds and sights I heard and saw anywhere in the row, a part of the inexhaustible entertainment which the country offers.

On gala days the town fires its great guns, which echo like popguns to these woods, and somewaifs of martial music occasionally penetrate thus far. To me, away there in my bean-field at the other end of the town, the big guns sounded as if a puffball had burst; and when there was a military turnout of which I was ignorant, I have sometimes had a vague sense all the day of some sort of itching and disease in the horizon, as if some eruption would break out there soon, either scarlatina or canker-rash, until at length some more favorable puff of wind, making haste over the fields and up the Wayland road, brought me information of the “trainers.” It seemed by the distant hum as if somebody's bees had swarmed, and that the neighbors, according to Virgil's advice,³ by a faint *tintinnabulum* upon the most sonorous of their domestic utensils, were endeavoring to call them down into the hive again. And when

¹ Air played in Switzerland to call in cattle.

² Italian violinist (1784-1840).

³ In *Georgics*, Bk. IV,

the sound died quite away, and the hum had ceased, and the most favorable breezes told no tale, I knew that they had got the last drone of them all safely into the Middlesex hive, and that now their minds were bent on the honey with which it was smeared.

I felt proud to know that the liberties of Massachusetts and of our fatherland were in such safe keeping; and as I turned to my hoeing again I was filled with an inexpressible confidence, and pursued my labor cheerfully with a calm trust in the future.

When there were several bands of musicians, it sounded as if all the village was a vast bellows, and all the buildings expanded and collapsed alternately with a din. But sometimes it was a really noble and inspiring strain that reached these woods, and the trumpet that sings of fame, and I felt as if I could spit a Mexican¹ with a good relish,—for why should we always stand for trifles?—and looked round for a woodchuck or a skunk to exercise my chivalry upon. These martial strains seemed as far away as Palestine, and reminded me of a march of crusaders in the horizon, with a slight tantivy and tremulous motion of the elm tree tops which overhang the village. This was one of the *great* days; though the sky had from my clearing only the same everlastingly great look that it wears daily, and I saw no difference in it.

It was a singular experience that long acquaintance which I cultivated with beans, what with planting, and hoeing, and harvesting, and threshing, and picking over and selling them,—the last was the hardest of all,—I might add eating, for I did taste. I was determined to know beans. When they were growing, I used to hoe from five o'clock in the morning till noon, and commonly spent the rest of the day about other affairs. Consider the intimate and curious acquaintance one makes with various kinds of weeds,—it will bear some iteration in the account, for there was no little iteration in the labor,—disturbing their delicate organizations so ruthlessly, and making such invidious distinctions with his hoe, leveling whole ranks of one species, and sedulously cultivating another. That's Roman wormwood,—that's

pigweed,—that's sorrel,—that's piper-grass,—have at him, chop him up, turn his roots upward to the sun, don't let him have a fiber in the shade, if you do he'll turn himself t'other side up and be as green as a leek in two days. A long war, not with cranes, but with weeds, those Trojans who had sun and rain and dews on their side. Daily the beans saw me come to their rescue armed with a hoe, and thin the ranks of their enemies, filling up the trenches with weedy dead. Many a lusty crest-waving Hector, that towered a whole foot above his crowding comrades, fell before my weapon and rolled in the dust.

Those summer days which some of my contemporaries devoted to the fine arts in Boston or Rome, and others to contemplation in India, and others to trade in London or New York, I thus, with the other farmers of New England, devoted to husbandry. Not that I wanted beans to eat, for I am by nature a Pythagorean, so far as beans are concerned, whether they mean porridge or voting, and exchanged them for rice; but, perchance, as some must work in fields if only for the sake of tropes and expression, to serve a parable-maker one day. It was on the whole a rare amusement, which, continued too long, might have become a dissipation. Though I gave them no manure, and did not hoe them all once, I hoed them unusually well as far as I went, and was paid for it in the end, "there being in truth," as Evelyn says, "no compost or lætation whatsoever comparable to this continual motion, repastination, and turning of the mold with the spade." "The earth," he adds elsewhere, "especially if fresh, has a certain magnetism in it, by which it attracts the salt, power, or virtue (call it either) which gives it life, and is the logic of all the labor and stir we keep about it, to sustain us; all dungings and other sordid temperings being but the vicars succedaneous to this improvement." Moreover, this being one of those "worn-out and exhausted lay fields which enjoy their sabbath," had perchance, as Sir Kenelm Digby thinks likely, attracted "vital spirits" from the air. I harvested twelve bushels of beans.

But to be more particular, for it is complained that Mr. Colman has reported chiefly the expensive experiments of gentlemen farmers, my outgoes were,—

¹ The war against Mexico was in progress at this time.

For a hoe	\$0 54	
Plowing, harrowing, and furrowing	7 50	Too much
Beans for seed	3 12½	
Potatoes for seed	1 33	
Peas for seed	0 40	
Turnip seed	0 06	
White line for crow fence	0 02	
Horse cultivator and boy three hours	1 00	
Horse and cart to get crop	0 75	
In all	\$14 72½	

My income was (*patremfamilias vendacem, non emacem esse oportet*¹), from

Nine bushels and twelve quarts of beans sold	\$16 94
Five bushels large potatoes	2 50
Nine bushels small	2 25
Grass	1 00
Stalks	0 75
In all	\$23 44

Leaving a pecuniary profit,
as I have elsewhere said, of \$8 71½

This is the result of my experience in raising beans: Plant the common small white bush bean about the first of June, in rows three feet by eighteen inches apart, being careful to select fresh round and unmixed seed. First look out for worms, and supply vacancies by planting anew. Then look out for woodchucks, if it is an exposed place, for they will nibble off the earliest tender leaves almost clean as they go; and again, when the young tendrils make their appearance, they have notice of it, and will shear them off with both buds and young pods, sitting erect like a squirrel. But above all harvest as early as possible, if you would escape frosts and have a fair and salable crop; you may save much loss by this means.

This further experience also I gained: I said to myself, I will not plant beans and corn with so much industry another summer, but such seeds, if the seed is not lost, as sincerity, truth, simplicity, faith, innocence, and the like, and see if they will not grow in this soil, even with less toil and manurance, and sustain me, for surely it has not been exhausted for these crops. Alas! I said this to

¹ It behooves a householder to be a seller, not a buyer. (Cato, *De Re Rustica*.)

myself; but now another summer is gone, and another, and another, and I am obliged to say to you, Reader, that the seeds which I planted, if indeed they *were* the seeds of those virtues, were worm-eaten or had lost their vitality, and so did not come up. Commonly men will only be brave as their fathers were brave, or timid. This generation is very sure to plant corn and beans each new year precisely as the Indians did centuries ago and taught the first settlers to do, as if there were a fate in it. I saw an old man the other day, to my astonishment, making the holes with a hoe for the seventieth time at least, and not for himself to lie down in! But why should not the New Englander try new adventures, and not lay so much stress on his grain, his potato and grass crop, and his orchards,—raise other crops than these? Why concern ourselves so much about our beans for seed, and not be concerned at all about a new generation of men? We should really be fed and cheered if when we met a man we were sure to see that some of the qualities which I have named, which we all prize more than those other productions, but which are for the most part broadcast and floating in the air, had taken root and grown in him. Here comes such a subtle and ineffable quality, for instance, as truth or justice, though the slightest amount or new variety of it, along the road. Our ambassadors should be instructed to send home such seeds as these, and Congress help to distribute them over all the land. We should never stand upon ceremony with sincerity. We should never cheat and insult and banish one another by our meanness, if there were present the kernel of worth and friendliness. We should not meet thus in haste. Most men I do not meet at all, for they seem not to have time; they are busy about their beans. We would not deal with a man thus plodding ever, leaning on a hoe or a spade as a staff between his work, not as a mushroom, but partially risen out of the earth, something more than erect, like swallows alighted and walking on the ground:—

And as he spake, his wings would now and then Spread, as he meant to fly, then close again,—

so that we should suspect that we might be conversing with an angel. Bread may not always nourish us; but it always does us good,

it even takes stiffness out of our joints, and makes us supple and buoyant, when we knew not what ailed us, to recognize any generosity in man or Nature, to share any unmixed and heroic joy.

Ancient poetry and mythology suggest, at least, that husbandry was once a sacred art; but it is pursued with irreverent haste and heedlessness by us, our object being to have large farms and large crops merely. We have no festival, nor procession, nor ceremony, not excepting our cattle-shows and so-called Thanksgivings, by which the farmer expresses a sense of the sacredness of his calling, or is reminded of its sacred origin. It is the premium and the feast which tempt him. He sacrifices not to Ceres and the Terrestrial Jove, but to the infernal Plutus rather. By avarice and selfishness, and a groveling habit from which none of us is free, of regarding the soil as property, or the means of acquiring property chiefly, the landscape is deformed, husbandry is degraded with us, and the farmer leads the meanest of lives. He knows Nature but as a robber. Cato says that the profits of agriculture are particularly pious or just (*maximeque pius quaestus*), and according to Varro the old Romans "called the same earth Mother and Ceres, and thought that they who cultivated it led a pious and useful life, and that they alone were left of the race of King Saturn."

We are wont to forget that the sun looks on our cultivated fields and on the prairies and forests without distinction. They all reflect and absorb his rays alike, and the former make but a small part of the glorious picture which he beholds in his daily course. In his view the earth is all equally cultivated like a garden. Therefore we should receive the benefit of his light and heat with a corresponding trust and magnanimity. What though I value the seed of these beans, and harvest that in the fall of the year? This broad field which I have looked at so long looks not to me as the principal cultivator, but away from me to influences more genial to it, which water and make it green. These beans have results which are not harvested by me. Do they not grow for woodchucks partly? The ear of wheat (in Latin *spica*, obsoletely *specā*, from *spe*, hope) should not be the only hope of the husbandman; its kernel or grain (*granum*, from *gerendo*, bear-

ing) is not all that it bears. How, then, can our harvest fail? Shall I not rejoice also at the abundance of the weeds whose seeds are the granary of the birds? It matters little comparatively whether the fields fill the farmer's barns. The true husbandman will cease from anxiety, as the squirrels manifest no concern whether the woods will bear chestnuts this year or not, and finish his labor with every day, relinquishing all claim to the produce of his fields, and sacrificing in his mind not only his first but his last fruits also.

XI. HIGHER LAWS

As I came home through the woods with my string of fish, trailing my pole, it being now quite dark, I caught a glimpse of a woodchuck stealing across my path, and felt a strange thrill of savage delight, and was strongly tempted to seize and devour him raw; not that I was hungry then, except for that wildness which he represented. Once or twice, however, while I lived at the pond, I found myself ranging the woods, like a half-starved hound, with a strange abandonment, seeking some kind of venison which I might devour, and no morsel could have been too savage for me. The wildest scenes had become unaccountably familiar. I found in myself, and still find, an instinct toward a higher, or, as it is named, spiritual life, as do most men, and another toward a primitive rank and savage one, and I reverence them both. I love the wild not less than the good. The wildness and adventure that are in fishing still recommended it to me. I like sometimes to take rank hold on life and spend my day more as the animals do. Perhaps I have owed to this employment and to hunting, when quite young, my closest acquaintance with Nature. They early introduce us to and detain us in scenery with which otherwise, at that age, we should have little acquaintance. Fishermen, hunters, woodchoppers, and others, spending their lives in the fields and woods, in a peculiar sense a part of Nature themselves, are often in a more favorable mood for observing her, in the intervals of their pursuits, than philosophers or poets even, who approach her with expectation. She is not afraid to exhibit herself to them. The traveler on the prairie is naturally a hunter, on the head

waters of the Missouri and Columbia a trapper, and at the Falls of St. Mary a fisherman. He who is only a traveler learns things at second-hand and by the halves, and is poor authority. We are most interested when science reports what those men already know practically or instinctively, for that alone is a true *humanity*, or account of human experience.

They mistake who assert that the Yankee has few amusements, because he has not so many public holidays, and men and boys do not play so many games as they do in England, for here the more primitive but solitary amusements of hunting, fishing, and the like have not yet given place to the former. Almost every New England boy among my contemporaries shouldered a fowling-piece between the ages of ten and fourteen; and his hunting and fishing grounds were not limited, like the preserves of an English nobleman, but were more boundless even than those of a savage. No wonder, then, that he did not oftener stay to play on the common. But already a change is taking place, owing, not to an increased humanity, but to an increased scarcity of game, for perhaps the hunter is the greatest friend of the animals hunted, not excepting the Humane Society.

Moreover, when at the pond, I wished sometimes to add fish to my fare for variety. I have actually fished from the same kind of necessity that the first fishers did. Whatever humanity I might conjure up against it was all factitious, and concerned my philosophy more than my feelings. I speak of fishing only now, for I had long felt differently about fowling, and sold my gun before I went to the woods. Not that I am less humane than others, but I did not perceive that my feelings were much affected. I did not pity the fishes nor the worms. This was habit. As for fowling, during the last years that I carried a gun my excuse was that I was studying ornithology, and sought only new or rare birds. But I confess that I am now inclined to think that there is a finer way of studying ornithology than this. It requires so much closer attention to the habits of the birds, that, if for that reason only, I have been willing to omit the gun. Yet notwithstanding the objection on the score of humanity, I am compelled to doubt

if equally valuable sports are ever substituted for these; and when some of my friends have asked me anxiously about their boys, whether they should let them hunt, I have answered, yes,—remembering that it was one of the best parts of my education,—*make* them hunters, though sportsmen only at first, if possible, mighty hunters at last, so that they shall not find game large enough for them in this or any vegetable wilderness,—hunters as well as fishers of men. Thus far I am of the opinion of Chaucer's nun,¹ who

yave not of the text a pullèd hen
That saith that hunters ben not holy men.

There is a period in the history of the individual, as of the race, when the hunters are the "best men," as the Algonquins called them. We cannot but pity the boy who has never fired a gun; he is no more humane, while his education has been sadly neglected. This was my answer with respect to those youths who were bent on this pursuit, trusting that they would soon outgrow it. No humane being, past the thoughtless age of boyhood, will wantonly murder any creature which holds its life by the same tenure that he does. The hare in its extremity cries like a child. I warn you, mothers, that my sympathies do not always make the usual *philanthropic* distinctions.

Such is oftenest the young man's introduction to the forest, and the most original part of himself. He goes thither at first as a hunter and fisher, until at last, if he has the seeds of a better life in him, he distinguishes his proper objects, as a poet or naturalist it may be, and leaves the gun and fish-pole behind. The mass of men are still and always young in this respect. In some countries a hunting parson is no uncommon sight. Such a one might make a good shepherd's dog, but is far from being the Good Shepherd. I have been surprised to consider that the only obvious employment, except wood-chopping, ice-cutting, or the like business, which ever to my knowledge detained at Walden Pond for a whole half-day any of my fellow-citizens, whether fathers or children of the town, with just one exception, was fishing. Commonly they did not think that they were lucky, or well paid for their time, unless they

¹ It was the Monk. (*Canterbury Tales*, Prologue, ll. 177-178.)

got a long string of fish, though they had the opportunity of seeing the pond all the while. They might go there a thousand times before the sediment of fishing would sink to the bottom and leave their purpose pure; but no doubt such a clarifying process would be going on all the while. The Governor and his Council faintly remember the pond, for they went a-fishing there when they were boys; but now they are too old and dignified to go a-fishing, and so they know it no more forever. Yet even they expect to go to heaven at last. If the legislature regards it, it is chiefly to regulate the number of hooks to be used there; but they know nothing about the hook of hooks with which to angle for the pond itself, impaling the legislature for a bait. Thus, even in civilized communities, the embryo man passes through the hunter stage of development.

I have found repeatedly, of late years, that I cannot fish without falling a little in self-respect. I have tried it again and again. I have skill at it, and, like many of my fellows, a certain instinct for it, which revives from time to time, but always when I have done I feel that it would have been better if I had not fished. I think that I do not mistake. It is a faint intimation, yet so are the first streaks of morning. There is unquestionably this instinct in me which belongs to the lower orders of creation; yet with every year I am less a fisherman, though without more humanity or even wisdom; at present I am no fisherman at all. But I see that if I were to live in a wilderness I should again be tempted to become a fisher and hunter in earnest. Beside, there is something essentially unclean about this diet and all flesh, and I began to see where house-work commences, and whence the endeavor, which costs so much, to wear a tidy and respectable appearance each day, to keep the house sweet and free from all ill odors and sights. Having been my own butcher and scullion and cook, as well as the gentleman for whom the dishes were served up, I can speak from an unusually complete experience. The practical objection to animal food in my case was its uncleanness; and besides, when I had caught and cleaned and cooked and eaten my fish, they seemed not to have fed me essentially. It was insignificant and unnecessary, and cost more than it came to. A little bread or a

few potatoes would have done as well, with less trouble and filth. Like many of my contemporaries, I had rarely for many years used animal food, or tea, or coffee, *etc.*; not so much because of any ill effects which I had traced to them, as because they were not agreeable to my imagination. The repugnance to animal food is not the effect of experience, but is an instinct. It appeared more beautiful to live low and fare hard in many respects; and though I never did so, I went far enough to please my imagination. I believe that every man who has ever been earnest to preserve his higher or poetic faculties in the best condition has been particularly inclined to abstain from animal food, and from much food of any kind. It is a significant fact, stated by entomologists,—I find it in Kirby and Spence,¹—that “some insects in their perfect state, though furnished with organs of feeding, make no use of them”; and they lay it down as “a general rule, that almost all insects in this state eat much less than in that of larvæ. The voracious caterpillar when transformed into a butterfly . . . and the gluttonous maggot when become a fly” content themselves with a drop or two of honey or some other sweet liquid. The abdomen under the wings of the butterfly still represents the larva. This is the tidbit which tempts his insectivorous fate. The gross feeder is a man in the larva state; and there are whole nations in that condition, nations without fancy or imagination, whose vast abdomens betray them.

It is hard to provide and cook so simple and clean a diet as will not offend the imagination; but this, I think, is to be fed when we feed the body; they should both sit down at the same table. Yet perhaps this may be done. The fruits eaten temperately need not make us ashamed of our appetites, not interrupt the worthiest pursuits. But put an extra condiment into your dish, and it will poison you. It is not worth the while to live by rich cookery. Most men would feel shame if caught preparing with their own hands precisely such a dinner, whether of animal or vegetable food, as is every day prepared for them by others. Yet till this is otherwise we are not civilized, and, if

¹ Authors of *An Introduction to Entomology*, London, 1815-1826 (4 vols.).

gentlemen and ladies, are not true men and women. This certainly suggests what change is to be made. It may be vain to ask why the imagination will not be reconciled to flesh and fat. I am satisfied that it is not. Is it not a reproach that man is a carnivorous animal? True, he can and does live, in a great measure, by preying on other animals; but this is a miserable way,—as any one who will go to snaring rabbits, or slaughtering lambs, may learn,—and he will be regarded as a benefactor of his race who shall teach man to confine himself to a more innocent and wholesome diet. Whatever my own practice may be, I have no doubt that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other when they came in contact with the more civilized.

If one listens to the faintest but constant suggestions of his genius, which are certainly true, he sees not to what extremes, or even insanity, it may lead him; and yet that way, as he grows more resolute and faithful, his road lies. The faintest assured objection which one healthy man feels will at length prevail over the arguments and customs of mankind. No man ever followed his genius till it misled him. Though the result were bodily weakness, yet perhaps no one can say that the consequences were to be regretted, for these were a life in conformity to higher principles. If the day and the night are such that you greet them with joy, and life emits a fragrance like flowers and sweet-scented herbs, is more elastic, more starry, more immortal,—that is your success. All nature is your congratulation, and you have cause momentarily to bless yourself. The greatest gains and values are farthest from being appreciated. We easily come to doubt if they exist. We soon forget them. They are the highest reality. Perhaps the facts most astounding and most real are never communicated by man to man. The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. It is a little star-dust caught, a segment of the rainbow which I have clutched.

Yet, for my part, I was never unusually squeamish; I could sometimes eat a fried rat with a good relish, if it were necessary. I

am glad to have drunk water so long, for the same reason that I prefer the natural sky to an opium-eater's heaven. I would fain keep sober always; and there are infinite degrees of drunkenness. I believe that water is the only drink for a wise man; wine is not so noble a liquor; and think of dashing the hopes of a morning with a cup of warm coffee, or of an evening with a dish of tea! Ah, how low I fall when I am tempted by them! Even music may be intoxicating. Such apparently slight causes destroyed Greece and Rome, and will destroy England and America. Of all ebriosity, who does not prefer to be intoxicated by the air he breathes? I have found it to be the most serious objection to coarse labors long continued, that they compelled me to eat and drink coarsely also. But to tell the truth, I find myself at present somewhat less particular in these respects. I carry less religion to the table, ask no blessing; not because I am wiser than I was, but, I am obliged to confess, because, however much it is to be regretted, with years I have grown more coarse and indifferent. Perhaps these questions are entertained only in youth, as most believe of poetry. My practice is "nowhere," my opinion is here. Nevertheless I am far from regarding myself as one of those privileged ones to whom the Ved¹ refers when it says, that "he who has true faith in the Omnipresent Supreme Being may eat all that exists," that is, is not bound to inquire what is his food, or who prepares it; and even in their case it is to be observed, as a Hindoo commentator has remarked, that the Vedant limits this privilege to "the time of distress."

Who has not sometimes derived an inexpressible satisfaction from his food in which appetite had no share? I have been thrilled to think that I owed a mental perception to the commonly gross sense of taste, that I have been inspired through the palate, that some berries which I had eaten on a hillside had fed my genius. "The soul not being mistress of herself," says Thseng-tseu, "one looks, and one does not see; one listens, and one does not hear; one eats, and one does not know the savor of food." He who distinguishes the true savor of his food

¹ *I.e.*, Veda.

can never be a glutton; he who does not cannot be otherwise. A puritan may go to his brown-bread crust with as gross an appetite as ever an alderman to his turtle. Not that food which entereth into the mouth defileth a man, but the appetite with which it is eaten.¹ It is neither the quality nor the quantity, but the devotion to sensual savors; when that which is eaten is not a viand to sustain our animal, or inspire our spiritual life, but food for the worms that possess us. If the hunter has a taste for mud-turtles, muskrats, and other such savage tidbits, the fine lady indulges a taste for jelly made of a calf's foot, or for sardines from over the sea, and they are even. He goes to the mill-pond, she to her preserve-pot. The wonder is how they, how you and I, can live this slimy, beastly life, eating and drinking.

Our whole life is startlingly moral. There is never an instant's truce between virtue and vice. Goodness is the only investment that never fails. In the music of the harp which trembles round the world it is the insisting on this which thrills us. The harp is the traveling patterer for the Universe's Insurance Company, recommending its laws, and our little goodness is all the assessment that we pay. Though the youth at last grows indifferent, the laws of the universe are not indifferent, but are forever on the side of the most sensitive. Listen to every zephyr for some reproof, for it is surely there, and he is unfortunate who does not hear it. We cannot touch a string or move a stop but the charming moral transfixes us. Many an irksome noise, go a long way off, is heard as music, a proud, sweet satire on the meanness of our lives.

We are conscious of an animal in us, which awakens in proportion as our higher nature slumbers. It is reptile and sensual, and perhaps cannot be wholly expelled; like the worms which, even in life and health, occupy our bodies. Possibly we may withdraw from it, but never change its nature. I fear that it may enjoy a certain health of its own; that we may be well, yet not pure. The other day I picked up the lower jaw of a hog, with white and sound teeth and tusks, which suggested that there was an animal health and vigor distinct from the spiritual. This

creature succeeded by other means than temperance and purity. "That in which men differ from brute beasts," says Mencius,² "is a thing very inconsiderable; the common herd lose it very soon; superior men preserve it carefully." Who knows what sort of life would result if we had attained to purity? If I knew so wise a man as could teach me purity I would go to seek him forthwith. "A command over our passions, and over the external senses of the body, and good acts, are declared by the Ved to be indispensable in the mind's approximation to God." Yet the spirit can for the time pervade and control every member and function of the body, and transmute what in form is the grossest sensuality into purity and devotion. The generative energy, which, when we are loose, dissipates and makes us unclean, when we are continent invigorates and inspires us. Chastity is the flowering of man; and what are called Genius, Heroism, Holiness, and the like, are but various fruits which succeed it. Man flows at once to God when the channel of purity is open. By turns our purity inspires and our impurity casts us down. He is blessed who is assured that the animal is dying out in him day by day, and the divine being established. Perhaps there is none but has cause for shame on account of the inferior and brutish nature to which he is allied. I fear that we are such gods or demigods only as fauns and satyrs, the divine allied to beasts, the creatures of appetite, and that, to some extent, our very life is our disgrace.—

How happy's he who hath due place assigned
To his beasts and disafforested his mind!

Can use his horse, goat, wolf, and ev'ry beast,
And is not ass himself to all the rest!
Else man not only is the herd of swine,
But he's those devils too which did incline
Them to a headlong rage, and made them worse.³

All sensuality is one, though it takes many forms; all purity is one. It is the same whether a man eat, or drink, or cohabit, or sleep sensually. They are but one appetite, and we only need to see a person do any one

² *I.e.*, Meng-Tse, teacher of Confucianism, flourished about 300 B.C.

³ Donne, *Letter to Sir Edward Herbert*, ll. 9-10, 13-17.

¹ Cf. St. Matthew, xv, 11.

of these things to know how great a sensualist he is. The impure can neither stand nor sit with purity. When the reptile is attacked at one mouth of his burrow, he shows himself at another. If you would be chaste, you must be temperate. What is chastity? How shall a man know if he is chaste? He shall not know it. We have heard of this virtue, but we know not what it is. We speak conformably to the rumor which we have heard. From exertion come wisdom and purity; from sloth ignorance and sensuality. In the student sensuality is a sluggish habit of mind. An unclean person is universally a slothful one, one who sits by a stove, whom the sun shines on prostrate, who reposes without being fatigued. If you would avoid uncleanness, and all the sins, work earnestly, though it be at cleaning a stable. Nature is hard to be overcome, but she must be overcome. What avails it that you are Christian, if you are not purer than the heathen, if you deny yourself no more, if you are not more religious? I know of many systems of religion esteemed heathenish whose precepts fill the reader with shame, and provoke him to new endeavors, though it be to the performance of rites merely.

I hesitate to say these things, but it is not because of the subject,—I care not how obscene my *words* are,—but because I cannot speak of them without betraying my impurity. We discourse freely without shame of one form of sensuality, and are silent about another. We are so degraded that we cannot speak simply of the necessary functions of human nature. In earlier ages, in some countries, every function was reverently spoken of and regulated by law. Nothing was too trivial for the Hindoo law-giver, however offensive it may be to modern taste. He teaches how to eat, drink, cohabit, void excrement and urine, and the like, elevating what is mean, and does not falsely excuse himself by calling these things trifles.

Every man is the builder of a temple, called his body, to the god he worships, after a style purely his own, nor can he get off by hammering marble instead. We are all sculptors and painters, and our material is our own flesh and blood and bones. Any nobleness begins at once to refine a man's features, any meanness or sensuality to imbrute them.

John Farmer sat at his door one September evening, after a hard day's work, his mind still running on his labor more or less. Having bathed, he sat down to re-create his intellectual man. It was a rather cool evening, and some of his neighbors were apprehending a frost. He had not attended to the train of his thoughts long when he heard some one playing on a flute, and that sound harmonized with his mood. Still he thought of his work; but the burden of his thought was, that though this kept running in his head, and he found himself planning and contriving it against his will, yet it concerned him very little. It was no more than the scurf of his skin, which was constantly shuffled off. But the notes of the flute came home to his ears out of a different sphere from that he worked in, and suggested work for certain faculties which slumbered in him. They gently did away with the street, and the village, and the state in which he lived. A voice said to him,—Why do you stay here and live this mean moiling life, when a glorious existence is possible for you? Those same stars twinkle over other fields than these.—But how to come out of this condition and actually migrate thither? All that he could think of was to practice some new austerity, to let his mind descend into his body and redeem it, and treat himself with ever increasing respect.

XII. BRUTE NEIGHBORS

SOMETIMES I had a companion¹ in my fishing, who came through the village to my house from the other side of the town, and the catching of the dinner was as much a social exercise as the eating of it.

Hermit. I wonder what the world is doing now. I have not heard so much as a locust over the sweet-fern these three hours. The pigeons are all asleep upon their roosts,—no flutter from them. Was that a farmer's noon horn which sounded from beyond the woods just now? The hands are coming in to boiled salt beef and cider and Indian bread. Why will men worry themselves so? He that does not eat need not work. I wonder how much they have reaped. Who would live there where a body can never

¹ William Ellery Channing.

think for the barking of Bose?¹ And oh, the housekeeping! to keep bright the devil's door-knobs, and scour his tubs this bright day! Better not keep a house. Say, some hollow tree; and then for morning calls and dinner-parties! Only a woodpecker tapping. Oh, they swarm; the sun is too warm there; they are born too far into life for me. I have water from the spring, and a loaf of brown bread on the shelf.—Hark! I hear a rustling of the leaves. Is it some ill-fed village hound yielding to the instinct of the chase? or the lost pig which is said to be in these woods, whose tracks I saw after the rain? It comes on apace; my sumacs and sweetbriars tremble.—Eh, Mr. Poet, is it you? How do you like the world to-day?

Poet. See those clouds; how they hang! That's the greatest thing I have seen to-day. There's nothing like it in old paintings, nothing like it in foreign lands,—unless when we were off the coast of Spain. That's a true Mediterranean sky. I thought, as I have my living to get, and have not eaten to-day, that I might go a-fishing. That's the true industry for poets. It is the only trade I have learned. Come, let's along.

Hermit. I cannot resist. My brown bread will soon be gone. I will go with you gladly soon, but I am just concluding a serious meditation. I think that I am near the end of it. Leave me alone, then, for a while. But that we may not be delayed, you shall be digging the bait meanwhile. Angleworms are rarely to be met with in these parts, where the soil was never fattened with manure; the race is nearly extinct. The sport of digging the bait is nearly equal to that of catching the fish, when one's appetite is not too keen; and this you may have all to yourself to-day. I would advise you to set in the spade down yonder among the ground-nuts, where you see the johnswort waying. I think that I may warrant you one worm to every three sods you turn up, if you look well in among the roots of the grass, as if you were weeding. Or, if you choose to go farther, it will not be unwise, for I have found the increase of fair bait to be very nearly as the squares of the distances.

Hermit alone. Let me see; where was I? Methinks I was nearly in this frame of mind;

the world lay about at this angle. Shall I go to heaven or a-fishing? If I should soon bring this meditation to an end, would another so sweet occasion be likely to offer? I was as near being resolved into the essence of things as ever I was in my life. I fear my thoughts will not come back to me. If it would do any good, I would whistle for them. When they make us an offer, is it wise to say, We will think of it? My thoughts have left no track, and I cannot find the path again. What was it that I was thinking of? It was a very hazy day. I will just try these three sentences of Confut-see;² they may fetch that state about again. I know not whether it was the dumps or a budding ecstasy. Mem. There never is but one opportunity of a kind.

Poet. How now, Hermit, is it too soon? I have got just thirteen whole ones, beside several which are imperfect or undersized; but they will do for the smaller fry; they do not cover up the hook so much. Those village worms are quite too large; a shiner may make a meal off one without finding the skewer.

Hermit. Well, then, let's be off. Shall we to the Concord? There's good sport there if the water be not too high.

Why do precisely these objects which we behold make a world? Why has man just these species of animals for his neighbors; as if nothing but a mouse could have filled this crevice? I suspect that Pilpay and Co.³ have put animals to their best use, for they are all beasts of burden, in a sense, made to carry some portion of our thoughts.

The mice which haunted my house were not the common ones, which are said to have been introduced into the country, but a wild native kind not found in the village. I sent one to a distinguished naturalist, and it interested him much. When I was building, one of these had its nest underneath the house, and before I had laid the second floor, and swept out the shavings, would come out regularly at lunch time and pick up the crumbs at my feet. It probably had never seen a man before; and it soon became quite familiar, and would run over my shoes and up my clothes. It could readily ascend the

² *I.e.*, Confucius.

³ *I.e.*, the makers of fables. (Pilpay is now usually rendered as Bidpai.)

¹ *I.e.*, a dog.

sides of the room by short impulses, like a squirrel, which it resembled in its motions. At length, as I leaned with my elbow on the bench one day, it ran up my clothes, and along my sleeve, and round and round the paper which held my dinner, while I kept the latter close, and dodged and played at bopeep with it; and when at last I held still a piece of cheese between my thumb and finger, it came and nibbled it, sitting in my hand, and afterward cleaned its face and paws, like a fly, and walked away.

A phoebe soon built in my shed, and a robin for protection in a pine which grew against the house. In June the partridge (*Tetrao umbellus*), which is so shy a bird, led her brood past my windows, from the woods in the rear to the front of my house, clucking and calling to them like a hen, and in all her behavior proving herself the hen of the woods. The young suddenly disperse on your approach, at a signal from the mother, as if a whirlwind had swept them away, and they so exactly resemble the dried leaves and twigs that many a traveler has placed his foot in the midst of a brood, and heard the whir of the old bird as she flew off, and her anxious calls and mewing, or seen her trail her wings to attract his attention, without suspecting their neighborhood. The parent will sometimes roll and spin round before you in such a dishabille, that you cannot, for a few moments, detect what kind of creature it is. The young squat still and flat, often running their heads under a leaf, and mind only their mother's directions given from a distance, nor will your approach make them run again and betray themselves. You may even tread on them, or have your eyes on them for a minute, without discovering them. I have held them in my open hand at such a time, and still their only care, obedient to their mother and their instinct, was to squat there without fear or trembling. So perfect is this instinct, that once, when I had laid them on the leaves again, and one accidentally fell on its side, it was found with the rest in exactly the same position ten minutes afterward. They are not callow like the young of most birds, but more perfectly developed and precocious even than chickens. The remarkably adult yet innocent expression of their open and serene eyes is very memorable. All intelligence seems

reflected in them. They suggest not merely the purity of infancy, but a wisdom clarified by experience. Such an eye was not born when the bird was, but is coeval with the sky it reflects. The woods do not yield another such a gem. The traveler does not often look into such a limpid well. The ignorant or reckless sportsman often shoots the parent at such a time, and leaves these innocents to fall a prey to some prowling beast or bird, or gradually mingle with the decaying leaves which they so much resemble. It is said that when hatched by a hen they will directly disperse on some alarm, and so are lost, for they never hear the mother's call which gathers them again. These were my hens and chickens.

It is remarkable how many creatures live wild and free though secret in the woods, and still sustain themselves in the neighborhood of towns, suspected by hunters only. How retired the otter manages to live here! He grows to be four feet long, as big as a small boy, perhaps without any human being getting a glimpse of him. I formerly saw the raccoon in the woods behind where my house is built, and probably still heard their whinnying at night. Commonly I rested an hour or two in the shade at noon, after planting, and ate my lunch, and read a little by a spring which was the source of a swamp and of a brook, oozing from under Brister's Hill, half a mile from my field. The approach to this was through a succession of descending grassy hollows, full of young pitch pines, into a larger wood about the swamp. There, in a very secluded and shaded spot, under a spreading white pine, there was yet a clean, firm sward to sit on. I had dug out the spring and made a well of clear gray water, where I could dip up a pailful without roiling it, and thither I went for this purpose almost every day in midsummer, when the pond was warmest. Thither, too, the woodcock led her brood, to probe the mud for worms, flying but a foot above them down the bank, while they ran in a troop beneath; but at last, spying me, she would leave her young and circle round and round me, nearer and nearer till within four or five feet, pretending broken wings and legs, to attract my attention, and get off her young, who would already have taken up their march, with faint, wiry peep, single file through the

swamp, as she directed. Or I heard the peep of the young when I could not see the parent bird. There too the turtle doves sat over the spring, or fluttered from bough to bough of the soft white pines over my head; or the red squirrel, coursing down the nearest bough, was particularly familiar and inquisitive. You only need sit still long enough in some attractive spot in the woods that all its inhabitants may exhibit themselves to you by turns.

I was witness to events of a less peaceful character. One day when I went out to my wood-pile, or rather my pile of stumps, I observed two large ants, the one red, the other much larger, nearly half an inch long, and black, fiercely contending with one another. Having once got hold they never let go, but struggled and wrestled and rolled on the chips incessantly. Looking farther, I was surprised to find that the chips were covered with such combatants, that it was not a *duellum*, but a *bellum*, a war between two races of ants, the red always pitted against the black, and frequently two red ones to one black. The legions of these Myrmidons covered all the hills and vales in my wood-yard, and the ground was already strewn with the dead and dying, both red and black. It was the only battle which I have ever witnessed, the only battle-field I ever trod while the battle was raging; internecine war; the red republicans on the one hand, and the black imperialists on the other. On every side they were engaged in deadly combat, yet without any noise that I could hear, and human soldiers never fought so resolutely. I watched a couple that were fast locked in each other's embraces, in a little sunny valley amid the chips, now at noonday prepared to fight till the sun went down, or life went out. The smaller red champion had fastened himself like a vice to his adversary's front, and through all the tumblings on that field never for an instant ceased to gnaw at one of his feelers near the root, having already caused the other to go by the board; while the stronger black one dashed him from side to side, and, as I saw on looking nearer, had already divested him of several of his members. They fought with more pertinacity than bulldogs. Neither manifested the least disposition to retreat. It was evident that their battle-cry was

"Conquer or die." In the meanwhile there came along a single red ant on the hillside of this valley, evidently full of excitement, who either had dispatched his foe, or had not yet taken part in the battle; probably the latter, for he had lost none of his limbs; whose mother had charged him to return with his shield or upon it. Or perchance he was some Achilles, who had nourished his wrath apart, and had now come to avenge or rescue his Patroclus. He saw this unequal combat from afar,—for the blacks were nearly twice the size of the red,—he drew near with rapid pace till he stood on his guard within half an inch of the combatants; then, watching his opportunity, he sprang upon the black warrior, and commenced his operations near the root of his right fore leg, leaving the foe to select among his own members; and so there were three united for life, as if a new kind of attraction had been invented which put all other locks and cements to shame. I should not have wondered by this time to find that they had their respective musical bands stationed on some eminent chip, and playing their national airs the while, to excite the slow and cheer the dying combatants. I was myself excited somewhat even as if they had been men. The more you think of it, the less the difference. And certainly there is not the fight recorded in Concord history, at least, if in the history of America, that will bear a moment's comparison with this, whether for the numbers engaged in it, or for the patriotism and heroism displayed. For numbers and for carnage it was an Austerlitz or Dresden. Concord Fight! Two killed on the patriots' side, and Luther Blanchard wounded! Why here every ant was a Butterick,—"Fire! for God's sake fire!"—and thousands shared the fate of Davis and Hosmer. There was not one hireling there. I have no doubt that it was a principle they fought for, as much as our ancestors, and not to avoid a three-penny tax on their tea; and the results of this battle will be as important and memorable to those whom it concerns as those of the battle of Bunker Hill, at least.

I took up the chip on which the three I have particularly described were struggling, carried it into my house, and placed it under a tumbler on my window-sill, in order to see

the issue. Holding a microscope to the first-mentioned red ant, I saw that, though he was assiduously gnawing at the near fore leg of his enemy, having severed his remaining feeler, his own breast was all torn away, exposing what vitals he had there to the jaws of the black warrior, whose breastplate was apparently too thick for him to pierce; and the dark carbuncles of the sufferer's eyes shone with ferocity such as war only could excite. They struggled half an hour longer under the tumbler, and when I looked again the black soldier had severed the heads of his foes from their bodies, and the still living heads were hanging on either side of him like ghastly trophies at his saddle-bow, still apparently as firmly fastened as ever, and he was endeavoring with feeble struggles, being without feelers and with only the remnant of a leg, and I know not how many other wounds, to divest himself of them; which at length, after half an hour more, he accomplished. I raised the glass, and he went off over the window-sill in that crippled state. Whether he finally survived that combat, and spent the remainder of his days in some Hôtel des Invalides, I do not know; but I thought that his industry would not be worth much thereafter. I never learned which party was victorious, nor the cause of the war; but I felt for the rest of that day as if I had had my feelings excited and harrowed by witnessing the struggle, the ferocity and carnage, of a human battle before my door.

Kirby and Spence tell us that the battles of ants have long been celebrated and the date of them recorded, though they say that Huber¹ is the only modern author who appears to have witnessed them. "Æneas Sylvius," say they, "after giving a very circumstantial account of one contested with great obstinacy by a great and small species on the trunk of a pear tree," adds that "'this action was fought in the pontificate of Eugenius the Fourth, in the presence of Nicholas Pistoriensis, an eminent lawyer, who related the whole history of the battle with the greatest fidelity.' A similar engagement between great and small ants is recorded by Olaus Magnus, in which the small ones, being victorious, are said to have buried the bodies of their own soldiers, but

left those of their giant enemies a prey to the birds. This event happened previous to the expulsion of the tyrant Christiern the Second from Sweden." The battle which I witnessed took place in the Presidency of Polk, five years before the passage of Webster's Fugitive-Slave Bill.

Many a village Bose, fit only to course a mud-turtle in a victualing cellar, sported his heavy quarters in the woods, without the knowledge of his master, and ineffectually smelled at old fox burrows and woodchucks' holes; led perchance by some slight cur which nimbly threaded the wood, and might still inspire a natural terror in its denizens;—now far behind his guide, barking like a canine bull toward some small squirrel which had treed itself for scrutiny, then, cantering off, bending the bushes with his weight, imagining that he is on the track of some stray member of the jerbilla family.² Once I was surprised to see a cat walking along the stony shore of the pond, for they rarely wander so far from home. The surprise was mutual. Nevertheless the most domestic cat, which has lain on a rug all her days, appears quite at home in the woods, and, by her sly and stealthy behavior, proves herself more native there than the regular inhabitants. Once, when berrying, I met with a cat with young kittens in the woods, quite wild, and they all, like their mother, had their backs up and were fiercely spitting at me. A few years before I lived in the woods there was what was called a "winged cat" in one of the farmhouses in Lincoln nearest the pond, Mr. Gilian Baker's. When I called to see her in June, 1842, she was gone a-hunting in the woods, as was her wont (I am not sure whether it was a male or female, and so use the more common pronoun), but her mistress told me that she came into the neighborhood a little more than a year before, in April, and was finally taken into their house; that she was of a dark brownish-gray color, with a white spot on her throat, and white feet, and had a large bushy tail like a fox; that in the winter the fur grew thick and flatted out along her sides, forming strips ten or twelve inches long by two and a half wide, and under her chin like a muff, the upper side loose, the under matted like

¹ Swiss naturalist (1750-1831).

² *I.e.*, mouse family.

felt, and in the spring these appendages dropped off. They gave me a pair of her "wings," which I keep still. There is no appearance of a membrane about them. Some thought it was part flying squirrel or some other wild animal, which is not impossible, for, according to naturalists, prolific hybrids have been produced by the union of the marten and domestic cat. This would have been the right kind of cat for me to keep, if I had kept any; for why should not a poet's cat be winged as well as his horse?

In the fall the loon (*Colymbus glacialis*) came, as usual, to molt and bathe in the pond, making the woods ring with his wild laughter before I had risen. At rumor of his arrival all the Mill-dam sportsmen are on the alert, in gigs and on foot, two by two and three by three, with patent rifles and conical balls and spy-glasses. They come rustling through the woods like autumn leaves, at least ten men to one loon. Some station themselves on this side of the pond, some on that, for the poor bird cannot be omnipresent; if he dive here he must come up there. But now the kind October wind rises, rustling the leaves and rippling the surface of the water, so that no loon can be heard or seen, though his foes sweep the pond with spy-glasses, and make the woods resound with their discharges. The waves generously rise and dash angrily, taking sides with all water-fowl, and our sportsmen must beat a retreat to town and shop and unfinished jobs. But they were too often successful. When I went to get a pail of water early in the morning I frequently saw this stately bird sailing out of my cove within a few rods. If I endeavored to overtake him in a boat, in order to see how he would maneuver, he would dive and be completely lost, so that I did not discover him again, sometimes, till the latter part of the day. But I was more than a match for him on the surface. He commonly went off in a rain.

As I was paddling along the north shore one very calm October afternoon, for such days especially they settle on to the lakes, like the milkweed down, having looked in vain over the pond for a loon, suddenly one, sailing out from the shore toward the middle a few rods in front of me, set up his wild

laugh and betrayed himself. I pursued with a paddle and he dived, but when he came up I was nearer than before. He dived again, but I miscalculated the direction he would take, and we were fifty rods apart when he came to the surface this time, for I had helped to widen the interval; and again he laughed long and loud, and with more reason than before. He maneuvered so cunningly that I could not get within half a dozen rods of him. Each time, when he came to the surface, turning his head this way and that, he coolly surveyed the water and the land, and apparently chose his course so that he might come up where there was the widest expanse of water and at the greatest distance from the boat. It was surprising how quickly he made up his mind and put his resolve into execution. He led me at once to the widest part of the pond, and could not be driven from it. While he was thinking one thing in his brain, I was endeavoring to divine his thought in mine. It was a pretty game, played on the smooth surface of the pond, a man against a loon. Suddenly your adversary's checker disappears beneath the board, and the problem is to place yours nearest to where his will appear again. Sometimes he would come up unexpectedly on the opposite side of me, having apparently passed directly under the boat. So long-winded was he and so unweariable, that when he had swum farthest he would immediately plunge again, nevertheless; and then no wit could divine where in the deep pond, beneath the smooth surface, he might be speeding his way like a fish, for he had time and ability to visit the bottom of the pond in its deepest part. It is said that loons have been caught in the New York lakes eighty feet beneath the surface, with hooks set for trout,—though Walden is deeper than that. How surprised must the fishes be to see this ungainly visitor from another sphere speeding his way amid their schools! Yet he appeared to know his course as surely under water as on the surface, and swam much faster there. Once or twice I saw a ripple where he approached the surface, just put his head out to reconnoiter, and instantly dived again. I found that it was as well for me to rest on my oars and wait his reappearing as to endeavor to calculate where he would rise; for again and again, when I was

straining my eyes over the surface one way, I would suddenly be startled by his unearthly laugh behind me. But why, after displaying so much cunning, did he invariably betray himself the moment he came up by that loud laugh? Did not his white breast enough betray him? He was indeed a silly loon, I thought. I could commonly hear the splash of the water when he came up, and so also detected him. But after an hour he seemed as fresh as ever, dived as willingly, and swam yet farther than at first. It was surprising to see how serenely he sailed off with unruffled breast when he came to the surface, doing all the work with his webbed feet beneath. His usual note was this demoniac laughter, yet somewhat like that of a waterfowl; but occasionally, when he had balked me most successfully and come up a long way off, he uttered a long-drawn unearthly howl, probably more like that of a wolf than any bird; as when a beast puts his muzzle to the ground and deliberately howls. This was his looning,—perhaps the wildest sound that is ever heard here, making the woods ring far and wide. I concluded that he laughed in derision of my efforts, confident of his own resources. Though the sky was by this time overcast, the pond was so smooth that I could see where he broke the surface when I did not hear him. His white breast, the stillness of the air, and the smoothness of the water were all against him. At length, having come up fifty rods off, he uttered one of those prolonged howls, as if calling on the god of loons to aid him, and immediately there came a wind from the east and rippled the surface, and filled the whole air with misty rain, and I was impressed as if it were the prayer of the loon answered, and his god was angry with me; and so I left him disappearing far away on the tumultuous surface.

For hours, in fall days, I watched the ducks cunningly tack and veer and hold the middle of the pond, far from the sportsman; tricks which they will have less need to practice in Louisiana bayous. When compelled to rise they would sometimes circle round and round and over the pond at a considerable height, from which they could easily see to other ponds and the river, like black motes in the sky; and, when I thought they had gone off thither long since, they would settle

down by a slanting flight of a quarter of a mile on to a distant part which was left free; but what beside safety they got by sailing in the middle of Walden I do not know, unless they love its water for the same reason that I do.

LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE¹

AT a lyceum, not long since, I felt that the lecturer had chosen a theme too foreign to himself, and so failed to interest me as much as he might have done. He described things not in or near to his heart, but toward his extremities and superficialities. There was, in this sense, no truly central or centralizing thought in the lecture. I would have had him deal with his privatest experience, as the poet does. The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what *I thought*, and attended to my answer. I am surprised, as well as delighted, when this happens, it is such a rare use he would make of me, as if he were acquainted with the tool. Commonly, if men want anything of me, it is only to know how many acres I make of their land,—since I am a surveyor,—or, at most, what trivial news I have burdened myself with. They never will go to law for my meat; they prefer the shell. A man once came a considerable distance to ask me to lecture on Slavery; but on conversing with him, I found that he and his clique expected seven-eighths of the lecture to be theirs, and only one-eighth mine; so I declined. I take it for granted, when I am invited to lecture anywhere,—for I have had a little experience in that business,—that there is a desire to hear what *I think* on some subject, though I may be the greatest fool in the country,—and not that I should say pleasant things merely, or such as the audience will assent to;

¹ First published in *Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1863. Thoreau's posthumously published volumes may be mentioned here: *Excursions*, 1863; *The Maine Woods*, 1864; *Cape Cod*, 1864; *Letters to Various Persons* (collected and edited by Emerson), 1865; *A Yankee in Canada, with Anti-Slavery and Reform Papers*, 1866. Four volumes of selections from Thoreau's Journal were published 1881-1892, and in 1906 the complete Journal was printed in the "Manuscript" and "Walden" editions of Thoreau's *Collected Works*. *Life without Principle* has been reprinted in the volume entitled *Miscellanies* ("Riverside Edition" of Thoreau's writings).

and I resolve, accordingly, that I will give them a strong dose of myself. They have sent for me, and engaged to pay for me, and I am determined that they shall have me, though I bore them beyond all precedent.

So now I would say something similar to you, my readers. Since *you* are my readers, and I have not been much of a traveler, I will not talk about people a thousand miles off but come as near home as I can. As the time is short, I will leave out all the flattery, and retain all the criticism.

Let us consider the way in which we spend our lives.

This world is a place of business. What an infinite bustle! I am awaked almost every night by the panting of the locomotive. It interrupts my dreams. There is no sabbath. It would be glorious to see mankind at leisure for once. It is nothing but work, work, work. I cannot easily buy a blank-book to write thoughts in; they are commonly ruled for dollars and cents. An Irishman, seeing me making a minute in the fields, took it for granted that I was calculating my wages. If a man was tossed out of a window when an infant, and so made a cripple for life, or scared out of his wits by the Indians, it is regretted chiefly because he was thus incapacitated for—business! I think that there is nothing, not even crime, more opposed to poetry, to philosophy, ay, to life itself, than this incessant business.

There is a coarse and boisterous money-making fellow in the outskirts of our town, who is going to build a bank-wall under the hill along the edge of his meadow. The powers have put this into his head to keep him out of mischief, and he wishes me to spend three weeks digging there with him. The result will be that he will perhaps get some more money to hoard, and leave for his heirs to spend foolishly. If I do this, most will commend me as an industrious and hard-working man; but if I choose to devote myself to certain labors which yield more real profit, though but little money, they may be inclined to look on me as an idler. Nevertheless, as I do not need the police of meaningless labor to regulate me, and do not see anything absolutely praiseworthy in this fellow's undertaking any more than in many an enterprise of our own or foreign governments, however amusing it may be to him or them,

I prefer to finish my education at a different school.

If a man walk in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer; but if he spends his whole day as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making earth bald before her time, he is esteemed an industrious and enterprising citizen. As if a town had no interest in its forests but to cut them down!

Most men would feel insulted if it were proposed to employ them in throwing stones over a wall, and then in throwing them back, merely that they might earn their wages. But many are no more worthily employed now. For instance: just after sunrise, one summer morning, I noticed one of my neighbors walking beside his team, which was slowly drawing a heavy hewn stone swung under the axle, surrounded by an atmosphere of industry,—his day's work begun,—his brow commenced to sweat,—a reproach to all sluggards and idlers,—pausing abreast the shoulders of his oxen, and half turning round with a flourish of his merciful whip, while they gained their length on him. And I thought, Such is the labor which the American Congress exists to protect,—honest, manly toil,—honest as the day is long,—that makes his bread taste sweet, and keeps society sweet,—which all men respect and have consecrated; one of the sacred band, doing the needful but irksome drudgery. Indeed, I felt a slight reproach, because I observed this from a window, and was not abroad and stirring about a similar business. The day went by, and at evening I passed the yard of another neighbor, who keeps many servants, and spends much money foolishly, while he adds nothing to the common stock, and there I saw the stone of the morning lying beside a whimsical structure intended to adorn this Lord Timothy Dexter's¹ premises, and the dignity forthwith departed from the teamster's labor, in my eyes. In my opinion, the sun was made to light worthier toil than this. I may add that his employer has since

¹ Lord Timothy Dexter (1743-1806) of Newburyport, Massachusetts, became famous because of his eccentricities, not the least of which was his whimsical residence, whose grounds were adorned with some thirty or forty colossal wooden statues of famous men, including himself. Dexter, however, unlike the man whom Thoreau made his namesake, lived a prosperous life.

run off, in debt to a good part of the town, and, after passing through Chancery, has settled somewhere else, there to become once more a patron of the arts.

The ways by which you may get money almost without exception lead downward. To have done anything by which you earned money *merely* is to have been truly idle or worse. If the laborer gets no more than the wages which his employer pays him, he is cheated, he cheats himself. If you would get money as a writer or lecturer, you must be popular, which is to go down perpendicularly. Those services which the community will most readily pay for, it is most disagreeable to render. You are paid for being something less than a man. The State does not commonly reward a genius any more wisely. Even the poet-laureate would rather not have to celebrate the accidents of royalty. He must be bribed with a pipe of wine; and perhaps another poet is called away from his muse to gauge that very pipe. As for my own business, even that kind of surveying which I could do with most satisfaction my employers do not want. They would prefer that I should do my work coarsely and not too well, ay, not well enough. When I observe that there are different ways of surveying, my employer commonly asks which will give him the most land, not which is most correct. I once invented a rule for measuring cord-wood, and tried to introduce it in Boston; but the measurer there told me that the sellers did not wish to have their wood measured correctly,—that he was already too accurate for them, and therefore they commonly got their wood measured in Charlestown before crossing the bridge.

The aim of the laborer should be, not to get his living, to get "a good job," but to perform well a certain work; and, even in a pecuniary sense, it would be economy for a town to pay its laborers so well that they would not feel that they were working for low ends, as for a livelihood merely, but for scientific, or even moral ends. Do not hire a man who does your work for money, but him who does it for love of it.

It is remarkable that there are few men so well employed, so much to their minds, but that a little money or fame would commonly buy them off from their present pursuit. I see advertisements for *active* young men, as

if activity were the whole of a young man's capital. Yet I have been surprised when one has with confidence proposed to me, a grown man, to embark in some enterprise of his, as if I had absolutely nothing to do, my life having been a complete failure hitherto. What a doubtful compliment this to pay me! As if he had met me halfway across the ocean beating up against the wind, but bound nowhere, and proposed to me to go along with him! If I did, what do you think the underwriters would say? No, no! I am not without employment at this stage of the voyage. To tell the truth, I saw an advertisement for able-bodied seamen, when I was a boy, sauntering in my native port, and as soon as I came of age I embarked.

The community has no bribe that will tempt a wise man. You may raise money enough to tunnel a mountain, but you cannot raise money enough to hire a man who is minding *his own* business. An efficient and valuable man does what he can, whether the community pay him for it or not. The inefficient offer their inefficiency to the highest bidder, and are forever expecting to be put into office. One would suppose that they were rarely disappointed.

Perhaps I am more than usually jealous with respect to my freedom. I feel that my connection with and obligation to society are still very slight and transient. Those slight labors which afford me a livelihood, and by which it is allowed that I am to some extent serviceable to my contemporaries, are as yet commonly a pleasure to me, and I am not often reminded that they are a necessity. So far I am successful. But I foresee that if my wants should be much increased, the labor required to supply them would become a drudgery. If I should sell both my forenoons and afternoons to society, as most appear to do, I am sure that for me there would be nothing left worth living for. I trust that I shall never thus sell my birthright for a mess of pottage. I wish to suggest that a man may be very industrious, and yet not spend his time well. There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the greater part of his life getting his living. All great enterprises are self-supporting. The poet, for instance, must sustain his body by his poetry, as a steam planing-mill feeds its boilers with the shavings it makes. You must get your

living by loving. But as it is said of the merchants that ninety-seven in a hundred fail, so the life of men generally, tried by this standard, is a failure, and bankruptcy may be surely prophesied.

Merely to come into the world the heir of a fortune is not to be born, but to be still-born, rather. To be supported by the charity of friends, or a government-pension,—provided you continue to breathe,—by whatever fine synonyms you describe these relations, is to go into the almshouse. On Sundays the poor debtor goes to church to take an account of stock, and finds, of course, that his outgoes have been greater than his income. In the Catholic Church, especially, they go into chancery, make a clean confession, give up all, and think to start again. Thus men will lie on their backs, talking about the fall of man, and never make an effort to get up.

As for the comparative demand which men make on life, it is an important difference between two, that the one is satisfied with a level success, that his marks can all be hit by point-blank shots, but the other, however low and unsuccessful his life may be, constantly elevates his aim, though at a very slight angle to the horizon. I should much rather be the last man,—though, as the Orientals say, "Greatness doth not approach him who is forever looking down; and all those who are looking high are growing poor."

It is remarkable that there is little or nothing to be remembered written on the subject of getting a living; how to make getting a living not merely honest and honorable, but altogether inviting and glorious; for if *getting* a living is not so, then living is not. One would think, from looking at literature, that this question had never disturbed a solitary individual's musings. Is it that men are too much disgusted with their experience to speak of it? The lesson of value which money teaches, which the Author of the Universe has taken so much pains to teach us, we are inclined to skip altogether. As for the means of living, it is wonderful how indifferent men of all classes are about it, even reformers, so called,—whether they inherit, or earn, or steal it. I think that Society has done nothing for us in this respect, or at least has undone what she has done. Cold and hunger seem more friendly

to my nature than those methods which men have adopted and advise to ward them off.

The title *wise* is, for the most part, falsely applied. How can one be a wise man, if he does not know any better how to live than other men?—if he is only more cunning and intellectually subtle? Does Wisdom work in a treadmill? or does she teach how to succeed *by her example*? Is there any such thing as wisdom not applied to life? Is she merely the miller who grinds the finest logic? It is pertinent to ask if Plato got his *living* in a better way or more successfully than his contemporaries,—or did he succumb to the difficulties of life like other men? Did he seem to prevail over some of them merely by indifference, or by assuming grand airs? or find it easier to live, because his aunt remembered him in her will? The ways in which most men get their living, that is, live, are mere make-shifts, and a shirking of the real business of life,—chiefly because they do not know, but partly because they do not mean, any better.

The rush to California, for instance, and the attitude, not merely of merchants, but of philosophers and prophets, so called, in relation to it, reflect the greatest disgrace on mankind. That so many are ready to live by luck, and so get the means of commanding the labor of others less lucky, without contributing any value to society! And that is called enterprise! I know of no more startling development of the immorality of trade, and all the common modes of getting a living. The philosophy and poetry and religion of such a mankind are not worth the dust of a puff-ball. The hog that gets his living by rooting, stirring up the soil so, would be ashamed of such company. If I could command the wealth of all the worlds by lifting my finger, I would not pay *such* a price for it. Even Mahomet knew that God did not make this world in jest. It makes God to be a moneyed gentleman who scatters a handful of pennies in order to see mankind scramble for them. The world's raffle! A subsistence in the domains of Nature a thing to be raffled for! What a comment, what a satire, on our institutions! The conclusion will be that mankind will hang itself upon a tree. And have all the precepts in all the Bibles taught men only this? and is the last and most admirable invention of the human race only an

improved muck-rake? Is this the ground on which Orientals and Occidentals meet? Did God direct us so to get our living, digging where we never planted,—and He would, perchance, reward us with lumps of gold?

God gave the righteous man a certificate entitling him to food and raiment, but the unrighteous man found a facsimile of the same in God's coffers, and appropriated it, and obtained food and raiment like the former. It is one of the most extensive systems of counterfeiting that the world has seen. I did not know that mankind were suffering for want of gold. I have seen a little of it. I know that it is very malleable, but not so malleable as wit. A grain of gold will gild a great surface, but not so much as a grain of wisdom.

The gold-digger in the ravines of the mountains is as much a gambler as his fellow in the saloons of San Francisco. What difference does it make whether you shake dirt or shake dice? If you win, society is the loser. The gold-digger is the enemy of the honest laborer, whatever checks and compensations there may be. It is not enough to tell me that you worked hard to get your gold. So does the Devil work hard. The way of transgressors may be hard in many respects. The humblest observer who goes to the mines sees and says that gold-digging is of the character of a lottery; the gold thus obtained is not the same thing with the wages of honest toil. But, practically, he forgets what he has seen, for he has seen only the fact, not the principle, and goes into trade there, that is, buys a ticket in what commonly proves another lottery, where the fact is not so obvious.

After reading Howitt's account of the Australian gold-diggings one evening, I had in my mind's eye, all night, the numerous valleys, with their streams, all cut up with foul pits, from ten to one hundred feet deep, and half a dozen feet across, as close as they can be dug, and partly filled with water,—the locality to which men furiously rush to probe for their fortunes,—uncertain where they shall break ground,—not knowing but the gold is under their camp itself,—sometimes digging one hundred and sixty feet before they strike the vein, or then missing it by a foot,—turned into demons, and regardless of each others' rights, in their thirst for

riches,—whole valleys, for thirty miles, suddenly honeycombed by the pits of the miners, so that even hundreds are drowned in them,—standing in water, and covered with mud and clay, they work night and day, dying of exposure and disease. Having read this, and partly forgotten it, I was thinking, accidentally, of my own unsatisfactory life, doing as others do; and with that vision of the diggings still before me, I asked myself why *I* might not be washing some gold daily, though it were only the finest particles,—why *I* might not sink a shaft down to the gold within me, and work that mine. *There* is a Ballarat, a Bendigo for you,—what though it were a sulky-gully? At any rate, I might pursue some path, however solitary and narrow and crooked, in which I could walk with love and reverence. Wherever a man separates from the multitude, and goes his own way in this mood, there indeed is a fork in the road, though ordinary travelers may see only a gap in the paling. His solitary path across-lots will turn out the *higher* way of the two.

Men rush to California and Australia as if the true gold were to be found in that direction; but that is to go to the very opposite extreme to where it lies. They go prospecting farther and farther away from the true lead, and are most unfortunate when they think themselves most successful. Is not our *native* soil auriferous? Does not a stream from the golden mountains flow through our native valley? and has not this for more than geologic ages been bringing down the shining particles and forming the nuggets for us? Yet, strange to tell, if a digger steal away, prospecting for this true gold, into the unexplored solitudes around us, there is no danger that any will dog his steps, and endeavor to supplant him. He may claim and undermine the whole valley even, both the cultivated and the uncultivated portions, his whole life long in peace, for no one will ever dispute his claim. They will not mind his cradles or his toms. He is not confined to a claim twelve feet square, as at Ballarat, but may mine anywhere, and wash the whole wide world in his tom.

Howitt says of the man who found the great nugget which weighed twenty-eight pounds, at the Bendigo diggings in Australia: "He soon began to drink; got a horse, and

rode all about, generally at full gallop, and, when he met people, called out to inquire if they knew who he was, and then kindly informed them that he was 'the bloody wretch that had found the nugget.' At last he rode full speed against a tree, and nearly knocked his brains out." I think, however, there was no danger of that, for he had already knocked his brains out against the nugget. Howitt adds, "He is a hopelessly ruined man." But he is a type of the class. They are all fast men. Hear some of the names of the places where they dig: "Jackass Flat,"—"Sheep's-Head Gully,"—"Murderer's Bar," *etc.* Is there no satire in these names? Let them carry their ill-gotten wealth where they will, I am thinking it will still be "Jackass Flat," if not "Murderer's Bar," where they live.

The last resource of our energy has been the robbing of graveyards on the Isthmus of Darien, an enterprise which appears to be but in its infancy; for, according to late accounts, an act has passed its second reading in the legislature of New Granada, regulating this kind of mining; and a correspondent of the *Tribune* writes: "In the dry season, when the weather will permit of the country being properly prospected, no doubt other rich *guacas* [that is, graveyards] will be found." To emigrants he says: "Do not come before December; take the Isthmus route in preference to the Boca del Toro one; bring no useless baggage, and do not cumber yourself with a tent; but a good pair of blankets will be necessary; a pick, shovel, and ax of good material will be almost all that is required": advice which might have been taken from the *Burker's Guide*. And he concludes with this line in italics and small capitals: "*If you are doing well at home, STAY THERE,*" which may fairly be interpreted to mean, "If you are getting a good living by robbing graveyards at home, stay there."

But why go to California for a text? She is the child of New England, bred at her own school and church.

It is remarkable that among all the preachers there are so few moral teachers. The prophets are employed in excusing the ways of men. Most reverend seniors, the *illuminati* of the age, tell me, with a gracious, reminiscent smile, betwixt an aspiration and a shudder, not to be too tender about these things,—to lump all that, that is, make a

lump of gold of it. The highest advice I have heard on these subjects was groveling. The burden of it was,—It is not worth your while to undertake to reform the world in this particular. Do not ask how your bread is buttered; it will make you sick, if you do,—and the like. A man had better starve at once than lose his innocence in the process of getting his bread. If within the sophisticated man there is not an unsophisticated one, then he is but one of the Devil's angels. As we grow old, we live more coarsely, we relax a little in our disciplines, and, to some extent, cease to obey our finest instincts. But we should be fastidious to the extreme of sanity, disregarding the gibes of those who are more unfortunate than ourselves.

In our science and philosophy, even, there is commonly no true and absolute account of things. The spirit of sect and bigotry has planted its hoof amid the stars. You have only to discuss the problem, whether the stars are inhabited or not, in order to discover it. Why must we daub the heavens as well as the earth? It was an unfortunate discovery that Dr. Kane was a Mason, and that Sir John Franklin was another.¹ But it was a more cruel suggestion that possibly that was the reason why the former went in search of the latter. There is not a popular magazine in this country that would dare to print a child's thought on important subjects without comment. It must be submitted to the D.D.'s. I would it were the chickadee-dees.

You come from attending the funeral of mankind to attend to a natural phenomenon. A little thought is sexton to all the world.

I hardly know an *intellectual* man, even, who is so broad and truly liberal that you can think aloud in his society. Most with whom you endeavor to talk soon come to a stand against some institution in which they appear to hold stock,—that is, some particular, not universal, way of viewing things. They will continually thrust their own low roof, with

¹ Franklin was an English Arctic explorer (1786-1847); sailed on his last expedition, in search of the northwest passage, in May, 1845. Thirty-nine relief expeditions were sent out in search of him between 1847 and 1857. E. K. Kane (1820-1857), an American physician, was a member of one of these expeditions (1850-1851) and commander of another (1853-1855).

its narrow skylight, between you and the sky, when it is the unobstructed heavens you would view. Get out of the way with your cobwebs; wash your windows, I say! In some lyceums they tell me that they have voted to exclude the subject of religion. But how do I know what their religion is, and when I am near to or far from it? I have walked into such an arena and done my best to make a clean breast of what religion I have experienced, and the audience never suspected what I was about. The lecture was as harmless as moonshine to them. Whereas, if I had read to them the biography of the greatest scamps in history, they might have thought that I had written the lives of the deacons of their church. Ordinarily, the inquiry is, Where did you come from? or, Where are you going? That was a more pertinent question which I overheard one of my auditors put to another once,—“What does he lecture for?” It made me quake in my shoes.

To speak impartially, the best men that I know are not serene, a world in themselves. For the most part, they dwell in forms, and flatter and study effect only more finely than the rest. We select granite for the underpinning of our houses and barns; we build fences of stone; but we do not ourselves rest on an underpinning of granitic truth, the lowest primitive rock. Our sills are rotten. What stuff is the man made of who is not coexistent in our thought with the purest and subtlest truth? I often accuse my finest acquaintances of an immense frivolity; for, while there are manners and compliments we do not meet, we do not teach one another the lessons of honesty and sincerity that the brutes do, or of steadiness and solidity that the rocks do. The fault is commonly mutual, however; for we do not habitually demand any more of each other.

That excitement about Kossuth,¹ consider how characteristic, but superficial, it was!—only another kind of politics or dancing. Men were making speeches to him all over the country, but each expressed only the thought, or the want of thought, of the multitude. No man stood on truth. They were merely banded together, as usual one leaning

on another, and all together on nothing; as the Hindoos made the world rest on an elephant, the elephant on a tortoise, and the tortoise on a serpent, and had nothing to put under the serpent. For all fruit of that stir we have the Kossuth hat.

Just so hollow and ineffectual, for the most part, is our ordinary conversation. Surface meets surface. When our life ceases to be inward and private, conversation degenerates into mere gossip. We rarely meet a man who can tell us any news which he has not read in a newspaper, or been told by his neighbor; and, for the most part, the only difference between us and our fellow is that he has seen the newspaper, or been out to tea, and we have not. In proportion as our inward life fails, we go more constantly and desperately to the post-office. You may depend on it, that the poor fellow who walks away with the greatest number of letters, proud of his extensive correspondence, has not heard from himself this long while.

I do not know but it is too much to read one newspaper a week. I have tried it recently, and for so long it seems to me that I have not dwelt in my native region. The sun, the clouds, the snow, the trees say not so much to me. You cannot serve two masters. It requires more than a day's devotion to know and to possess the wealth of a day.

We may well be ashamed to tell what things we have read or heard in our day. I do not know why my news should be so trivial,—considering what one's dreams and expectations are, why the developments should be so paltry. The news we hear, for the most part, is not news to our genius. It is the stalest repetition. You are often tempted to ask why such stress is laid on a particular experience which you have had,—that, after twenty-five years, you should meet Hobbins, Registrar of Deeds, again on the sidewalk. Have you not budged an inch, then? Such is the daily news. Its facts appear to float in the atmosphere, insignificant as the sporules of fungi, and impinge on some neglected *thallus*, or surface of our minds, which affords a basis for them, and hence a parasitic growth. We should wash ourselves clean of such news. Of what consequence, though our planet explode, if there is no character involved in the explo-

¹ Hungarian patriot (1802-1894), leader of Hungarian insurrection of 1848-1849. Lived in exile in Turkey, 1849-1851; visited United States, 1851-1852.

sion? In health we have not the least curiosity about such events. We do not live for idle amusement. I would not run round a corner to see the world blow up.

All summer, and far into the autumn, perchance, you unconsciously went by the newspapers and the news, and now you find it was because the morning and the evening were full of news to you. Your walks were full of incidents. You attended, not to the affairs of Europe, but to your own affairs in Massachusetts fields. If you chance to live and move and have your being in that thin stratum in which the events that make the news transpire,—thinner than the paper on which it is printed,—then these things will fill the world for you; but if you soar above or dive below that plane, you cannot remember nor be reminded of them. Really to see the sun rise or go down every day, so to relate ourselves to a universal fact, would preserve us sane forever. Nations! What are nations? Tartars, and Huns, and Chinamen! Like insects, they swarm. The historian strives in vain to make them memorable. It is for want of a man that there are so many men. It is individuals that populate the world. Any man thinking may say with the Spirit of Lodin,—

I look down from my height on nations,
And they become ashes before me;—
Calm is my dwelling in the clouds;
Pleasant are the great fields of my rest.¹

Pray, let us live without being drawn by dogs, Esquimaux-fashion, tearing over hill and dale, and biting each other's ears.

Not without a slight shudder at the danger, I often perceive how near I had come to admitting into my mind the details of some trivial affair,—the news of the street; and I am astonished to observe how willing men are to lumber their minds with such rubbish,—to permit idle rumors and incidents of the most insignificant kind to intrude on ground which should be sacred to thought. Shall the mind be a public arena, where the affairs of the street and the gossip of the tea-table chiefly are discussed? Or shall it be a quarter of heaven itself,—an hypæthral temple, consecrated to the service of the gods? I find

¹ From James Macpherson's Ossianic poem *Caricthura*. One of the Spirit of Loda's speeches in the debate with Fingal.

it so difficult to dispose of the few facts which to me are significant, that I hesitate to burden my attention with those which are insignificant, which only a divine mind could illustrate. Such is, for the most part, the news in newspapers and conversation. It is important to preserve the mind's chastity in this respect. Think of admitting the details of a single case of the criminal court into our thoughts, to stalk profanely through their very *sanctum sanctorum* for an hour, ay, for many hours! to make a very bar-room of the mind's inmost apartment, as if for so long the dust of the street had occupied us,—the very street itself, with all its travel, its bustle, and filth, had passed through our thoughts' shrine! Would it not be an intellectual and moral suicide? When I have been compelled to sit spectator and auditor in a courtroom for some hours, and have seen my neighbors, who were not compelled, stealing in from time to time, and tiptoeing about with washed hands and faces, it has appeared to my mind's eye, that, when they took off their hats, their ears suddenly expanded into vast hoppers for sound, between which even their narrow heads were crowded. Like the vanes of windmills, they caught the broad but shallow stream of sound, which, after a few titillating gyrations in their coggy brains, passed out the other side. I wondered if, when they got home, they were as careful to wash their ears as before their hands and faces. It has seemed to me, at such a time, that the auditors and the witnesses, the jury and the counsel, the judge and the criminal at the bar,—if I may presume him guilty before he is convicted,—were all equally criminal, and a thunderbolt might be expected to descend and consume them all together.

By all kinds of traps and signboards, threatening the extreme penalty of the divine law, exclude such trespassers from the only ground which can be sacred to you. It is so hard to forget what it is worse than useless to remember! If I am to be a thoroughfare, I prefer that it be of the mountain-brooks, the Parnassian streams, and not the town-sewers. There is inspiration, that gossip which comes to the ear of the attentive mind from the courts of heaven. There is the profane and stale revelation of the bar-room and the police court. The same ear is fitted to

receive both communications. Only the character of the hearer determines to which it shall be open, and to which closed. I believe that the mind can be permanently profaned by the habit of attending to trivial things, so that all our thoughts shall be tinged with triviality. Our very intellect shall be macadamized, as it were,—its foundation broken into fragments for the wheels of travel to roll over; and if you would know what will make the most durable pavement, surpassing rolled stones, spruce blocks, and asphaltum, you have only to look into some of our minds which have been subjected to this treatment so long.

If we have thus desecrated ourselves,—as who has not?—the remedy will be by wariness and devotion to reconsecrate ourselves, and make once more a fane of the mind. We should treat our minds, that is, ourselves, as innocent and ingenuous children, whose guardians we are, and be careful what objects and what subjects we thrust on their attention. Read not the Times. Read the Eternities. Conventionalities are at length as bad as impurities. Even the facts of science may dust the mind by their dryness, unless they are in a sense effaced each morning, or rather rendered fertile by the dews of fresh and living truth. Knowledge does not come to us by details, but in flashes of light from heaven. Yes, every thought that passes through the mind helps to wear and tear it, and to deepen the ruts, which, as in the streets of Pompeii, evince how much it has been used. How many things there are concerning which we might well deliberate whether we had better know them,—had better let their peddling-carts be driven, even at the slowest trot or walk, over that bridge of glorious span by which we trust to pass at last from the farthest brink of time to the nearest shore of eternity! Have we no culture, no refinement,—but skill only to live coarsely and serve the Devil?—to acquire a little worldly wealth, or fame, or liberty, and make a false show with it, as if we were all husk and shell, with no tender and living kernel to us? Shall our institutions be like those chestnut-burs which contain abortive nuts, perfect only to prick the fingers?

America is said to be the arena on which the battle of freedom is to be fought; but surely it cannot be freedom in a merely polit-

ical sense that is meant. Even if we grant that the American has freed himself from a political tyrant, he is still the slave of an economical and moral tyrant. Now that the republic—the *res-publica*—has been settled, it is time to look after the *res-privata*,—the private state,—to see, as the Roman senate charged its consuls, "*ne quid res-PRIVATA detrimenti caperet*," that the private state receive no detriment.

Do we call this the land of the free? What is it to be free from King George and continue the slaves of King Prejudice? What is it to be born free and not to live free? What is the value of any political freedom, but as a means to moral freedom? Is it a freedom to be slaves, or a freedom to be free, of which we boast? We are a nation of politicians, concerned about the outmost defenses only of freedom. It is our children's children who may perchance be really free. We tax ourselves unjustly. There is a part of us which is not represented. It is taxation without representation. We quarter troops, we quarter fools and cattle of all sorts upon ourselves. We quarter our gross bodies on our poor souls, till the former eat up all the latter's substance.

With respect to a true culture and manhood, we are essentially provincial still, not metropolitan,—mere Jonathans. We are provincial, because we do not find at home our standards; because we do not worship truth, but the reflection of truth; because we are warped and narrowed by an exclusive devotion to trade and commerce and manufactures and agriculture and the like, which are but means, and not the end.

So is the English Parliament provincial. Mere country bumpkins, they betray themselves, when any more important question arises for them to settle, the Irish question, for instance,—the English question why did I not say? Their natures are subdued to what they work in. Their "good breeding" respects only secondary objects. The finest manners in the world are awkwardness and fatuity when contrasted with a finer intelligence. They appear but as the fashions of past days,—mere courtliness, knee-buckles and small-clothes, out of date. It is the vice, but not the excellence of manners, that they are continually being deserted by the character; they are cast-off clothes or shells,

claiming the respect which belonged to the living creature. You are presented with the shells instead of the meat, and it is no excuse generally, that, in the case of some fishes, the shells are of more worth than the meat. The man who thrusts his manners upon me does as if he were to insist on introducing me to his cabinet of curiosities, when I wished to see himself. It was not in this sense that the poet Decker called Christ "the first true gentleman that ever breathed." I repeat that in this sense the most splendid court in Christendom is provincial, having authority to consult about Transalpine interests only, and not the affairs of Rome. A prætor or proconsul would suffice to settle the questions which absorb the attention of the English Parliament and the American Congress.

Government and legislation! these I thought were respectable professions. We have heard of heaven-born Numas, Lycurguses, and Solons, in the history of the world, whose *names* at least may stand for ideal legislators; but think of legislating to *regulate* the breeding of slaves, or the exportation of tobacco! What have divine legislators to do with the exportation or the importation of tobacco? what humane ones with the breeding of slaves? Suppose you were to submit the question to any son of God,—and has He no children in the nineteenth century? is it a family which is extinct?—in what condition would you get it again? What shall a State like Virginia say for itself at the last day, in which these have been the principal, the staple productions? What ground is there for patriotism in such a State? I derive my facts from statistical tables which the States themselves have published.

A commerce that whitens every sea in quest of nuts and raisins, and makes slaves of its sailors for this purpose! I saw, the other day, a vessel which had been wrecked, and many lives lost, and her cargo of rags, juniper-berries, and bitter almonds were strewn along the shore. It seemed hardly worth the while to tempt the dangers of the sea between Leghorn and New York for the sake of a cargo of juniper-berries and bitter almonds. America sending to the Old World for her bitters! Is not the sea-brine, is not shipwreck, bitter enough to make the cup of life go down here? Yet such, to a great ex-

tent, is our boasted commerce; and there are those who style themselves statesmen and philosophers who are so blind as to think that progress and civilization depend on precisely this kind of interchange and activity,—the activity of flies about a molasses-hogshead. Very well, observes one, if men were oysters. And very well, answer I, if men were mosquitoes.

Lieutenant Herndon, whom our Government sent to explore the Amazon, and, it is said, to extend the area of slavery, observed that there was wanting there "an industrious and active population, who know what the comforts of life are, and who have artificial wants to draw out the great resources of the country." But what are the "artificial wants" to be encouraged? Not the love of luxuries, like the tobacco and slaves of, I believe, his native Virginia, nor the ice and granite and other material wealth of our native New England; nor are "the great resources of a country" that fertility or barrenness of soil which produces these. The chief want, in every State that I have been into, was a high and earnest purpose in its inhabitants. This alone draws out "the great resources" of Nature, and at last taxes her beyond her resources; for man naturally dies out of her. When we want culture more than potatoes, and illumination more than sugar-plums, then the great resources of a world are taxed and drawn out, and the result, or staple production, is, not slaves, nor operatives, but men,—those rare fruits called heroes, saints, poets, philosophers, and redeemers.

In short, as a snow-drift is formed where there is a lull in the wind, so, one would say, where there is a lull of truth, an institution springs up. But the truth blows right on over it, nevertheless, and at length blows it down.

What is called politics is comparatively something so superficial and inhuman, that practically I have never fairly recognized that it concerns me at all. The newspapers, I perceive, devote some of their columns specially to politics or government without charge; and this, one would say, is all that saves it; but as I love literature and to some extent the truth also, I never read those columns at any rate. I do not wish to blunt my sense of right so much. I have not got to

answer for having read a single President's Message. A strange age of the world this, when empires, kingdoms, and republics come a-begging to a private man's door, and utter their complaints at his elbow! I cannot take up a newspaper but I find that some wretched government or other, hard pushed, and on its last legs, is interceding with me, the reader, to vote for it,—more importunate than an Italian beggar; and if I have a mind to look at its certificate, made, perchance, by some benevolent merchant's clerk, or the skipper that brought it over, for it cannot speak a word of English itself, I shall probably read of the eruption of some Vesuvius, or the overflowing of some Po, true or forged, which brought it into this condition. I do not hesitate, in such a case, to suggest work, or the almshouse; or why not keep its castle in silence, as I do commonly? The poor President, what with preserving his popularity and doing his duty, is completely bewildered. The newspapers are the ruling power. Any other government is reduced to a few marines at Fort Independence. If a man neglects to read the Daily Times, government will go down on its knees to him, for this is the only treason in these days.

Those things which now most engage the

attention of men, as politics and the daily routine, are, it is true, vital functions of human society, but should be unconsciously performed, like the corresponding functions of the physical body. They are *infra*-human, a kind of vegetation. I sometimes awake to a half-consciousness of them going on about me, as a man may become conscious of some of the processes of digestion in a morbid state, and so have the dyspepsia, as it is called. It is as if a thinker submitted himself to be rasped by the great gizzard of creation. Politics is, as it were, the gizzard of society, full of grit and gravel, and the two political parties are its two opposite halves,—sometimes split into quarters, it may be, which grind on each other. Not only individuals, but states, have thus a confirmed dyspepsia, which expresses itself, you can imagine, by what sort of eloquence. Thus our life is not altogether a forgetting, but also, alas! to a great extent, a remembering, of that which we should never have been conscious of, certainly not in our waking hours. Why should we not meet, not always as dyspeptics, to tell our bad dreams, but sometimes as *eupeptics*, to congratulate each other on the ever-glorious morning? I do not make an exorbitant demand, surely.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (1804-1864)

Hawthorne's earliest American ancestor was a Major William Hathorne (the "w" was later inserted in the name) who had come to New England with John Winthrop, had been a magistrate of Salem, and had persecuted the heretical Quakers. His son John Hathorne was a staunch Puritan like himself, and also a leader in the persecution of the Salem witches. Thereafter for more than a century the Hathornes, living in Salem, followed the sea. Hawthorne's father was a shipmaster who married a Miss Manning, of a New England family long established there, and Nathaniel was born at Salem on 4 July, 1804. His father died in 1808, leaving his wife and three children in poor circumstances. Nathaniel's boyhood and youth were passed chiefly in Salem, and of this period it need only be remarked that the boy was a reader and lover of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and, it is said, of *The Faerie Queene*. In the spring of 1821 he wrote from Salem to his mother, who was then in Maine: "I am quite reconciled to going to college, since I am to spend the vacations with you. Yet four years of the best part of my life is a great deal to throw away." A few months afterwards he entered Bowdoin College, from which he was duly graduated without special distinction at the end of four years. He later wrote: "I was an idle student, negligent of college rules and the Procrustean details of academic life, rather choosing to nurse my own fancies than to dig into Greek roots and be numbered among the learned Thebans." If he thus characteristically preserved his independence and detachment, the college years still gave him much, and, moreover, he went away with three lifelong friends, among his classmates, two of whom were to play important parts in the circumstances of his later life. They were Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Franklin Pierce, and Horatio Bridge. In the Preface to *The Snow-Image and Other Tales* (1852) Hawthorne says that if any one was responsible for his becoming an author, it was Bridge. He, while the two were undergraduates together, had the insight to perceive something of Hawthorne's capacities, and encouraged him to believe that he was destined to be a writer of fiction. Possibly, indeed, Hawthorne began to act on this belief before he left Bowdoin, for he may there have begun to write *Fanshawe*, his first published tale, printed in 1828. At all events, upon leaving Bowdoin Hawthorne deliberately set himself to make his way by writing, though this was probably not so much the courageous, or foolhardy, act of faith which it has been called, as it was the result of his not finding in any other definite and attractive opening. He returned to Salem, and lived for about twelve years in his mother's house, dreaming, reading widely, and writing tales. It must have been a very curious household. Hawthorne, his mother, and his two sisters, were all of them not only unsocial in their attitude towards others, but even towards each other. We are told that frequently Hawthorne's meals were brought and left at his locked door, and that sometimes days went by without his seeing his relatives. He was a shy, silent man, "fonder, on almost any occasion," as Henry James has said, "of being absent than of being present," and never disposed to think highly of his own abilities or achievements. Locked away from the actual world, he perhaps found, however, the readier entrance to the world of imagination. "I used to think," he has said of this period, "I could imagine all passions, all feelings, and states of the heart and mind." Later he concluded that he had been dwelling in a vacuous dream-world, among shadows, and that he had not really lived at all during those years of seclusion. He did not, however, regret them as wholly wasted; and it is, indeed, possible that they were a singularly good preparation for what he could best do. For they helped to confirm him in his detachment from the tyrannical world of sweating, money-making, conventional humanity, without which he could not have ranged, as he did, a free and questioning skeptic in the ideal world of moral values.

But Hawthorne's detachment from his contemporaries, even during these twelve years, was of course not complete. As was said, he was writing tales, and these he kept sending forth, in an attempt "to open an intercourse with the world." They were published in various periodicals, but always anonymously, so that whatever attention they attracted did not prevent him from remaining, as he declared, "the obscurest man of letters in America." And, too, he could earn in this way little or no money. Finally, in 1837, with Bridge's help, he found a publisher for *Twice-Told Tales*, and with the appearance of that volume came a measure of public recognition. Means of livelihood did not also come, however, and in 1839 he was glad to accept appointment—offered at the suggestion of his friend Bridge—as weigher and gauger in the Customs House at Boston. The work was hard, dirty, and disagreeable, but he endured it for two years, until a change in the national administration forced

his resignation. Then, in 1841, he joined the group of transcendentalists who were beginning to conduct their famous socialistic experiment at Brook Farm. It is easy to understand Hawthorne's sympathy—particularly after his period at the Customs House—with the aims of these idealists who were seeking to make "such industrial, social, and educational arrangements as would simplify economies, combine leisure for study with healthful and honest toil, avert unjust collisions of caste, equalize refinements, awaken generous affections, diffuse courtesy, and sweeten and sanctify life as a whole." But it is also easy to understand how Hawthorne, retiring, sensitive, loving to possess his own soul, requiring freedom for moral speculation, found the actual life of Brook Farm increasingly distasteful, so that after a year and a half he left the community, confirmed in his native individualism and the enemy of self-confident social reformers. When he went to the Farm he was hopeful and ready to be pleased. He wrote in great good humor about Margaret Fuller's "transcendental heifer": "She is very fractious . . . and apt to kick over the milk-pail." She "hooks the other cows, and has made herself ruler of the herd, and behaves in a very tyrannical manner." But very soon he found that the omnipresent farmers and the hard labor of husbandry combined to prevent him from carrying on his own proper work, and then his tone changed: "Even my Custom House experience was not such a thralldom and weariness; my mind and heart were free. Oh, labor is the curse of the world, and nobody can meddle with it without becoming proportionately brutified! Is it a praiseworthy matter that I have spent five golden months in providing food for cows and horses? It is not so."

Not long after he left Brook Farm Hawthorne married Sophia Peabody, whom he had come to love several years before, and who brought him an inestimable treasure of understanding sympathy, while she also helped to draw him into the center of New England's intellectual life. With her he went to Concord, where they lived in the Old Manse from 1842 until 1846. In the former year an enlarged edition of *Twice-Told Tales* was published, while in 1841-1842 the series of children's books called *Grandfather's Chair* and *Biographical Stories for Children* were published. *The Celestial Railroad* appeared in 1843, and *Mosses from an Old Manse* in 1846. Despite this activity, however, Hawthorne was not yet earning sufficient money to keep himself out of debt, and in 1846 he accepted the post of Surveyor of the Port of Salem—a position which he kept for three years, when another change in the national administration again forced him out of office. During this period of financial security he wrote nothing, but he had been meditating a long tale, which he now immediately began to write. It was *The Scarlet Letter*, his greatest work, published in 1850 and immediately recognized as a book that placed its author at the head of imaginative writers in America. Following its completion Hawthorne went to Lenox, among the Berkshire hills, where he lived for about two years, having for a near neighbor Herman Melville. Here *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) and *The Blithedale Romance* (1852) were written. In 1852 Hawthorne purchased a house in Concord—which he called "The Wayside"—and moved there, expecting it to be his home for the remainder of his life. In the same year he published *A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys* and a campaign biography of his friend Franklin Pierce. In the following year Pierce, now President, appointed him U. S. Consul at Liverpool, where he remained until 1857, and then went to Italy for a stay of two years. *Tanglewood Tales* had been published in 1853. *The Marble Faun*, the result of his Italian stay, was now published in 1860. In 1863 appeared *Our Old Home*, a series of observations upon England. The year after this Hawthorne died, while on a journey undertaken for the sake of his health, in which he was accompanied by his friend Pierce, at Plymouth, New Hampshire, on 18 May. In following years several more or less fragmentary pieces were published, as well as six volumes of *Passages from Note-Books* which have rightfully taken their place as an integral and valuable part of Hawthorne's great literary accomplishment.

Perhaps no better evaluation of that accomplishment has been made than the one with which Henry James closed his interesting, though not altogether accurate or trustworthy, *Life of Hawthorne* in the "English Men of Letters" series: "He was a beautiful, natural, original genius, and his life had been singularly exempt from worldly preoccupations and vulgar efforts. It had been as pure, as simple, as unsophisticated, as his work. He had lived primarily in his domestic affections, which were of the tenderest kind; and then—without eagerness, without pretension, but with a great deal of quiet devotion—in his charming art. His work will remain; it is too original and exquisite to pass away; among the men of imagination he will always have his niche. No one has had just that vision of life, and no one has had a literary form that more successfully expressed his vision. He was not a moralist, and he was not simply a poet. The moralists are weightier, denser, richer, in a sense; the poets are more purely inconclusive and irresponsible. He combined in a singular degree the spontaneity of the imagination with a haunting care for moral problems. Man's conscience was his theme, but he saw it in the light of a creative fancy which added, out of its own substance, an interest, and, I may almost say, an importance."

THE SCARLET LETTER¹

I. THE PRISON-DOOR

A THROG of bearded men, in sad-colored garments, and gray, steeple-crowned hats, intermixed with women, some wearing hoods and others bareheaded, was assembled in front of a wooden edifice, the door of which was heavily timbered with oak, and studded with iron spikes.

The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison. In accordance with this rule, it may safely be assumed that the forefathers of Boston had built the first prison-house somewhere in the vicinity of Cornhill, almost as seasonably as they marked out the first burial-ground, on Isaac Johnson's lot, and round about his grave, which subsequently became the nucleus of all the congregated sepulchers in the old churchyard of King's Chapel. Certain it is, that, some fifteen or twenty years after the settlement of the town, the wooden jail was already marked with weather-stains and other indications of age, which gave a yet darker aspect to its beetle-browed and gloomy front. The rust on the ponderous iron-work of its oaken door looked more antique than anything else in the New World. Like all that pertains to crime, it seemed never to have known a

youthful era. Before this ugly edifice, and between it and the wheel-track of the street, was a grass-plot, much overgrown with burdock, pigweed, apple-peru, and such unsightly vegetation, which evidently found something congenial in the soil that had so early borne the black flower of civilized society, a prison. But, on one side of the portal, and rooted almost at the threshold, was a wild rose-bush, covered, in this month of June, with its delicate gems, which might be imagined to offer their fragrance and fragile beauty to the prisoner as he went in, and to the condemned criminal as he came forth to his doom, in token that the deep heart of Nature could pity and be kind to him.

This rose-bush, by a strange chance, has been kept alive in history; but whether it had merely survived out of the stern old wilderness, so long after the fall of the gigantic pines and oaks that originally overshadowed it,—or whether, as there is fair authority for believing, it had sprung up under the footsteps of the sainted Ann Hutchinson, as she entered the prison-door,—we shall not take upon us to determine. Finding it so directly on the threshold of our narrative, which is now about to issue from that inauspicious portal, we could hardly do otherwise than pluck one of its flowers, and present it to the reader. It may serve, let us hope, to symbolize some sweet moral blossom, that may be found along the track, or relieve the darkening close of a tale of human frailty and sorrow.

II. THE MARKET-PLACE

THE grass-plot before the jail, in Prison Lane, on a certain summer morning, not less than two centuries ago, was occupied by a pretty large number of the inhabitants of Boston; all with their eyes intently fastened on the iron-clamped oaken door. Amongst any other population, or at a later period in the history of New England, the grim rigidity that petrified the bearded physiognomies of these good people would have augured some awful business in hand. It could have betokened nothing short of the anticipated execution of some noted culprit, on whom the sentence of a legal tribunal had but confirmed the verdict of public sentiment. But, in that early severity of the Puritan character, an inference of this kind could not so

¹ On 4 February, 1850, Hawthorne wrote to Horatio Bridge: "I finished my book only yesterday, one end being in press in Boston, while the other was in my head here in Salem; so that, as you see, the story is at least fourteen miles long. . . . The publisher tells me [it] will not be out before April. He speaks of it in tremendous terms of approbation. So does Mrs. Hawthorne, to whom I read the conclusion last night. It broke her heart, and sent her to bed with a grievous headache, which I look upon as a tremendous success."

Some years later, in England, Hawthorne wrote: "Speaking of Thackeray, I cannot but wonder at his coolness in respect to his own pathos, and compare it with my emotions when I read the last scene of *The Scarlet Letter* to my wife just after writing it—tried to read it, rather, for my voice swelled and heaved, as if I were tossed up and down on an ocean as it subsides after a storm. But I was in a very nervous state then, having gone through a great diversity of emotion while writing it, for many months."

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indubitably be drawn. It might be that a sluggish bond-servant, or an undutiful child, whom his parents had given over to the civil authority, was to be corrected at the whipping-post. It might be that an Antinomian, a Quaker, or other heterodox religionist was to be scourged out of the town, or an idle and vagrant Indian, whom the white man's fire-water had made riotous about the streets, was to be driven with stripes into the shadow of the forest. It might be, too, that a witch, like old Mistress Hibbins, the bitter-tempered widow of the magistrate, was to die upon the gallows. In either case, there was very much the same solemnity of demeanor on the part of the spectators; as befitted a people amongst whom religion and law were almost identical, and in whose character both were so thoroughly interfused, that the mildest and the severest acts of public discipline were alike made venerable and awful. Meager, indeed, and cold was the sympathy that a transgressor might look for, from such bystanders, at the scaffold. On the other hand, a penalty, which, in our days, would infer a degree of mocking infamy and ridicule, might then be invested with almost as stern a dignity as the punishment of death itself.

It was a circumstance to be noted, on the summer morning when our story begins its course, that the women, of whom there were several in the crowd, appeared to take a peculiar interest in whatever penal infliction might be expected to ensue. The age had not so much refinement, that any sense of impropriety restrained the wearers of petticoat and farthingale from stepping forth into the public ways, and wedging their not unsubstantial persons, if occasion were, into the throng nearest to the scaffold at an execution. Morally, as well as materially, there was a coarser fiber in those wives and maidens of old English birth and breeding, than in their fair descendants, separated from them by a series of six or seven generations; for, throughout that chain of ancestry, every successive mother has transmitted to her child a fainter bloom, a more delicate and briefer beauty, and a slighter physical frame, if not a character of less force and solidity, than her own. The women who were now standing about the prison-door stood within less than half a century of the period when the man-like Elizabeth had been the not

altogether unsuitable representative of the sex. They were her countrywomen; and the beef and ale of their native land, with a moral diet not a whit more refined, entered largely into their composition. The bright morning sun, therefore, shone on broad shoulders and well-developed busts, and on round and ruddy cheeks, that had ripened in the far-off island, and had hardly yet grown paler or thinner in the atmosphere of New England. There was, moreover, a boldness and rotundity of speech among these matrons, as most of them seemed to be, that would startle us at the present day, whether in respect to its purport or its volume of tone.

"Goodwives," said a hard-featured dame of fifty, "I'll tell ye a piece of my mind. It would be greatly for the public behoof, if we women, being of mature age and church-members in good repute, should have the handling of such malefactresses as this Hester Prynne. What think ye, gossip? If the hussy stood up for judgment before us five, that are now here in a knot together, would she come off with such a sentence as the worshipful magistrates have awarded? Marry, I trow not!"

"People say," said another, "that the Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation."

"The magistrates are God-fearing gentlemen, but merciful overmuch,—that is a truth," added a third autumnal matron. "At the very least, they should have put the brand of a hot iron on Hester Prynne's forehead. Madam Hester would have winced at that, I warrant me. But she,—the naughty baggage,—little will she care what they put upon the bodice of her gown! Why, look you, she may cover it with a brooch, or such like heathenish adornment, and so walk the streets as brave as ever!"

"Ah, but," interposed, more softly, a young wife, holding a child by the hand, "let her cover the mark as she will, the pang of it will be always in her heart."

"What do we talk of marks and brands, whether on the bodies of her gown, or the flesh of her forehead?" cried another female, the ugliest as well as the most pitiless of these self-constituted judges. "This woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to

die. Is there not law for it? Truly, there is, both in the Scripture and the statute-book. Then let the magistrates, who have made it of no effect, thank themselves if their own wives and daughters go astray!"

"Mercy on us, goodwife," exclaimed a man in the crowd, "is there no virtue in woman, save what springs from a wholesome fear of the gallows? That is the hardest word yet! Hush, now, gossips! for the lock is turning in the prison-door, and here comes Mistress Prynne herself."

The door of the jail being flung open from within, there appeared, in the first place, like a black shadow emerging into sunshine, the grim and grisly presence of the town-beadle, with a sword by his side, and his staff of office in his hand. This personage prefigured and represented in his aspect the whole dismal severity of the Puritanic code of law, which it was his business to administer in its final and closest application to the offender. Stretching forth the official staff in his left hand, he laid his right upon the shoulder of a young woman, whom he thus drew forward; until, on the threshold of the prison-door, she repelled him, by an action marked with natural dignity and force of character, and stepped into the open air, as if by her own free will. She bore in her arms a child, a baby of some three months old, who winked and turned aside its little face from the too vivid light of day; because its existence, heretofore, had brought it acquainted only with the gray twilight of a dungeon, or other darksome apartment of the prison.

When the young woman—the mother of this child—stood fully revealed before the crowd, it seemed to be her first impulse to clasp the infant closely to her bosom; not so much by an impulse of motherly affection, as that she might thereby conceal a certain token, which was wrought or fastened into her dress. In a moment, however, wisely judging that one token of her shame would but poorly serve to hide another, she took the baby on her arm, and, with a burning blush, and yet a haughty smile, and a glance that would not be abashed, looked around at her townspeople and neighbors. On the breast of her gown, in fine red cloth, surrounded with an elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold-thread, appeared the letter A. It was so artistically done, and

with so much fertility and gorgeous luxuriance of fancy, that it had all the effect of a last and fitting decoration to the apparel which she wore; and which was of a splendor in accordance with the taste of the age, but greatly beyond what was allowed by the sumptuary regulations of the colony.

The young woman was tall, with a figure of perfect elegance on a large scale. She had dark and abundant hair, so glossy that it threw off the sunshine with a gleam, and a face which, besides being beautiful from regularity of feature and richness of complexion, had the impressiveness belonging to a marked brow and deep black eyes. She was lady-like, too, after the manner of the feminine gentility of those days; characterized by a certain state and dignity, rather than by the delicate, evanescent, and indescribable grace, which is now recognized as its indication. And never had Hester Prynne appeared more lady-like, in the antique interpretation of the term, than as she issued from the prison. Those who had before known her, and had expected to behold her dimmed and obscured by a disastrous cloud, were astonished, and even startled, to perceive how her beauty shone out, and made a halo of the misfortune and ignominy in which she was enveloped. It may be true, that, to a sensitive observer, there was something exquisitely painful in it. Her attire, which, indeed, she had wrought for the occasion, in prison, and had modeled much after her own fancy, seemed to express the attitude of her spirit, the desperate recklessness of her mood, by its wild and picturesque peculiarity. But the point which drew all eyes, and, as it were, transfigured the wearer,—so that both men and women, who had been familiarly acquainted with Hester Prynne, were now impressed as if they beheld her for the first time,—was that SCARLET LETTER, so fantastically embroidered and illuminated upon her bosom. It had the effect of a spell, taking her out of the ordinary relations with humanity, and enclosing her in a sphere by herself.

"She hath good skill at her needle, that's certain," remarked one of her female spectators; "but did ever a woman, before this brazen hussy, contrive such a way of showing it! Why, gossips, what is it but to laugh in the faces of our godly magistrates, and

make a pride out of what they, worthy gentlemen, meant for a punishment?"

"It were well," muttered the most iron-visaged of the old dames, "if we stripped Madam Hester's rich gown off her dainty shoulders; and as for the red letter, which she hath stitched so curiously, I'll bestow a rag of mine own rheumatic flannel, to make a fitter one!"

"O, peace, neighbors, peace!" whispered their youngest companion; "do not let her hear you! Not a stitch in that embroidered letter, but she has felt it in her heart."

The grim beadle now made a gesture with his staff.

"Make way, good people, make way, in the King's name!" cried he. "Open a passage; and, I promise ye, Mistress Prynne shall be set where man, woman, and child may have a fair sight of her brave apparel, from this time till an hour past meridian. A blessing on the righteous Colony of the Massachusetts, where iniquity is dragged out into the sunshine! Come along, Madam Hester, and show your scarlet letter in the market-place!"

A lane was forthwith opened through the crowd of spectators. Preceded by the beadle, and attended by an irregular procession of stern-browed men and unkindly visaged women, Hester Prynne set forth towards the place appointed for her punishment. A crowd of eager and curious school-boys, understanding little of the matter in hand, except that it gave them a half-holiday, ran before her progress, turning their heads continually to stare into her face, and at the winking baby in her arms, and at the ignominious letter on her breast. It was no great distance, in those days, from the prison-door to the market-place. Measured by the prisoner's experience, however, it might be reckoned a journey of some length; for, haughty as her demeanor was, she perchance underwent an agony from every footstep of those that thronged to see her, as if her heart had been flung into the street for them all to spurn and trample upon. In our nature, however, there is a provision, alike marvelous and merciful, that the sufferer should never know the intensity of what he endures by its present torture, but chiefly by the pang that rankles after it. With almost a serene deportment, therefore, Hester Prynne passed

through this portion of her ordeal, and came to a sort of scaffold, at the western extremity of the market-place. It stood nearly beneath the eaves of Boston's earliest church, and appeared to be a fixture there.

In fact, this scaffold constituted a portion of a penal machine, which now, for two or three generations past, has been merely historical and traditionary among us, but was held, in the old time, to be as effectual an agent, in the promotion of good citizenship, as ever was the guillotine among the terrorists of France. It was, in short, the platform of the pillory; and above it rose the framework of that instrument of discipline, so fashioned as to confine the human head in its tight grasp, and thus hold it up to the public gaze. The very ideal of ignominy was embodied and made manifest in this contrivance of wood and iron. There can be no outrage, methinks, against our common nature,—whatever be the delinquencies of the individual,—no outrage more flagrant than to forbid the culprit to hide his face for shame; as it was the essence of this punishment to do. In Hester Prynne's instance, however, as not unfrequently in other cases, her sentence bore, that she should stand a certain time upon the platform, but without undergoing that gripe about the neck and confinement of the head, the proneness to which was the most devilish characteristic of this ugly engine. Knowing well her part, she ascended a flight of wooden steps, and was thus displayed to the surrounding multitude, at about the height of a man's shoulders above the Street.

Had there been a Papist among the crowd of Puritans, he might have seen in this beautiful woman, so picturesque in her attire and mien, and with the infant at her bosom, an object to remind him of the image of Divine Maternity, which so many illustrious painters have vied with one another to represent; something which should remind him, indeed, but only by contrast, of that sacred image of sinless motherhood, whose infant was to redeem the world. Here, there was the taint of deepest sin in the most sacred quality of human life, working such effect, that the world was only the darker for this woman's beauty, and the more lost for the infant that she had borne.

The scene was not without a mixture of

awe, such as must always invest the spectacle of guilt and shame in a fellow-creature, before society shall have grown corrupt enough to smile, instead of shuddering, at it. The witnesses of Hester Prynne's disgrace had not yet passed beyond their simplicity. They were stern enough to look upon her death, had that been the sentence, without a murmur at its severity, but had none of the heartlessness of another social state, which would find only a theme for jest in an exhibition like the present. Even had there been a disposition to turn the matter into ridicule, it must have been repressed and overpowered by the solemn presence of men no less dignified than the Governor, and several of his counselors, a judge, a general, and the ministers of the town; all of whom sat or stood in a balcony of the meeting-house, looking down upon the platform. When such personages could constitute a part of the spectacle, without risking the majesty or reverence of rank and office, it was safely to be inferred that the infliction of a legal sentence would have an earnest and effectual meaning. Accordingly, the crowd was somber and grave. The unhappy culprit sustained herself as best a woman might, under the heavy weight of a thousand unrelenting eyes, all fastened upon her, and concentrated at her bosom. It was almost intolerable to be borne. Of an impulsive and passionate nature, she had fortified herself to encounter the stings and venomous stabs of public contumely, wreaking itself in every variety of insult; but there was a quality so much more terrible in the solemn mood of the popular mind, that she longed rather to behold all those rigid countenances contorted with scornful merriment, and herself the object. Had a roar of laughter burst from the multitude,—each man, each woman, each little shrill-voiced child, contributing their individual parts,—Hester Prynne might have repaid them all with a bitter and disdainful smile. But, under the leaden infliction which it was her doom to endure, she felt, at moments, as if she must needs shriek out with the full power of her lungs, and cast herself from the scaffold down upon the ground, or else go mad at once.

Yet there were intervals when the whole scene, in which she was the most conspicuous object, seemed to vanish from her eyes,

or, at least, glimmered indistinctly before them, like a mass of imperfectly shaped and spectral images. Her mind, and especially her memory, was preternaturally active, and kept bringing up other scenes than this roughly hewn street of a little town, on the edge of the Western wilderness; other faces than were lowering upon her from beneath the brims of those steeple-crowned hats. Reminiscences the most trifling and immaterial, passages of infancy and school-days, sports, childish quarrels, and the little domestic traits of her maiden years, came swarming back upon her, intermingled with recollections of whatever was gravest in her subsequent life; one picture precisely as vivid as another; as if all were of similar importance, or all alike a play. Possibly it was an instinctive device of her spirit, to relieve itself, by the exhibition of these phantasmagoric forms, from the cruel weight and hardness of the reality.

Be that as it might, the scaffold of the pillory was a point of view that revealed to Hester Prynne the entire track along which she had been treading since her happy infancy. Standing on that miserable eminence, she saw again her native village, in Old England, and her paternal home; a decayed house of gray stone, with a poverty-stricken aspect, but retaining a half-obliterated shield of arms over the portal, in token of antique gentility. She saw her father's face, with its bald brow, and reverend white beard, that flowed over the old-fashioned Elizabethan ruff; her mother's, too, with the look of heedful and anxious love which it always wore in her remembrance, and which, even since her death, had so often laid the impediment of a gentle remonstrance in her daughter's pathway. She saw her own face, glowing with girlish beauty, and illuminating all the interior of the dusky mirror in which she had been wont to gaze at it. There she beheld another countenance, of a man well stricken in years, a pale, thin, scholar-like visage, with eyes dim and bleared by the lamplight that had served them to pore over many ponderous books. Yet those same bleared optics had a strange, penetrating power, when it was their owner's purpose to read the human soul. This figure of the study and the cloister, as Hester Prynne's womanly fancy failed not to recall, was slightly deformed, with the

left shoulder a trifle higher than the right. Next rose before her, in memory's picture-gallery, the intricate and narrow thoroughfares, the tall, gray houses, the huge cathedrals, and the public edifices, ancient in date and quaint in architecture, of a Continental city; where a new life had awaited her, still in connection with the misshapen scholar; a new life, but feeding itself on time-worn materials, like a tuft of green moss on a crumbling wall. Lastly, in lieu of these shifting scenes, came back the rude market-place of the Puritan settlement, with all the townspeople assembled and leveling their stern regards at Hester Prynne,—yes, at herself,—who stood on the scaffold of the pillory, an infant on her arm, and the letter A, in scarlet, fantastically embroidered with gold thread, upon her bosom!

Could it be true? She clutched the child so fiercely to her breast, that it sent forth a cry; she turned her eyes downward at the scarlet letter, and even touched it with her finger, to assure herself that the infant and the shame were real. Yes!—these were her realities,—all else had vanished!

III. THE RECOGNITION

FROM this intense consciousness of being the object of severe and universal observation, the wearer of the scarlet letter was at length relieved, by discerning, on the outskirts of the crowd, a figure which irresistibly took possession of her thoughts. An Indian, in his native garb, was standing there; but the red men were not so infrequent visitors of the English settlements, that one of them would have attracted any notice from Hester Prynne, at such a time; much less would he have excluded all other objects and ideas from her mind. By the Indian's side, and evidently sustaining a companionship with him, stood a white man, clad in a strange disarray of civilized and savage costume.

He was small in stature, with a furrowed visage, which, as yet, could hardly be termed aged. There was a remarkable intelligence in his features, as of a person who had so cultivated his mental part that it could not fail to mold the physical to itself, and become manifest by unmistakable tokens. Although, by a seemingly careless arrangement of his heterogeneous garb, he had endeavored to conceal or abate the peculiarity, it was suffi-

ciently evident to Hester Prynne, that one of this man's shoulders rose higher than the other. Again, at the first instant of perceiving that thin visage, and the slight deformity of the figure, she pressed her infant to her bosom with so convulsive a force that the poor babe uttered another cry of pain. But the mother did not seem to hear it.

At his arrival in the market-place, and some time before she saw him, the stranger had bent his eyes on Hester Prynne. It was carelessly, at first, like a man chiefly accustomed to look inward, and to whom external matters are of little value and import, unless they bear relation to something within his mind. Very soon, however, his look became keen and penetrative. A writhing horror twisted itself across his features, like a snake gliding swiftly over them, and making one little pause, with all its wreathed intervoltions in open sight. His face darkened with some powerful emotion, which, nevertheless, he so instantaneously controlled by an effort of his will, that, save at a single moment, its expression might have passed for calmness. After a brief space, the convulsion grew almost imperceptible, and finally subsided into the depths of his nature. When he found the eyes of Hester Prynne fastened on his own, and saw that she appeared to recognize him, he slowly and calmly raised his finger, made a gesture with it in the air, and laid it on his lips.

Then touching the shoulder of a townsman who stood next to him, he addressed him, in a formal and courteous manner.

"I pray you, good Sir," said he, "who is this woman?—and wherefore is she here set up to public shame?"

"You must needs be a stranger in this region, friend," answered the townsman, looking curiously at the questioner and his savage companion, "else you would surely have heard of Mistress Hester Prynne, and her evil doings. She hath raised a great scandal, I promise you, in godly Master Dimmesdale's church."

"You say truly," replied the other. "I am a stranger, and have been a wanderer, sorely against my will. I have met with grievous mishaps by sea and land, and have been long held in bonds among the heathen-folk, to the southward; and am now brought hither by this Indian, to be redeemed out of

my captivity. Will it please you, therefore, to tell me of Hester Prynne's,—have I her name rightly?—of this woman's offenses, and what has brought her to yonder scaffold?"

"Truly, friend; and methinks it must gladden your heart, after your troubles and sojourn in the wilderness," said the townsman, "to find yourself, at length, in a land where iniquity is searched out, and punished in the sight of rulers and people; as here in our godly New England. Yonder woman, Sir, you must know, was the wife of a certain learned man, English by birth, but who had long dwelt in Amsterdam, whence, some good time ago, he was minded to cross over and cast in his lot with us of the Massachusetts. To this purpose, he sent his wife before him, remaining himself to look after some necessary affairs. Marry, good Sir, in some two years, or less, that the woman has been a dweller here in Boston, no tidings have come of this learned gentleman, Master Prynne; and his young wife, look you, being left to her own misguidance—"

"Ah!—aha!—I conceive you," said the stranger, with a bitter smile. "So learned a man as you speak of should have learned this too in his books. And who, by your favor, Sir, may be the father of yonder babe—it is some three or four months old, I should judge—which Mistress Prynne is holding in her arms?"

"Of a truth, friend, that matter remaineth a riddle; and the Daniel who shall expound it is yet a-wanting," answered the townsman. "Madam Hester absolutely refuseth to speak, and the magistrates have laid their heads together in vain. Peradventure the guilty one stands looking on at this sad spectacle, unknown of man, and forgetting that God sees him."

"The learned man," observed the stranger, with another smile, "should come himself, to look into the mystery."

"It behooves him well, if he be still in life," responded the townsman. "Now, good Sir, our Massachusetts magistracy, bethinking themselves that this woman is youthful and fair, and doubtless was strongly tempted to her fall,—and that, moreover, as is most likely, her husband may be at the bottom of the sea,—they have not been bold to put in force the extremity of our righteous law

against her. The penalty thereof is death. But in their great mercy and tenderness of heart, they have doomed Mistress Prynne to stand only a space of three hours on the platform of the pillory, and then and thereafter, for the remainder of her natural life, to wear a mark of shame upon her bosom."

"A wise sentence!" remarked the stranger, gravely bowing his head. "Thus she will be a living sermon against sin, until the ignominious letter be engraved upon her tombstone. It irks me, nevertheless, that the partner of her iniquity should not, at least, stand on the scaffold by her side. But he will be known!—he will be known!—he will be known!"

He bowed courteously to the communicative townsman, and, whispering a few words to his Indian attendant, they both made their way through the crowd.

While this passed, Hester Prynne had been standing on her pedestal, still with a fixed gaze towards the stranger; so fixed a gaze, that, at moments of intense absorption, all other objects in the visible world seemed to vanish, leaving only him and her. Such an interview, perhaps, would have been more terrible than even to meet him as she now did, with the hot, midday sun burning down upon her face, and lighting up its shame; with the scarlet token of infamy on her breast; with the sin-born infant in her arms; with a whole people, drawn forth as to a festival, staring at the features that should have been seen only in the quiet gleam of the fireside, in the happy shadow of a home, or beneath a matronly veil, at church. Dreadful as it was, she was conscious of a shelter in the presence of these thousand witnesses. It was better to stand thus, with so many betwixt him and her, than to greet him, face to face, they two alone. She fled for refuge, as it were, to the public exposure, and dreaded the moment when its protection should be withdrawn from her. Involved in these thoughts, she scarcely heard a voice behind her, until it had repeated her name more than once, in a loud and solemn tone, audible to the whole multitude.

"Harken unto me, Hester Prynne!" said the voice.

It has already been noticed, that directly over the platform on which Hester Prynne stood was a kind of balcony, or open gallery,

appended to the meeting-house. It was the place whence proclamations were wont to be made, amidst an assemblage of the magistracy, with all the ceremonial that attended such public observances in those days. Here, to witness the scene which we are describing, sat Governor Bellingham himself, with four sergeants about his chair, bearing halberds, as a guard of honor. He wore a dark feather in his hat, a border of embroidery on his cloak, and a black velvet tunic beneath; a gentleman advanced in years, with a hard experience written in his wrinkles. He was not ill fitted to be the head and representative of a community, which owed its origin and progress, and its present state of development, not to the impulses of youth, but to the stern and tempered energies of manhood, and the somber sagacity of age; accomplishing so much, precisely because it imagined and hoped so little. The other eminent characters, by whom the chief ruler was surrounded, were distinguished by a dignity of mien, belonging to a period when the forms of authority were felt to possess the sacredness of Divine institutions. They were, doubtless, good men, just, and sage. But, out of the whole human family, it would not have been easy to select the same number of wise and virtuous persons, who should be less capable of sitting in judgment on an erring woman's heart, and disentangling its mesh of good and evil, than the sages of rigid aspect towards whom Hester Prynne now turned her face. She seemed conscious, indeed, that whatever sympathy she might expect lay in the larger and warmer heart of the multitude; for, as she lifted her eyes towards the balcony, the unhappy woman grew pale and trembled.

The voice which had called her attention was that of the reverend and famous John Wilson, the eldest clergyman of Boston, a great scholar, like most of his contemporaries in the profession, and withal a man of kind and genial spirit. This last attribute, however, had been less carefully developed than his intellectual gifts, and was, in truth, rather a matter of shame than self-congratulation with him. There he stood, with a border of grizzled locks beneath his skullcap; while his gray eyes, accustomed to the shaded light of his study, were winking, like those of Hester's infant, in the unadulterated sunshine. He looked like the darkly engraved portraits

which we see prefixed to old volumes of sermons; and had no more right than one of those portraits would have, to step forth, as he now did, and meddle with a question of human guilt, passion, and anguish.

"Hester Prynne," said the clergyman, "I have striven with my young brother here, under whose preaching of the word you have been privileged to sit,"—here Mr. Wilson laid his hand on the shoulder of a pale young man beside him,—"I have sought, I say, to persuade this godly youth, that he should deal with you, here in the face of Heaven, and before these wise and upright rulers, and in hearing of all the people, as touching the vileness and blackness of your sin. Knowing your natural temper better than I, he could the better judge what arguments to use, whether of tenderness or terror, such as might prevail over your hardness and obstinacy; insomuch that you should no longer hide the name of him who tempted you to this grievous fall. But he opposes to me (with a young man's oversoftness, albeit wise beyond his years), that it were wronging the very nature of woman to force her to lay open her heart's secrets in such broad daylight, and in presence of so great a multitude. Truly, as I sought to convince him, the shame lay in the commission of the sin, and not in the showing of it forth. What say you to it, once again, Brother Dimmesdale? Must it be thou, or I, that shall deal with this poor sinner's soul?"

There was a murmur among the dignified and reverend occupants of the balcony; and Governor Bellingham gave expression to its purport, speaking in an authoritative voice, although tempered with respect towards the youthful clergyman whom he addressed.

"Good Master Dimmesdale," said he, "the responsibility of this woman's soul lies greatly with you. It behooves you, therefore, to exhort her to repentance, and to confession, as a proof and consequence thereof."

The directness of this appeal drew the eyes of the whole crowd upon the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale; a young clergyman, who had come from one of the great English universities, bringing all the learning of the age into our wild forest-land. His eloquence and religious fervor had already given the earnest of high eminence in his profession. He was a person of very striking aspect, with a white,

lofty, and impending brow, large, brown, melancholy eyes, and a mouth which, unless when he forcibly compressed it, was apt to be tremulous, expressing both nervous sensibility and a vast power of self-restraint. Notwithstanding his high native gifts and scholar-like attainments, there was an air about this young minister,—an apprehensive, a startled, a half-frightened look,—as of a being who felt himself quite astray and at a loss in the pathway of human existence, and could only be at ease in some seclusion of his own. Therefore, so far as his duties would permit, he trod in the shadowy by-paths, and thus kept himself simple and child-like; coming forth, when occasion was, with a freshness, and fragrance, and dewy purity of thought, which, as many people said, affected them like the speech of an angel.

Such was the young man whom the Reverend Mr. Wilson and the Governor had introduced so openly to the public notice, bidding him speak, in the hearing of all men, to that mystery of a woman's soul, so sacred even in its pollution. The trying nature of his position drove the blood from his cheek, and made his lips tremulous.

"Speak to the woman, my brother," said Mr. Wilson. "It is of moment to her soul, and therefore, as the worshipful Governor says, momentous to thine own, in whose charge hers is. Exhort her to confess the truth!"

The Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale bent his head, in silent prayer, as it seemed, and then came forward.

"Hester Prynne," said he, leaning over the balcony and looking down steadfastly into her eyes, "thou hearest what this good man says, and seest the accountability under which I labor. If thou feelest it to be for thy soul's peace, and that thy earthly punishment will thereby be made more effectual to salvation, I charge thee to speak out the name of thy fellow-sinner and fellow-sufferer! Be not silent from any mistaken pity and tenderness for him; for, believe me, Hester, though he were to step down from a high place, and stand there beside thee, on thy pedestal of shame, yet better were it so, than to hide a guilty heart through life. What can thy silence do for him, except it tempt him—yea, compel him, as it were—to add hypocrisy to sin? Heaven hath granted thee an open igno-

miny, that thereby thou mayest work out an open triumph over the evil within thee, and the sorrow without. Take heed how thou deniest to him—who, perchance, hath not the courage to grasp it for himself—the bitter, but wholesome, cup that is now presented to thy lips!"

The young pastor's voice was tremulously sweet, rich, deep, and broken. The feeling that it so evidently manifested, rather than the direct purport of the words, caused it to vibrate within all hearts, and brought the listeners into one accord of sympathy. Even the poor baby, at Hester's bosom, was affected by the same influence; for it directed its hitherto vacant gaze towards Mr. Dimmesdale, and held up its little arms, with a half-pleased, half-plaintive murmur. So powerful seemed the minister's appeal, that the people could not believe but that Hester Prynne would speak out the guilty name; or else that the guilty one himself, in whatever high or lowly place he stood, would be drawn forth by an inward and inevitable necessity, and compelled to ascend the scaffold.

Hester shook her head.

"Woman, transgress not beyond the limits of Heaven's mercy!" cried the Reverend Mr. Wilson, more harshly than before. "That little babe hath been gifted with a voice, to second and confirm the counsel which thou hast heard. Speak out the name! That, and thy repentance, may avail to take the scarlet letter off thy breast."

"Never!" replied Hester Prynne, looking, not at Mr. Wilson, but into the deep and troubled eyes of the younger clergyman. "It is too deeply branded. Ye cannot take it off. And would that I might endure his agony, as well as mine!"

"Speak, woman!" said another voice, coldly and sternly, proceeding from the crowd about the scaffold. "Speak; and give your child a father!"

"I will not speak!" answered Hester, turning pale as death, but responding to this voice, which she too surely recognized. "And my child must seek a heavenly Father; she shall never know an earthly one!"

"She will not speak!" murmured Mr. Dimmesdale, who, leaning over the balcony, with his hand upon his heart, had awaited the result of his appeal. He now drew back,

with a long respiration. "Wondrous strength and generosity of a woman's heart! She will not speak!"

Discerning the impracticable state of the poor culprit's mind, the elder clergyman, who had carefully prepared himself for the occasion, addressed to the multitude a discourse on sin, in all its branches, but with continual reference to the ignominious letter. So forcibly did he dwell upon this symbol, for the hour or more during which his periods were rolling over the people's heads, that it assumed new terrors in their imagination, and seemed to derive its scarlet hue from the flames of the infernal pit. Hester Prynne, meanwhile, kept her place upon the pedestal of shame, with glazed eyes, and an air of weary indifference. She had borne, that morning, all that nature could endure; and as her temperament was not of the order that escapes from too intense suffering by a swoon, her spirit could only shelter itself beneath a stony crust of insensibility, while the faculties of animal life remained entire. In this state, the voice of the preacher thundered remorselessly, but unavailingly, upon her ears. The infant, during the latter portion of her ordeal, pierced the air with its wailings and screams; she strove to hush it, mechanically, but seemed scarcely to sympathize with its trouble. With the same hard demeanor, she was led back to prison, and vanished from the public gaze within its iron-clamped portal. It was whispered, by those who peered after her, that the scarlet letter threw a lurid gleam along the dark passageway of the interior.

IV. THE INTERVIEW

AFTER her return to the prison, Hester Prynne was found to be in a state of nervous excitement that demanded constant watchfulness, lest she should perpetrate violence on herself, or do some half-frenzied mischief to the poor babe. As night approached, it proving impossible to quell her insubordination by rebuke or threats of punishment, Master Brackett, the jailer, thought fit to introduce a physician. He described him as a man of skill of all Christian modes of physical science, and likewise familiar with whatever the savage people could teach, in respect to medicinal herbs and roots that grew in the forest. To say the truth, there

was much need of professional assistance, not merely for Hester herself, but still more urgently for the child; who, drawing its sustenance from the maternal bosom, seemed to have drank in with it all the turmoil, the anguish and despair, which pervaded the mother's system. It now writhed in convulsions of pain, and was a forcible type, in its little frame, of the moral agony which Hester Prynne had borne throughout the day.

Closely following the jailer into the dismal apartment appeared that individual, of singular aspect, whose presence in the crowd had been of such deep interest to the wearer of the scarlet letter. He was lodged in the prison, not as suspected of any offense, but as the most convenient and suitable mode of disposing of him, until the magistrates should have conferred with the Indian sagamores respecting his ransom. His name was announced as Roger Chillingworth. The jailer, after ushering him into the room, remained a moment, marveling at the comparative quiet that followed his entrance; for Hester Prynne had immediately become as still as death, although the child continued to moan.

"Prithee, friend, leave me alone with my patient," said the practitioner. "Trust me, good jailer, you shall briefly have peace in your house; and, I promise you, Mistress Prynne shall hereafter be more amenable to just authority than you may have found her heretofore."

"Nay, if your worship can accomplish that," answered Master Brackett, "I shall own you for a man of skill indeed! Verily, the woman hath been like a possessed one; and there lacks little, that I should take in hand to drive Satan out of her with stripes."

The stranger had entered the room with the characteristic quietude of the profession to which he announced himself as belonging. Nor did his demeanor change, when the withdrawal of the prison-keeper left him face to face with the woman, whose absorbed notice of him, in the crowd, had intimated so close a relation between himself and her. His first care was given to the child; whose cries, indeed, as she lay writhing on the trundle-bed, made it of peremptory necessity to postpone all other business to the task of soothing her. He examined the infant carefully, and then

proceeded to unclasp a leathern case, which he took from beneath his dress. It appeared to contain medical preparations, one of which he mingled with a cup of water.

"My old studies in alchemy," observed he, "and my sojourn, for above a year past, among a people well versed in the kindly properties of simples, have made a better physician of me than many that claim the medical degree. Here, woman! The child is yours,—she is none of mine,—neither will she recognize my voice or aspect as a father's. Administer this draught, therefore, with thine own hand."

Hester repelled the offered medicine, at the same time gazing with strongly marked apprehension into his face.

"Wouldst thou avenge thyself on the innocent babe?" whispered she.

"Foolish woman!" responded the physician, half coldly, half soothingly. "What should ail me, to harm this misbegotten and miserable babe? The medicine is potent for good; and were it my child,—yea, mine own, as well as thine!—I could do no better for it."

As she still hesitated, being, in fact, in no reasonable state of mind, he took the infant in his arms, and himself administered the draught. It soon proved its efficacy, and redeemed the leech's pledge. The moans of the little patient subsided; its convulsive tossings gradually ceased; and, in a few moments, as is the custom of young children after relief from pain, it sank into a profound and dewy slumber. The physician, as he had a fair right to be termed, next bestowed his attention on the mother. With calm and intent scrutiny, he felt her pulse, looked into her eyes,—a gaze that made her heart shrink and shudder, because so familiar, and yet so strange and cold,—and, finally, satisfied with his investigation, proceeded to mingle another draught.

"I know not Lethe nor Nepenthe," remarked he; "but I have learned many new secrets in the wilderness, and here is one of them,—a recipe that an Indian taught me, in requital of some lessons of my own, that were as old as Paracelsus. Drink it! It may be less soothing than a sinless conscience. That I cannot give thee. But it will calm the swell and heaving of thy passion, like oil thrown on the waves of a tempestuous sea."

He presented the cup to Hester, who

received it with a slow, earnest look into his face; not precisely a look of fear, yet full of doubt and questioning, as to what his purposes might be. She looked also at her slumbering child.

"I have thought of death," said she,— "have wished for it,—would even have prayed for it, were it fit that such as I should pray for anything. Yet, if death be in this cup, I bid thee think again, ere thou beholdest me quaff it. See! It is even now at my lips."

"Drink, then," replied he, still with the same cold composure. "Dost thou know me so little, Hester Prynne? Are my purposes wont to be so shallow? Even if I imagine a scheme of vengeance, what could I do better for my object than to let thee live,—than to give thee medicines against all harm and peril of life,—so that this burning shame may still blaze upon thy bosom?" As he spoke, he laid his long forefinger on the scarlet letter, which forthwith seemed to scorch into Hester's breast, as if it had been red-hot. He noticed her involuntary gesture, and smiled. "Live, therefore, and bear about thy doom with thee, in the eyes of men and women,—in the eyes of him whom thou didst call thy husband,—in the eyes of yonder child! And, that thou mayest live, take off this draught."

Without further expostulation or delay, Hester Prynne drained the cup, and, at the motion of the man of skill, seated herself on the bed where the child was sleeping; while he drew the only chair which the room afforded, and took his own seat beside her. She could not but tremble at these preparations; for she felt that—having now done all that humanity, or principle, or, if so it were, a refined cruelty, impelled him to do, for the relief of physical suffering—he was next to treat with her as the man whom she had most deeply and irreparably injured.

"Hester," said he, "I ask not wherefore, nor how, thou hast fallen into the pit, or say, rather, thou hast ascended to the pedestal of infamy, on which I found thee. The reason is not far to seek. It was my folly, and thy weakness. I,—a man of thought,—the book-worm of great libraries,—a man already in decay, having given my best years to feed the hungry dream of knowledge,—what had I to do with youth and beauty like thine

own! Misshapen from my birth-hour, how could I delude myself with the idea that intellectual gifts might veil physical deformity in a young girl's fantasy! Men call me wise. If sages were ever wise in their own behoof, I might have foreseen all this. I might have known that, as I came out of the vast and dismal forest, and entered this settlement of Christian men, the very first object to meet my eyes would be thyself, Hester Prynne, standing up, a statue of ignominy, before the people. Nay, from the moment when we came down the old church steps together, a married pair, I might have beheld the bale-fire of that scarlet letter blazing at the end of our path!"

"Thou knowest," said Hester,—for, depressed as she was, she could not endure this last quiet stab at the token of her shame,—“thou knowest that I was frank with thee. I felt no love, nor feigned any.”

"True," replied he. "It was my folly! I have said it. But up to that epoch of my life, I had lived in vain. The world had been so cheerless! My heart was a habitation large enough for many guests, but lonely and chill, and without a household fire. I longed to kindle one! It seemed not so wild a dream,—old as I was, and somber as I was, and misshapen as I was,—that the simple bliss, which is scattered far and wide for all mankind to gather up, might yet be mine. And so, Hester, I drew thee into my heart, into its innermost chamber, and sought to warm thee by the warmth which thy presence made there!"

"I have greatly wronged thee," murmured Hester.

"We have wronged each other," answered he. "Mine was the first wrong, when I betrayed thy budding youth into a false and unnatural relation with my decay. Therefore, as a man who has not thought and philosophized in vain, I seek no vengeance, plot no evil against thee. Between thee and me, the scale hangs fairly balanced. But, Hester, the man lives who has wronged us both! Who is he?"

"Ask me not!" replied Hester Prynne, looking firmly into his face. "That thou shalt never know!"

"Never, sayest thou?" rejoined he, with a smile of dark and self-relying intelligence. "Never know him! Believe me, Hester,

there are few things,—whether in the outward world, or, to a certain depth, in the invisible sphere of thought,—few things hidden from the man who devotes himself earnestly and unreservedly to the solution of a mystery. Thou mayest cover up thy secret from the prying multitude. Thou mayest conceal it, too, from the ministers and magistrates, even as thou didst this day, when they sought to wrench the name out of thy heart, and give thee a partner on thy pedestal. But, as for me, I come to the inquest with other senses than they possess. I shall seek this man, as I have sought truth in books; as I have sought gold in alchemy. There is a sympathy that will make me conscious of him. I shall see him tremble. I shall feel myself shudder, suddenly and unawares. Sooner or later, he must needs be mine!"

The eyes of the wrinkled scholar glowed so intensely upon her, that Hester Prynne clasped her hands over her heart, dreading lest he should read the secret there at once.

"Thou wilt not reveal his name? Not the less he is mine," resumed he, with a look of confidence, as if destiny were at one with him. "He bears no letter of infamy wrought into his garment, as thou dost; but I shall read it on his heart. Yet fear not for him! Think not that I shall interfere with Heaven's own method of retribution, or, to my own loss, betray him to the gripe of human law. Neither do thou imagine that I shall contrive aught against his life; no, nor against his fame, if, as I judge, he be a man of fair repute. Let him live! Let him hide himself in outward honor, if he may! Not the less he shall be mine!"

"Thy acts are like mercy," said Hester, bewildered and appalled. "But thy words interpret thee as a terror!"

"One thing, thou that wast my wife, I would enjoin upon thee," continued the scholar. "Thou hast kept the secret of thy paramour. Keep, likewise, mine! There are none in this land that know me. Breathe not, to any human soul, that thou didst ever call me husband! Here, on this wild outskirts of the earth, I shall pitch my tent; for, elsewhere a wanderer, and isolated from human interests, I find here a woman, a man, a child, amongst whom and myself there exist the closest ligaments. No matter whether of

love or hate; no matter whether of right or wrong! Thou and thine, Hester Prynne, belong to me. My home is where thou art, and where he is. But betray me not!"

"Wherefore dost thou desire it?" inquired Hester, shrinking, she hardly knew why, from this secret bond. "Why not announce thyself openly, and cast me off at once?"

"It may be," he replied, "because I will not encounter the dishonor that besmirches the husband of a faithless woman. It may be for other reasons. Enough, it is my purpose to live and die unknown. Let, therefore, thy husband be to the world as one already dead, and of whom no tidings shall ever come. Recognize me not, by word, by sign, by look! Breathe not the secret, above all, to the man thou wottest of. Shouldest thou fail me in this, beware! His fame, his position, his life, will be in my hands. Beware!"

"I will keep thy secret, as I have his," said Hester.

"Swear it!" rejoined he.

And she took the oath.

"And now, Mistress Prynne," said old Roger Chillingworth, as he was hereafter to be named, "I leave thee alone; alone with thy infant, and the scarlet letter! How is it, Hester? Doth thy sentence bind thee to wear the token in thy sleep? Art thou not afraid of nightmares and hideous dreams?"

"Why dost thou smile so at me?" inquired Hester, troubled at the expression of his eyes. "Art thou like the Black Man that haunts the forest round about us? Hast thou enticed me into a bond that will prove the ruin of my soul?"

"Not thy soul," he answered, with another smile. "No, not thine!"

V. HESTER AT HER NEEDLE

HESTER PRYNNE'S term of confinement was now at an end. Her prison-door was thrown open, and she came forth into the sunshine, which, falling on all alike, seemed, to her sick and morbid heart, as if meant for no other purpose than to reveal the scarlet letter on her breast. Perhaps there was a more real torture in her first unattended footsteps from the threshold of the prison, than even in the procession and spectacle that have been described, where she was made the common infamy, at which all mankind was summoned to point its finger. Then,

she was supported by an unnatural tension of the nerves, and by all the combative energy of her character, which enabled her to convert the scene into a kind of lurid triumph. It was, moreover, a separate and insulated event, to occur but once in her lifetime, and to meet which, therefore, reckless of economy, she might call up the vital strength that would have sufficed for many quiet years. The very law that condemned her—a giant of stern features, but with vigor to support, as well as to annihilate, in his iron arm—had held her up, through the terrible ordeal of her ignominy. But now, with this unattended walk from her prison-door, began the daily custom; and she must either sustain and carry it forward by the ordinary resources of her nature, or sink beneath it. She could no longer borrow from the future to help her through the present grief. Tomorrow would bring its own trial with it; so would the next day, and so would the next; each its own trial, and yet the very same that was now so unutterably grievous to be borne. The days of the far-off future would toil onward, still with the same burden for her to take up, and bear along with her, but never to fling down; for the accumulating days, and added years, would pile up their misery upon the heap of shame. Throughout them all, giving up her individuality, she would become the general symbol at which the preacher and moralist might point, and in which they might vivify and embody their images of woman's frailty and sinful passion. Thus the young and pure would be taught to look at her, with the scarlet letter flaming on her breast,—at her, the child of honorable parents,—at her, the mother of a babe, that would thereafter be a woman,—at her, who had once been innocent,—as the figure, the body, the reality of sin. And over her grave, the infamy that she must carry thither would be her only monument.

It may seem marvelous, that, with the world before her,—kept by no restrictive clause of her condemnation within the limits of the Puritan settlement, so remote and so obscure,—free to return to her birthplace, or to any other European land, and there hide her character and identity under a new exterior, as completely as if emerging into another state of being,—and having also the passes of the dark, inscrutable forest open

to her, where the wildness of her nature might assimilate itself with a people whose customs and life were alien from the law that had condemned her,—it may seem marvelous, that this woman should still call that place her home, where, and where only, she must needs be the type of shame. But there is a fatality, a feeling so irresistible and inevitable that it has the force of doom, which almost invariably compels human beings to linger around and haunt, ghost-like, the spot where some great and marked event has given the color to their lifetime; and still the more irresistibly, the darker the tinge that saddens it. Her sin, her ignominy, were the roots which she had struck into the soil. It was as if a new birth, with stronger assimilations than the first, had converted the forest-land, still so uncongenial to every other pilgrim and wanderer, into Hester Prynne's wild and dreary, but life-long home. All other scenes of earth—even that village of rural England, where happy infancy and stainless maidenhood seemed yet to be in her mother's keeping, like garments put off long ago—were foreign to her, in comparison. The chain that bound her here was of iron links, and galling to her inmost soul, but could never be broken.

It might be, too,—doubtless it was so, although she hid the secret from herself, and grew pale whenever it struggled out of her heart, like a serpent from its hole,—it might be that another feeling kept her within the scene and pathway that had been so fatal. There dwelt, there trod the feet of one with whom she deemed herself connected in a union, that, unrecognized on earth, would bring them together before the bar of final judgment, and make that their marriage-altar, for a joint futurity of endless retribution. Over and over again, the tempter of souls had thrust this idea upon Hester's contemplation, and laughed at the passionate and desperate joy with which she seized, and then strove to cast it from her. She barely looked the idea in the face, and hastened to bar it in its dungeon. What she compelled herself to believe—what, finally, she reasoned upon, as her motive for continuing a resident of New England—was half a truth, and half a self-delusion. Here, she said to herself, had been the scene of her guilt, and here should be the scene of her earthly punishment; and so,

perchance, the torture of her daily shame would at length purge her soul, and work out another purity than that which she had lost; more saint-like, because the result of martyrdom.

Hester Prynne, therefore, did not flee. On the outskirts of the town, within the verge of the peninsula, but not in close vicinity to any other habitation, there was a small thatched cottage. It had been built by an earlier settler, and abandoned, because the soil about it was too sterile for cultivation, while its comparative remoteness put it out of the sphere of that social activity which already marked the habits of the emigrants. It stood on the shore, looking across a basin of the sea at the forest-covered hills, towards the west. A clump of scrubby trees, such as alone grew on the peninsula, did not so much conceal the cottage from view, as seem to denote that here was some object which would fain have been, or at least ought to be, concealed. In this little, lonesome dwelling, with some slender means that she possessed, and by the license of the magistrates, who still kept an inquisitorial watch over her, Hester established herself, with her infant child. A mystic shadow of suspicion immediately attached itself to the spot. Children, too young to comprehend wherefore this woman should be shut out from the sphere of human charities, would creep nigh enough to behold her plying her needle at the cottage-window, or standing in the doorway, or laboring in her little garden, or coming forth along the pathway that led townward; and, discerning the scarlet letter on her breast, would scamper off with a strange, contagious fear.

Lonely as was Hester's situation, and without a friend on earth who dared to show himself, she, however, incurred no risk of want. She possessed an art that sufficed, even in a land that afforded comparatively little scope for its exercise, to supply food for her thriving infant and herself. It was the art—then, as now, almost the only one within a woman's grasp—of needlework. She bore on her breast, in the curiously embroidered letter, a specimen of her delicate and imaginative skill, of which the dames of a court might gladly have availed themselves, to add the richer and more spiritual adornment of human ingenuity to their fabrics of silk and

gold. Here, indeed, in the sable simplicity that generally characterized the Puritanic modes of dress, there might be an infrequent call for the finer productions of her handiwork. Yet the taste of the age, demanding whatever was elaborate in compositions of this kind, did not fail to extend its influence over our stern progenitors, who had cast behind them so many fashions which it might seem harder to dispense with. Public ceremonies, such as ordinations, the installation of magistrates, and all that could give majesty to the forms in which a new government manifested itself to the people, were, as a matter of policy, marked by a stately and well-conducted ceremonial, and a somber, but yet a studied magnificence. Deep ruffs, painfully wrought bands, and gorgeously embroidered gloves, were all deemed necessary to the official state of men assuming the reins of power; and were readily allowed to individuals dignified by rank or wealth, even while sumptuary laws forbade these and similar extravagances to the plebeian order. In the array of funerals, too,—whether for the apparel of the dead body, or to typify, by manifold emblematic devices of sable cloth and snowy lawn, the sorrow of the survivors,—there was a frequent and characteristic demand for such labor as Hester Prynne could supply. Baby-linen—for babies then wore robes of state—afforded still another possibility of toil and emolument.

By degrees, nor very slowly, her handiwork became what would now be termed the fashion. Whether from commiseration for a woman of so miserable a destiny; or from the morbid curiosity that gives a fictitious value even to common or worthless things; or by whatever other intangible circumstance was then, as now, sufficient to bestow, on some persons, what others might seek in vain; or because Hester really filled a gap which must otherwise have remained vacant; it is certain that she had ready and fairly requited employment for as many hours as she saw fit to occupy with her needle. Vanity, it may be, chose to mortify itself, by putting on, for ceremonials of pomp and state, the garments that had been wrought by her sinful hands. Her needlework was seen on the ruff of the Governor; military men wore it on their scarfs, and the minister on his band; it decked the baby's little cap; it was shut up,

to be mildewed and molder away, in the coffins of the dead. But it is not recorded that, in a single instance, her skill was called in aid to embroider the white veil which was to cover the pure blushes of a bride. The exception indicated the ever-relentless rigor with which society frowned upon her sin.

Hester sought not to acquire anything beyond a subsistence, of the plainest and most ascetic description, for herself, and a simple abundance for her child. Her own dress was of the coarsest materials and the most somber hue; with only that one ornament,—the scarlet letter,—which it was her doom to wear. The child's attire, on the other hand, was distinguished by a fanciful, or, we might rather say, a fantastic ingenuity, which served, indeed, to heighten the airy charm that early began to develop itself in the little girl, but which appeared to have also a deeper meaning. We may speak further of it hereafter. Except for that small expenditure in the decoration of her infant, Hester bestowed all her superfluous means in charity, on wretches less miserable than herself, and who not unfrequently insulted the hand that fed them. Much of the time, which she might readily have applied to the better efforts of her art, she employed in making coarse garments for the poor. It is probable that there was an idea of penance in this mode of occupation, and that she offered up a real sacrifice of enjoyment, in devoting so many hours to such rude handiwork. She had in her nature a rich, voluptuous, Oriental characteristic,—a taste for the gorgeously beautiful, which, save in the exquisite productions of her needle, found nothing else, in all the possibilities of her life, to exercise itself upon. Women derive a pleasure, incomprehensible to the other sex, from the delicate toil of the needle. To Hester Prynne it might have been a mode of expressing, and therefore soothing, the passion of her life. Like all other joys, she rejected it as sin. This morbid meddling of conscience with an immaterial matter betokened, it is to be feared, no genuine and steadfast penitence, but something doubtful, something that might be deeply wrong, beneath.

In this manner, Hester Prynne came to have a part to perform in the world. With her native energy of character, and rare capacity, it could not entirely cast her off,

although it had set a mark upon her, more intolerable to a woman's heart than that which branded the brow of Cain. In all her intercourse with society, however, there was nothing that made her feel as if she belonged to it. Every gesture, every word, and even the silence of those with whom she came in contact, implied, and often expressed, that she was banished, and as much alone as if she inhabited another sphere, or communicated with the common nature by other organs and senses than the rest of human kind. She stood apart from moral interests, yet close beside them, like a ghost that revisits the familiar fireside, and can no longer make itself seen or felt; no more smile with the household joy, nor mourn with the kindred sorrow; or, should it succeed in manifesting its forbidden sympathy, awakening only terror and horrible repugnance. These emotions, in fact, and its bitterest scorn besides, seemed to be the sole portion that she retained in the universal heart. It was not an age of delicacy; and her position, although she understood it well, and was in little danger of forgetting it, was often brought before her vivid self-perception, like a new anguish, by the rudest touch upon the tenderest spot. The poor, as we have already said, whom she sought out to be the objects of her bounty, often reviled the hand that was stretched forth to succor them. Dames of elevated rank, likewise, whose doors she entered in the way of her occupation, were accustomed to distill drops of bitterness into her heart; sometimes through that alchemy of quiet malice, by which women can concoct a subtle poison from ordinary trifles; and sometimes, also, by a coarser expression, that fell upon the sufferer's defenseless breast like a rough blow upon an ulcerated wound. Hester had schooled herself long and well; she never responded to these attacks, save by a flush of crimson that rose irrepressibly over her pale cheek, and again subsided into the depths of her bosom. She was patient,—a martyr, indeed,—but she forbore to pray for her enemies; lest, in spite of her forgiving aspirations, the words of the blessing should stubbornly twist themselves into a curse.

Continually, and in a thousand other ways, did she feel the innumerable throbs of anguish that had been so cunningly contrived for her by the undying, the ever-active

sentence of the Puritan tribunal. Clergymen paused in the street to address words of exhortation, that brought a crowd, with its mingled grin and frown, around the poor, sinful woman. If she entered a church, trusting to share the Sabbath smile of the Universal Father, it was often her mishap to find herself the text of the discourse. She grew to have a dread of children; for they had imbibed from their parents a vague idea of something horrible in this dreary woman, gliding silently through the town, with never any companion but one only child. Therefore, first allowing her to pass, they pursued her at a distance with shrill cries, and the utterance of a word that had no distinct purport to their own minds, but was none the less terrible to her, as proceeding from lips that babbled it unconsciously. It seemed to argue so wide a diffusion of her shame, that all nature knew of it; it could have caused her no deeper pang, had the leaves of the trees whispered the dark story among themselves,—had the summer breeze murmured about it,—had the wintry blast shrieked it aloud! Another peculiar torture was felt in the gaze of a new eye. When strangers looked curiously at the scarlet letter,—and none ever failed to do so,—they branded it afresh into Hester's soul; so that, oftentimes, she could scarcely refrain, yet always did refrain, from covering the symbol with her hand. But then, again, an accustomed eye had likewise its own anguish to inflict. Its cool stare of familiarity was intolerable. From first to last, in short, Hester Prynne had always this dreadful agony in feeling a human eye upon the token; the spot never grew callous; it seemed, on the contrary, to grow more sensitive with daily torture.

But sometimes, once in many days, or perchance in many months, she felt an eye—a human eye—upon the ignominious brand, that seemed to give a momentary relief, as if half of her agony were shared. The next instant, back it all rushed again, with still a deeper throb of pain; for, in that brief interval, she had sinned anew. Had Hester sinned alone?

Her imagination was somewhat affected, and, had she been of a softer moral and intellectual fiber, would have been still more so, by the strange and solitary anguish of her life. Walking to and fro, with those lonely

footsteps, in the little world with which she was outwardly connected, it now and then appeared to Hester,—if altogether fancy, it was nevertheless too potent to be resisted,—she felt or fancied, then, that the scarlet letter had endowed her with a new sense. She shuddered to believe, yet could not help believing, that it gave her a sympathetic knowledge of the hidden sin in other hearts. She was terror-stricken by the revelations that were thus made. What were they? Could they be other than the insidious whispers of the bad angel, who would fain have persuaded the struggling woman, as yet only half his victim, that the outward guise of purity was but a lie, and that, if truth were everywhere to be shown, a scarlet letter would blaze forth on many a bosom besides Hester Prynne's? Or, must she receive those intimations—so obscure, yet so distinct—as truth? In all her miserable experience, there was nothing else so awful and so loathsome as this sense. It perplexed, as well as shocked her, by the irreverent inopportuneness of the occasions that brought it into vivid action. Sometimes the red infamy upon her breast would give a sympathetic throb, as she passed near a venerable minister or magistrate, the model of piety and justice, to whom that age of antique reverence looked up, as to a mortal man in fellowship with angels. "What evil thing is at hand?" would Hester say to herself. Lifting her reluctant eyes, there would be nothing human within the scope of view, save the form of this earthly saint! Again, a mystic sisterhood would contumaciously assert itself, as she met the sanctified frown of some matron, who, according to the rumor of all tongues, had kept cold snow within her bosom throughout life. That unsunned snow in the matron's bosom, and the burning shame on Hester Prynne's,—what had the two in common? Or, once more, the electric thrill would give her warning,—"Behold, Hester, here is a companion!"—and, looking up, she would detect the eyes of a young maiden glancing at the scarlet letter, shyly and aside, and quickly averted with a faint, chill crimson in her cheeks; as if her purity were somewhat sullied by that momentary glance. O Fiend, whose talisman was that fatal symbol, wouldst thou leave nothing, whether in youth or age, for this poor sinner to revere?—

such loss of faith is ever one of the saddest results of sin. Be it accepted as a proof that all was not corrupt in this poor victim of her own frailty, and man's hard law, that Hester Prynne yet struggled to believe that no fellow-mortal was guilty like herself.

The vulgar, who, in those dreary old times, were always contributing a grotesque horror to what interested their imaginations, had a story about the scarlet letter which we might readily work up into a terrific legend. They averred that the symbol was not mere scarlet cloth, tinged in an earthly dye-pot, but was red-hot with infernal fire, and could be seen glowing all alight, whenever Hester Prynne walked abroad in the night-time. And we must needs say, it seared Hester's bosom so deeply, that perhaps there was more truth in the rumor than our modern incredulity may be inclined to admit.

VI. PEARL

WE have as yet hardly spoken of the infant; that little creature, whose innocent life had sprung, by the inscrutable decree of Providence, a lovely and immortal flower, out of the rank luxuriance of a guilty passion. How strange it seemed to the sad woman, as she watched the growth, and the beauty that became every day more brilliant, and the intelligence that threw its quivering sunshine over the tiny features of this child! Her Pearl!—For so had Hester called her; not as a name expressive of her aspect, which had nothing of the calm, white, unimpassioned luster that would be indicated by the comparison. But she named the infant "Pearl," as being of great price,—purchased with all she had,—her mother's only treasure! How strange, indeed! Man had marked this woman's sin by a scarlet letter, which had such potent and disastrous efficacy that no human sympathy could reach her, save it were sinful like herself. God, as a direct consequence of the sin which man thus punished, had given her a lovely child, whose place was on that same dishonored bosom, to connect her parent forever with the race and descent of mortals, and to be finally a blessed soul in heaven! Yet these thoughts affected Hester Prynne less with hope than apprehension. She knew that her deed had been evil; she could have no faith, therefore, that its result would be good.

Day after day, she looked fearfully into the child's expanding nature, ever dreading to detect some dark and wild peculiarity, that should correspond with the guiltiness to which she owed her being.

Certainly there was no physical defect. By its perfect shape, its vigor, and its natural dexterity in the use of all its untried limbs, the infant was worthy to have been brought forth in Eden; worthy to have been left there, to be the plaything of the angels, after the world's first parents were driven out. The child had a native grace which does not invariably coexist with faultless beauty; its attire, however simple, always impressed the beholder as if it were the very garb that precisely became it best. But little Pearl was not clad in rustic weeds. Her mother with a morbid purpose that may be better understood hereafter, had bought the richest tissues that could be procured, and allowed her imaginative faculty its full play in the arrangement and decoration of the dresses which the child wore before the public eye. So magnificent was the small figure, when thus arrayed, and such was the splendor of Pearl's own proper beauty, shining through the gorgeous robes which might have extinguished a paler loveliness, that there was an absolute circle of radiance around her, on the darksome cottage floor. And yet a russet gown, torn and soiled with the child's rude play, made a picture of her just as perfect. Pearl's aspect was imbued with a spell of infinite variety; in this one child there were many children, comprehending the full scope between the wild-flower prettiness of a peasant-baby, and the pomp, in little, of an infant princess. Throughout all, however, there was a trait of passion, a certain depth of hue, which she never lost; and if, in any of her changes, she had grown fainter or paler, she would have ceased to be herself,—it would have been no longer Pearl!

This outward mutability indicated, and did not more than fairly express, the various properties of her inner life. Her nature appeared to possess depth, too, as well as variety; but—or else Hester's fears deceived her—it lacked reference and adaptation to the world into which she was born. The child could not be made amenable to rules. In giving her existence, a great law had been

broken; and the result was a being whose elements were perhaps beautiful and brilliant, but all in disorder; or with an order peculiar to themselves, amidst which the point of variety and arrangement was difficult or impossible to be discovered. Hester could only account for the child's character—and even then most vaguely and imperfectly—by recalling what she herself had been, during that momentous period while Pearl was imbibing her soul from the spiritual world, and her bodily frame from its material of earth. The mother's impassioned state had been the medium through which were transmitted to the unborn infant the rays of its moral life; and, however white and clear originally, they had taken the deep stains of crimson and gold, the fiery luster, the black shadow, and the untempered light of the intervening substance. Above all, the warfare of Hester's spirit, at that epoch, was perpetuated in Pearl. She could recognize her wild, desperate, defiant mood, the flightiness of her temper, and even some of the very cloud-shapes of gloom and despondency that had brooded in her heart. They were now illuminated by the morning radiance of a young child's disposition, but later in the day of earthly existence might be prolific of the storm and whirlwind.

The discipline of the family, in those days, was of a far more rigid kind than now. The frown, the harsh rebuke, the frequent application of the rod, enjoined by Scriptural authority, were used, not merely in the way of punishment for actual offenses, but as a wholesome regimen for the growth and promotion of all childish virtues. Hester Prynne, nevertheless, the lonely mother of this one child, ran little risk of erring on the side of undue severity. Mindful, however, of her own errors and misfortunes, she early sought to impose a tender, but strict control over the infant immortality that was committed to her charge. But the task was beyond her skill. After testing both smiles and frowns, and proving that neither mode of treatment possessed any calculable influence, Hester was ultimately compelled to stand aside, and permit the child to be swayed by her own impulses. Physical compulsion or restraint was effectual, of course, while it lasted. As to any other kind of discipline, whether addressed to her mind or heart, little Pearl

might or might not be within its reach, in accordance with the caprice that ruled the moment. Her mother, while Pearl was yet an infant, grew acquainted with a certain peculiar look that warned her when it would be labor thrown away to insist, persuade, or plead. It was a look so intelligent, yet inexplicable, so perverse, sometimes so malicious, but generally accompanied by a wild flow of spirits, that Hester could not help questioning, at such moments, whether Pearl were a human child. She seemed rather an airy sprite, which, after playing its fantastic sports for a little while upon the cottage floor, would flit away with a mocking smile. Whenever that look appeared in her wild, bright, deeply black eyes, it invested her with a strange remoteness and intangibility; it was as if she were hovering in the air and might vanish, like a glimmering light, that comes we know not whence, and goes we know not whither. Beholding it, Hester was constrained to rush towards the child,—to pursue the little elf in the flight which she invariably began,—to snatch her to her bosom, with a close pressure and earnest kisses,—not so much from overflowing love, as to assure herself that Pearl was flesh and blood, and not utterly delusive. But Pearl's laugh, when she was caught, though full of merriment and music, made her mother more doubtful than before.

Heart-smitten at this bewildering and baffling spell, that so often came between herself and her sole treasure, whom she had bought so dear, and who was all her world, Hester sometimes burst into passionate tears. Then, perhaps,—for there was no foreseeing how it might affect her,—Pearl would frown, and clench her little fist, and harden her small features into a stern, unsympathizing look of discontent. Not seldom, she would laugh anew, and louder than before, like a thing incapable and unintelligent of human sorrow. Or—but this more rarely happened—she would be convulsed with a rage of grief, and sob out her love for her mother, in broken words, and seem intent on proving that she had a heart, by breaking it. Yet Hester was hardly safe in confiding herself to that gusty tenderness; it passed, as suddenly as it came. Brooding over all these matters, the mother felt like one who has evoked a spirit, but, by some irregularity in

the process of conjuration, has failed to win the master-word that should control this new and incomprehensible intelligence. Her only real comfort was when the child lay in the placidity of sleep. Then she was sure of her, and tasted hours of quiet, sad, delicious happiness; until—perhaps with that perverse expression glimmering from beneath her opening lids—little Pearl awoke!

How soon—with what strange rapidity, indeed!—did Pearl arrive at an age that was capable of social intercourse, beyond the mother's ever-ready smile and nonsense-words! And then what a happiness would it have been, could Hester Prynne have heard her clear, bird-like voice mingling with the uproar of other childish voices, and have distinguished and unraveled her own darling's tones, amid all the entangled outcry of a group of sportive children! But this could never be. Pearl was a born outcast of the infantile world. An imp of evil, emblem and product of sin, she had no right among christened infants. Nothing was more remarkable than the instinct, as it seemed, with which the child comprehended her loneliness; the destiny that had drawn an inviolable circle round about her; the whole peculiarity, in short, of her position in respect to other children. Never, since her release from prison, had Hester met the public gaze without her. In all her walks about the town, Pearl, too, was there; first as the babe in arms, and afterwards as the little girl, small companion of her mother, holding a forefinger with her whole grasp, and tripping along at the rate of three or four footsteps to one of Hester's. She saw the children of the settlement, on the grassy margin of the street, or at the domestic thresholds, disporting themselves in such grim fashion as the Puritanic nurture would permit; playing at going to church, perchance; or at scourging Quakers; or taking scalps in a sham-fight with the Indians; or scaring one another with freaks of imitative witchcraft. Pearl saw, and gazed intently, but never sought to make acquaintance. If spoken to, she would not speak again. If the children gathered about her, as they sometimes did, Pearl would grow positively terrible in her puny wrath, snatching up stones to fling at them; with shrill, incoherent exclamations, that made her mother tremble,

because they had so much the sound of a witch's anathemas in some unknown tongue.

The truth was that the little Puritans, being of the most intolerant brood that ever lived, had got a vague idea of something outlandish, unearthly, or at variance with ordinary fashions, in the mother and child; and therefore scorned them in their hearts, and not unfrequently reviled them with their tongues. Pearl felt the sentiment, and requited it with the bitterest hatred that can be supposed to rankle in a childish bosom. These outbreaks of a fierce temper had a kind of value, and even comfort for her mother; because there was at least an intelligible earnestness in the mood, instead of the fitful caprice that so often thwarted her in the child's manifestations. It appalled her, nevertheless, to discern here, again, a shadowy reflection of the evil that had existed in herself. All this enmity and passion had Pearl inherited, by inalienable right, out of Hester's heart. Mother and daughter stood together in the same circle of seclusion from human society; and in the nature of the child seemed to be perpetuated those unquiet elements that had distracted Hester Prynne before Pearl's birth, but had since begun to be soothed away by the softening influences of maternity.

At home, within and around her mother's cottage, Pearl wanted not a wide and various circle of acquaintance. The spell of life went forth from her ever-creative spirit, and communicated itself to a thousand objects, as a torch kindles a flame wherever it may be applied. The unlikeliest materials—a stick, a bunch of rags, a flower—were the puppets of Pearl's witchcraft, and, without undergoing any outward change, became spiritually adapted to whatever drama occupied the stage of her inner world. Her one baby-voice served a multitude of imaginary personages, old and young, to talk withal. The pine-trees, aged, black and solemn, and flinging groans and other melancholy utterances on the breeze, needed little transformation to figure as Puritan elders; the ugliest weeds of the garden were their children, whom Pearl smote down and uprooted, most unmercifully. It was wonderful, the vast variety of forms into which she threw her intellect, with no continuity, indeed, but darting up and dancing, always in a state of

preternatural activity,—soon sinking down, as if exhausted by so rapid and feverish a tide of life,—and succeeded by other shapes of a similar wild energy. It was like nothing so much as the phantasmagoric play of the northern lights. In the mere exercise of the fancy, however, and the sportiveness of a growing mind, there might be little more than was observable in other children of bright faculties; except as Pearl, in the dearth of human playmates, was thrown more upon the visionary throng which she created. The singularity lay in the hostile feelings with which the child regarded all these offspring of her own heart and mind. She never created a friend, but seemed always to be sowing broadcast the dragon's teeth, whence sprung a harvest of armed enemies, against whom she rushed to battle. It was inexpressibly sad—then what depth of sorrow to a mother, who felt in her own heart the cause!—to observe, in one so young, this constant recognition of an adverse world, and so fierce a training of the energies that were to make good her cause, in the contest that must ensue.

Gazing at Pearl, Hester Prynne often dropped her work upon her knees, and cried out with an agony which she would fain have hidden, but which made utterance for itself, betwixt speech and a groan,—“O Father in Heaven,—if Thou art still my Father,—what is this being which I have brought into the world!” And Pearl, overhearing the ejaculation, or aware, through some more subtle channel, of those throbs of anguish, would turn her vivid and beautiful little face upon her mother, smile with sprite-like intelligence, and resume her play.

One peculiarity of the child's deportment remains yet to be told. The very first thing which she had noticed in her life was—what?—not the mother's smile, responding to it, as other babies do, by that faint, embryo smile of the little mouth, remembered so doubtfully afterwards, and with such fond discussion whether it were indeed a smile. By no means! But that first object of which Pearl seemed to become aware was—shall we say it?—the scarlet letter on Hester's bosom! One day, as her mother stooped over the cradle, the infant's eyes had been caught by the glimmering of the gold embroidery about the letter; and, putting up

her little hand, she grasped at it, smiling, not doubtfully, but with a decided gleam, that gave her face the look of a much older child. Then, gasping for breath, did Hester Prynne clutch the fatal token, instinctively endeavoring to tear it away; so infinite was the torture inflicted by the intelligent touch of Pearl's baby-hand. Again, as if her mother's agonized gesture were meant only to make sport for her, did little Pearl look into her eyes, and smile! From that epoch, except when the child was asleep, Hester had never felt a moment's safety; not a moment's calm enjoyment of her. Weeks, it is true, would sometimes elapse, during which Pearl's gaze might never once be fixed upon the scarlet letter; but then, again, it would come at unawares, like the stroke of sudden death, and always with that peculiar smile, and odd expression of the eyes.

Once, this freakish, elfish cast came into the child's eyes, while Hester was looking at her own image in them, as mothers are fond of doing; and, suddenly,—for women in solitude, and with troubled hearts, are pestered with unaccountable delusions,—she fancied that she beheld, not her own miniature portrait, but another face, in the small black mirror of Pearl's eye. It was a face, fiend-like, full of smiling malice, yet bearing the semblance of features that she had known full well, though seldom with a smile, and never with malice in them. It was as if an evil spirit possessed the child, and had just then peeped forth in mockery. Many a time afterwards had Hester been tortured, though less vividly, by the same illusion.

In the afternoon of a certain summer's day, after Pearl grew big enough to run about, she amused herself with gathering handfuls of wild-flowers, and flinging them, one by one, at her mother's bosom; dancing up and down, like a little elf, whenever she hit the scarlet letter. Hester's first motion had been to cover her bosom with her clasped hand. But, whether from pride or resignation, or a feeling that her penance might best be wrought out by this unutterable pain, she resisted the impulse, and sat erect, pale as death, looking sadly into little Pearl's wild eyes. Still came the battery of flowers, almost invariably hitting the mark, and covering the mother's breast with hurts for which she could find no balm in this world,

nor knew how to seek it in another. At last, her shot being all expended, the child stood still and gazed at Hester, with that little, laughing image of a fiend peeping out—or, whether it peeped or no, her mother so imagined it—from the unsearchable abyss of her black eyes.

"Child, what art thou?" cried the mother.

"O, I am your little Pearl!" answered the child.

But, while she said it, Pearl laughed, and began to dance up and down, with the humorsome gesticulation of a little imp, whose next freak might be to fly up the chimney.

"Art thou my child, in very truth?" asked Hester.

Nor did she put the question altogether idly, but, for the moment, with a portion of genuine earnestness; for, such was Pearl's wonderful intelligence, that her mother half doubted whether she were not acquainted with the secret spell of her existence, and might not now reveal herself.

"Yes; I am little Pearl!" repeated the child, continuing her antics.

"Thou art not my child! Thou art no Pearl of mine!" said the mother, half playfully; for it was often the case that a sportive impulse came over her, in the midst of her deepest suffering. "Tell me, then, what thou art, and who sent thee hither."

"Tell me, mother!" said the child, seriously, coming up to Hester, and pressing herself close to her knees, "Do thou tell me!"

"Thy Heavenly Father sent thee!" answered Hester Prynne.

But she said it with a hesitation that did not escape the acuteness of the child. Whether moved only by her ordinary freakishness, or because an evil spirit prompted her, she put up her small forefinger, and touched the scarlet letter.

"He did not send me!" cried she, positively. "I have no Heavenly Father!"

"Hush, Pearl, hush! Thou must not talk so!" answered the mother, suppressing a groan. "He sent us all into this world. He sent even me, thy mother. Then, much more, thee! Or, if not, thou strange and elfish child, whence didst thou come?"

"Tell me! Tell me!" repeated Pearl, no longer seriously, but laughing and capering

about the floor. "It is thou that must tell me!"

But Hester could not resolve the query, being herself in a dismal labyrinth of doubt. She remembered—betwixt a smile and a shudder—the talk of the neighboring townspeople; who, seeking vainly elsewhere for the child's paternity, and observing some of her odd attributes, had given out that poor little Pearl was a demon offspring; such as, ever since old Catholic times, had occasionally been seen on earth, through the agency of their mother's sin, and to promote some foul and wicked purpose. Luther, according to the scandal of his monkish enemies, was a brat of that hellish breed; nor was Pearl the only child to whom this inauspicious origin was assigned, among the New England Puritans.

VII. THE GOVERNOR'S HALL

HESTER PRYNNE went, one day, to the mansion of Governor Bellingham, with a pair of gloves, which she had fringed and embroidered to his order, and which were to be worn on some great occasion of state; for, though the chances of a popular election had caused this former ruler to descend a step or two from the highest rank, he still held an honorable and influential place among the colonial magistracy.

Another and far more important reason than the delivery of a pair of embroidered gloves impelled Hester, at this time, to seek an interview with a personage of so much power and activity in the affairs of the settlement. It had reached her ears that there was a design on the part of some of the leading inhabitants, cherishing the more rigid order of principles in religion and government, to deprive her of her child. On the supposition that Pearl, as already hinted, was of demon origin, these good people not unreasonably argued that a Christian interest in the mother's soul required them to remove such a stumbling-block from her path. If the child, on the other hand, were really capable of moral and religious growth, and possessed the elements of ultimate salvation, then, surely, it would enjoy all the fairer prospect of these advantages, by being transferred to wiser and better guardianship than Hester Prynne's. Among those who promoted the design, Governor Bellingham

was said to be one of the most busy. It may appear singular, and indeed, not a little ludicrous, that an affair of this kind, which, in later days, would have been referred to no higher jurisdiction than that of the selectmen of the town, should then have been a question publicly discussed, and on which statesmen of eminence took sides. At that epoch of pristine simplicity, however, matters of even slighter public interest, and of far less intrinsic weight, than the welfare of Hester and her child, were strangely mixed up with the deliberations of legislators and acts of state. The period was hardly, if at all, earlier than that of our story, when a dispute concerning the right of property in a pig, not only caused a fierce and bitter contest in the legislative body of the colony, but resulted in an important modification of the framework itself of the legislature.

Full of concern, therefore,—but so conscious of her own right that it seemed scarcely an unequal match between the public, on the one side, and a lonely woman, backed by the sympathies of nature, on the other,—Hester Prynne set forth from her solitary cottage. Little Pearl, of course, was her companion. She was now of an age to run lightly along by her mother's side, and, constantly in motion, from morn till sunset, could have accomplished a much longer journey than that before her. Often, nevertheless, more from caprice than necessity, she demanded to be taken up in arms; but was soon as imperious to be set down again, and frisked onward before Hester on the grassy pathway, with many a harmless trip and tumble. We have spoken of Pearl's rich and luxuriant beauty; a beauty that shone with deep and vivid tints; a bright complexion, eyes possessing intensity both of depth and glow, and hair already of a deep, glossy brown, and which, in after years, would be nearly akin to black. There was fire in her and throughout her; she seemed the unpremeditated offshoot of a passionate moment. Her mother, in contriving the child's garb, had allowed the gorgeous tendencies of her imagination their full play; arraying her in a crimson velvet tunic, of a peculiar cut, abundantly embroidered with fantasies and flourishes of gold-thread. So much strength of coloring, which must have given a wan and pallid aspect to cheeks of a

fainter bloom, was admirably adapted to Pearl's beauty, and made her the very brightest little jet of flame that ever danced upon the earth.

But it was a remarkable attribute of this garb, and, indeed, of the child's whole appearance, that it irresistibly and inevitably reminded the beholder of the token which Hester Prynne was doomed to wear upon her bosom. It was the scarlet letter in another form; the scarlet letter endowed with life! The mother herself—as if the red ignominy were so deeply scorched into her brain that all her conceptions assumed its form—had carefully wrought out the similitude; lavishing many hours of morbid ingenuity, to create an analogy between the object of her affection and the emblem of her guilt and torture. But, in truth, Pearl was the one, as well as the other; and only in consequence of that identity had Hester contrived so perfectly to represent the scarlet letter in her appearance.

As the two wayfarers came within the precincts of the town, the children of the Puritans looked up from their play,—or what passed for play with those somber little urchins,—and spake gravely one to another:—

“Behold, verily, there is the woman of the scarlet letter; and, of a truth, moreover, there is the likeness of the scarlet letter running along by her side! Come, therefore, and let us fling mud at them!”

But Pearl, who was a dauntless child, after frowning, stamping her foot, and shaking her little hand with a variety of threatening gestures, suddenly made a rush at the knot of her enemies, and put them all to flight. She resembled, in her fierce pursuit of them, an infant pestilence,—the scarlet fever, or some such half-fledged angel of judgment,—whose mission was to punish the sins of the rising generation. She screamed and shouted, too, with a terrific volume of sound, which, doubtless, caused the hearts of the fugitives to quake within them. The victory accomplished, Pearl returned quietly to her mother, and looked up, smiling, into her face.

Without further adventure, they reached the dwelling of Governor Bellingham. This was a large wooden house, built in a fashion of which there are specimens still extant in the streets of our older towns; now moss-

grown, crumbling to decay, and melancholy at heart with the many sorrowful or joyful occurrences, remembered or forgotten, that have happened, and passed away, within their dusky chambers. Then, however, there was the freshness of the passing year on its exterior, and the cheerfulness, gleaming forth from the sunny windows, of a human habitation, into which death had never entered. It had, indeed, a very cheery aspect; the walls being overspread with a kind of stucco, in which fragments of broken glass were plentifully intermixed; so that, when the sunshine fell aslant-wise over the front of the edifice, it glittered and sparkled as if diamonds had been flung against it by the double handful. The brilliancy might have befitted Aladdin's palace, rather than the mansion of a grave old Puritan ruler. It was further decorated with strange and seemingly cabalistic figures and diagrams, suitable to the quaint taste of the age, which had been drawn in the stucco when newly laid on, and had now grown hard and durable, for the admiration of after times.

Pearl, looking at this bright wonder of a house, began to caper and dance, and imperatively required that the whole breadth of sunshine should be stripped off its front, and given her to play with.

“No, my little Pearl!” said her mother. “Thou must gather thine own sunshine. I have none to give thee!”

They approached the door; which was of an arched form, and flanked on each side by a narrow tower or projection of the edifice, in both of which were lattice-windows, with wooden shutters to close over them at need. Lifting the iron hammer that hung at the portal, Hester Prynne gave a summons, which was answered by one of the Governor's bond-servants; a free-born Englishman, but now a seven years' slave. During that term he was to be the property of his master, and as much a commodity of bargain and sale as an ox, or a joint-stool. The serf wore the blue coat, which was the customary garb of serving-men of that period, and long before, in the old hereditary halls of England.

“Is the worshipful Governor Bellingham within?” inquired Hester.

“Yea, forsooth,” replied the bond-servant, staring with wide-open eyes at the scarlet letter, which, being a newcomer in the

country, he had never before seen. "Yea, his honorable worship is within. But he hath a godly minister or two with him, and likewise a leech. Ye may not see his worship now."

"Nevertheless, I will enter," answered Hester Prynne, and the bond-servant, perhaps judging from the decision of her air, and the glittering symbol in her bosom, that she was a great lady in the land, offered no opposition.

So the mother and little Pearl were admitted into the hall of entrance. With many variations, suggested by the nature of his building-materials, diversity of climate, and a different mode of social life, Governor Bellingham had planned his new habitation after the residences of gentlemen of fair estate in his native land. Here, then, was a wide and reasonably lofty hall, extending through the whole depth of the house, and forming a medium of general communication, more or less directly, with all the other apartments. At one extremity, this spacious room was lighted by the windows of the two towers, which formed a small recess on either side of the portal. At the other end, though partly muffled by a curtain, it was more powerfully illuminated by one of those embowed hall-windows which we read of in old books, and which was provided with a deep and cushioned seat. Here, on the cushion, lay a folio tome, probably of the Chronicles of England, or other such substantial literature; even as, in our own days, we scatter gilded volumes on the center-table, to be turned over by the casual guest. The furniture of the hall consisted of some ponderous chairs, the backs of which were elaborately carved with wreaths of oaken flowers; and likewise a table in the same taste; the whole being of the Elizabethan age, or perhaps earlier, and heirlooms, transferred hither from the Governor's paternal home. On the table—in token that the sentiment of old English hospitality had not been left behind—stood a large pewter tankard, at the bottom of which, had Hester or Pearl peeped into it, they might have seen the frothy remnant of a recent draught of ale.

On the wall hung a row of portraits, representing the forefathers of the Bellingham lineage, some with armor on their breasts, and others with stately ruffs and robes of

peace. All were characterized by the sternness and severity which old portraits so invariably put on; as if they were the ghosts, rather than the pictures, of departed worthies, and were gazing with harsh and intolerant criticism at the pursuits and enjoyments of living men.

At about the center of the oaken panels that lined the hall was suspended a suit of mail, not, like the pictures, an ancestral relic, but of the most modern date; for it had been manufactured by a skillful armorer in London, the same year in which Governor Bellingham came over to New England. There was a steel head-piece, a cuirass, a gorget, and greaves, with a pair of gauntlets and a sword hanging beneath; all, and especially the helmet and breastplate, so highly burnished as to glow with white radiance, and scatter an illumination everywhere about upon the floor. This bright panoply was not meant for mere idle show, but had been worn by the Governor on many a solemn muster and training field, and had glittered, moreover, at the head of a regiment in the Pequod war. For, though bred a lawyer, and accustomed to speak of Bacon, Coke, Noye, and Finch as his professional associates, the exigencies of this new country had transformed Governor Bellingham into a soldier as well as a statesman and ruler.

Little Pearl—who was as greatly pleased with the gleaming armor as she had been with the glittering frontispiece of the house—spent some time looking into the polished mirror of the breastplate.

"Mother," cried she, "I see you here. Look! Look!"

Hester looked, by way of humoring the child; and she saw that, owing to the peculiar effect of this convex mirror, the scarlet letter was represented in exaggerated and gigantic proportions, so as to be greatly the most prominent feature of her appearance. In truth, she seemed absolutely hidden behind it. Pearl pointed upward, also, at a similar picture in the head-piece; smiling at her mother, with the elfish intelligence that was so familiar an expression on her small physiognomy. That look of naughty merriement was likewise reflected in the mirror, with so much breadth and intensity of effect, that it made Hester Prynne feel as if it could not be the image of her own child, but of an

imp who was seeking to mold itself into Pearl's shape.

"Come along, Pearl," said she, drawing her away. "Come and look into this fair garden. It may be we shall see flowers there; more beautiful ones than we find in the woods."

Pearl, accordingly, ran to the bow-window, at the farther end of the hall, and looked along the vista of a graden-walk, carpeted with closely shaven grass, and bordered with some rude and immature attempt at shrubbery. But the proprietor appeared already to have relinquished, as hopeless, the effort to perpetuate on this side of the Atlantic, in a hard soil and amid the close struggle for subsistence, the native English taste for ornamental gardening. Cabbages grew in plain sight; and a pumpkin-vine, rooted at some distance, had run across the intervening space, and deposited one of its gigantic products directly beneath the hall-window; as if to warn the Governor that this great lump of vegetable gold was as rich an ornament as New England earth would offer him. There were a few rose-bushes, however, and a number of apple-trees, probably the descendants of those planted by the Reverend Mr. Blackstone, the first settler of the peninsula; that half-mythological personage, who rides through our early annals, seated on the back of a bull.

Pearl, seeing the rose-bushes, began to cry for a red rose, and would not be pacified.

"Hush, child, hush!" said her mother, earnestly. "Do not cry, dear little Pearl! I hear voices in the garden. The Governor is coming, and gentlemen along with him!"

In fact, adown the vista of the garden avenue a number of persons were seen approaching towards the house. Pearl, in utter scorn of her mother's attempt to quiet her, gave an eldritch scream, and then became silent; not from any notion of obedience, but because the quick and mobile curiosity of her disposition was excited by the appearance of these new personages.

VIII. THE ELF-CHILD AND THE MINISTER

GOVERNOR BELLINGHAM, in a loose gown and easy cap,—such as elderly gentlemen loved to endue themselves with, in their domestic privacy,—walked foremost, and appeared to be showing off his estate, and

expatiating on his projected improvements. The wide circumference of an elaborate ruff beneath his gray beard, in the antiquated fashion of King James's reign, caused his head to look not a little like that of John the Baptist in a charger. The impression made by his aspect, so rigid and severe, and frost-bitten with more than autumnal age, was hardly in keeping with the appliances of worldly enjoyment wherewith he had evidently done his utmost to surround himself. But it is an error to suppose that our grave forefathers—though accustomed to speak and think of human existence as a state merely of trial and warfare, and though unfeignedly prepared to sacrifice goods and life at the behest of duty—made it a matter of conscience to reject such means of comfort, or even luxury, as lay fairly within their grasp. This creed was never taught, for instance, by the venerable pastor, John Wilson, whose beard, white as a snow-drift, was seen over Governor Bellingham's shoulder; while its wearer suggested that pears and peaches might yet be naturalized in the New England climate, and that purple grapes might possibly be compelled to flourish, against the sunny garden-wall. The old clergyman, nurtured at the rich bosom of the English Church, had a long-established and legitimate taste for all good and comfortable things; and however stern he might show himself in the pulpit, or in his public reproof of such transgressions as that of Hester Prynne, still, the genial benevolence of his private life had won him warmer affection than was accorded to any of his professional contemporaries.

Behind the Governor and Mr. Wilson came two other guests: one the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, whom the reader may remember as having taken a brief and reluctant part in the scene of Hester Prynne's disgrace; and, in close companionship with him, old Roger Chillingworth, a person of great skill in physic, who, for two or three years past, had been settled in the town. It was understood that this learned man was the physician as well as friend of the young minister, whose health had severely suffered, of late, by his too unreserved self-sacrifice to the labors and duties of the pastoral relation.

The Governor, in advance of his visitors, ascended one or two steps, and, throwing

open the leaves of the great hall-window, found himself close to little Pearl. The shadow of the curtain fell on Hester Prynne, and partially concealed her.

"What have we here?" said Governor Bellingham, looking with surprise at the scarlet little figure before him. "I profess, I have never seen the like, since my days of vanity in old King James's time, when I was wont to esteem it a high favor to be admitted to a court mask! There used to be a swarm of these small apparitions, in holiday time; and we called them children of the Lord of Misrule. But how gat such a guest into my hall?"

"Ay, indeed!" cried good old Mr. Wilson. "What little bird of scarlet plumage may this be? Methinks I have seen just such figures, when the sun has been shining through a richly painted window, and tracing out the golden and crimson images across the floor. But that was in the old land. Prithee, young one, who art thou, and what has ailed thy mother to bedizen thee in this strange fashion? Art thou a Christian child,—ha? Dost know thy catechism? Or art thou one of those naughty elfs or fairies, whom we thought to have left behind us, with other relics of Papistry, in merry old England?"

"I am mother's child," answered the scarlet vision, "and my name is Pearl!"

"Pearl?—Ruby, rather!—or Coral!—or Red Rose, at the very least, judging from thy hue!" responded the old minister, putting forth his hand in a vain attempt to pat little Pearl on the cheek. "But where is this mother of thine? Ah! I see," he added; and, turning to Governor Bellingham, whispered, "This is the selfsame child of whom we have held speech together; and behold here the unhappy woman, Hester Prynne, her mother!"

"Sayest thou so?" cried the Governor. "Nay, we might have judged that such a child's mother must needs be a scarlet woman, and a worthy type of her of Babylon! But she comes at a good time; and we will look into this matter forthwith."

Governor Bellingham stepped through the window into the hall, followed by his three guests.

"Hester Prynne," said he, fixing his naturally stern regard on the wearer of the

scarlet letter, "there hath been much question concerning thee, of late. The point hath been weightily discussed, whether we, that are of authority and influence, do well discharge our consciences by trusting an immortal soul, such as there is in yonder child, to the guidance of one who hath stumbled and fallen, amid the pitfalls of this world. Speak thou, the child's own mother! Were it not, thinkest thou, for thy little one's temporal and eternal welfare that she be taken out of thy charge, and clad soberly, and disciplined strictly, and instructed in the truths of heaven and earth? What canst thou do for the child, in this kind?"

"I can teach my little Pearl what I have learned from this!" answered Hester Prynne, laying her finger on the red token.

"Woman, it is thy badge of shame!" replied the stern magistrate. "It is because of the stain which that letter indicates, that we would transfer thy child to other hands."

"Nevertheless," said the mother, calmly, though growing more pale, "this badge hath taught me—it daily teaches me—it is teaching me at this moment—lessons whereof my child may be the wiser and better, albeit they can profit nothing to myself."

"We will judge warily," said Bellingham, "and look well what we are about to do. Good Master Wilson, I pray you, examine this Pearl,—since that is her name,—and see whether she hath had such Christian nurture as befits a child of her age."

The old minister seated himself in an arm-chair, and made an effort to draw Pearl betwixt his knees. But the child, unaccustomed to the touch or familiarity of any but her mother, escaped through the open window, and stood on the upper step looking like a wild tropical bird of rich plumage, ready to take flight into the upper air. Mr. Wilson, not a little astonished at this outbreak,—for he was a grandfatherly sort of personage, and usually a vast favorite with children,—essayed, however, to proceed with the examination.

"Pearl," said he, with great solemnity, "thou must take heed to instruction, that so, in due season, thou mayest wear in thy bosom the pearl of great price. Canst thou tell me, my child, who made thee?"

Now Pearl knew well enough who made

her; for Hester Prynne, the daughter of a pious home, very soon after her talk with the child about her Heavenly Father, had begun to inform her of those truths which the human spirit, at whatever stage of immaturity, imbibes with such eager interest. Pearl, therefore, so large were the attainments of her three years' lifetime, could have borne a fair examination in the New England Primer, or the first column of the Westminster Catechisms, although unacquainted with the outward form of either of those celebrated works. But that perversity which all children have more or less of, and of which little Pearl had a tenfold portion, now, at the most inopportune moment, took thorough possession of her, and closed her lips, or impelled her to speak words amiss. After putting her finger in her mouth, with many ungracious refusals to answer good Mr. Wilson's question, the child finally announced that she had not been made at all, but had been plucked by her mother off the bush of wild roses that grew by the prison-door.

This fantasy was probably suggested by the near proximity of the Governor's red roses, as Pearl stood outside of the window; together with her recollection of the prison rose-bush, which she had passed in coming hither.

Old Roger Chillingworth, with a smile on his face, whispered something in the young clergyman's ear. Hester Prynne looked at the man of skill, and even then, with her fate hanging in the balance, was startled to perceive what a change had come over his features,—how much uglier they were,—how his dark complexion seemed to have grown duskier, and his figure more misshapen,—since the days when she had familiarly known him. She met his eyes for an instant, but was immediately constrained to give all her attention to the scene now going forward.

"This is awful!" cried the Governor, slowly recovering from the astonishment into which Pearl's response had thrown him. "Here is a child of three years old, and she cannot tell who made her! Without question, she is equally in the dark as to her soul, its present depravity, and future destiny! Methinks, gentlemen, we need inquire no further."

Hester caught hold of Pearl, and drew her forcibly into her arms, confronting the old Puritan magistrate with almost a fierce expression. Alone in the world, cast off by it, and with this sole treasure to keep her heart alive, she felt that she possessed indefeasible rights against the world, and was ready to defend them to the death.

"God gave me the child!" cried she. "He gave her in requital of all things else, which ye had taken from me. She is my happiness!—she is my torture, none the less! Pearl keeps me here in life! Pearl punishes me too! See ye not, she is the scarlet letter, only capable of being loved, and so endowed with a million-fold the power of retribution for my sin? Ye shall not take her! I will die first!"

"My poor woman," said the not unkind old minister, "the child shall be well cared for!—far better than thou canst do it."

"God gave her into my keeping," repeated Hester Prynne, raising her voice almost to a shriek. "I will not give her up!"—And here, by a sudden impulse, she turned to the young clergyman, Mr. Dimmesdale, at whom, up to this moment, she had seemed hardly so much as once to direct her eyes.—"Speak thou for me!" cried she. "Thou wast my pastor, and hadst charge of my soul, and knowest me better than these men can. I will not lose the child! Speak for me! Thou knowest,—for thou hast sympathies which these men lack!—thou knowest what is in my heart, and what are a mother's rights, and how much the stronger they are, when that mother has but her child and the scarlet letter! Look thou to it! I will not lose the child! Look to it!"

At this wild and singular appeal, which indicated that Hester Prynne's situation had provoked her to little less than madness, the young minister at once came forward, pale, and holding his hand over his heart, as was his custom whenever his peculiarly nervous temperament was thrown into agitation. He looked now more careworn and emaciated than as we described him at the scene of Hester's public ignominy; and whether it were his failing health, or whatever the cause might be, his large dark eyes had a world of pain in their troubled and melancholy depth.

"There is truth in what she says," began

the minister, with a voice sweet, tremulous, but powerful, insomuch that the hall echoed, and the hollow armor rang with it,—“truth in what Hester says, and in the feeling which inspires her! God gave her the child, and gave her, too, an instinctive knowledge of its nature and requirements,—both seemingly so peculiar,—which no other mortal being can possess. And, moreover, is there not a quality of awful sacredness in the relation between this mother and this child?”

“Ay!—how is that, good Master Dimmesdale?” interrupted the Governor. “Make that plain, I pray you!”

“It must be even so,” resumed the minister. “For if we deem it otherwise, do we not thereby say that the Heavenly Father, the Creator of all flesh, hath lightly recognized a deed of sin, and made of no account the distinction between unhallowed lust and holy love? This child of its father’s guilt and its mother’s shame hath come from the hand of God, to work in many ways upon her heart, who pleads so earnestly, and with such bitterness of spirit, the right to keep her. It was meant for a blessing; for the one blessing of her life! It was meant, doubtless, as the mother herself hath told us, for a retribution too; a torture to be felt at many an unthought-of moment; a pang, a sting, an ever-recurring agony, in the midst of a troubled joy! Hath she not expressed this thought in the garb of the poor child, so forcibly reminding us of that red symbol which sears her bosom?”

“Well said, again!” cried good Mr. Wilson. “I feared the woman had no better thought than to make a mountebank of her child!”

“O, not so!—not so!” continued Mr. Dimmesdale. “She recognizes, believe me, the solemn miracle which God hath wrought, in the existence of that child. And may she feel, too,—what, methinks, is the very truth,—that this boon was meant, above all things else, to keep the mother’s soul alive, and to preserve her from blacker depths of sin into which Satan might else have sought to plunge her! Therefore it is good for this poor, sinful woman that she hath an infant immortality, a being capable of eternal joy or sorrow, confided to her care,—to be trained up by her to righteousness,—to

remind her, at every moment, of her fall,—but yet to teach her, as it were by the Creator’s sacred pledge, that, if she bring the child to heaven, the child also will bring its parent thither! Herein is the sinful mother happier than the sinful father. For Hester Prynne’s sake, then, and no less for the poor child’s sake, let us leave them as Providence hath seen fit to place them!”

“You speak, my friend, with a strange earnestness,” said old Roger Chillingworth, smiling at him.

“And there is a weighty import in what my young brother hath spoken,” added the Reverend Mr. Wilson. “What say you, worshipful Master Bellingham? Hath he not pleaded well for the poor woman?”

“Indeed hath he,” answered the magistrate, “and hath adduced such arguments, that we will even leave the matter as it now stands; so long, at least, as there shall be no further scandal in the woman. Care must be had, nevertheless, to put the child to due and stated examination in the catechism, at thy hands or Master Dimmesdale’s. Moreover, at a proper season, the tithing-men must take heed that she go both to school and to meeting.”

The young minister, on ceasing to speak, had withdrawn a few steps from the group, and stood with his face partially concealed in the heavy folds of the window-curtain; while the shadow of his figure, which the sunlight cast upon the floor, was tremulous with the vehemence of his appeal. Pearl, that wild and flighty little elf, stole softly towards him, and taking his hand in the grasp of both her own, laid her cheek against it; a caress so tender, and withal so unobtrusive, that her mother, who was looking on, asked herself,—“Is that my Pearl?” Yet she knew that there was love in the child’s heart, although it mostly revealed itself in passion, and hardly twice in her lifetime had been softened by such gentleness as now. The minister,—for, save the long-sought regards of woman, nothing is sweeter than these marks of childish preference, accorded spontaneously by a spiritual instinct, and therefore seeming to imply in us something truly worthy to be loved,—the minister looked round, laid his hand on the child’s head, hesitated an instant, and then kissed her brow. Little Pearl’s unwonted mood of

sentiment lasted no longer; she laughed, and went capering down the hall, so airily, that old Mr. Wilson raised a question whether even her tiptoes touched the floor.

"The little baggage hath witchcraft in her, I profess," said he to Mr. Dimmesdale. "She needs no old woman's broomstick to fly withal!"

"A strange child!" remarked old Roger Chillingworth. "It is easy to see the mother's part in her. Would it be beyond a philosopher's research, think ye, gentlemen, to analyze that child's nature, and, from its make and mold, to give a shrewd guess at the father?"

"Nay; it would be sinful, in such a question, to follow the clew of profane philosophy," said Mr. Wilson. "Better to fast and pray upon it; and still better, it may be, to leave the mystery as we find it, unless Providence reveal it of its own accord. Thereby, every good Christian man hath a title to show a father's kindness towards the poor, deserted babe."

The affair being so satisfactorily concluded, Hester Prynne, with Pearl, departed from the house. As they descended the steps, it is averred that the lattice of a chamber-window was thrown open, and forth into the sunny day was thrust the face of Mistress Hibbins, Governor Bellingham's bitter-tempered sister, and the same who, a few years later, was executed as a witch.

"Hist, hist!" said she, while her ill-omened physiognomy seemed to cast a shadow over the cheerful newness of the house. "Wilt thou go with us to-night? There will be a merry company in the forest; and I wellnigh promised the Black Man that comely Hester Prynne should make one."

"Make my excuse to him, so please you!" answered Hester, with a triumphant smile. "I must tarry at home, and keep watch over my little Pearl. Had they taken her from me, I would willingly have gone with thee into the forest, and signed my name in the Black Man's book too, and that with mine own blood!"

"We shall have thee there anon!" said the witch-lady, frowning, as she drew back her head.

But here—if we suppose this interview betwixt Mistress Hibbins and Hester Prynne

to be authentic, and not a parable—was already an illustration of the young minister's argument against sundering the relation of a fallen mother to the offspring of her frailty. Even thus early had the child saved her from Satan's snare.

IX. THE LEECH

UNDER the appellation of Roger Chillingworth, the reader will remember, was hidden another name, which its former wearer had resolved should never more be spoken. It has been related, how, in the crowd that witnessed Hester Prynne's ignominious exposure, stood a man, elderly, travel-worn, who, just emerging from the perilous wilderness, beheld the woman, in whom he hoped to find embodied the warmth and cheerfulness of home, set up as a type of sin before the people. Her matronly fame was trodden under all men's feet. Infamy was babbling around her in the public market-place. For her kindred, should the tidings ever reach them, and for the companions of her unspotted life, there remained nothing but the contagion of her dishonor; which would not fail to be distributed in strict accordance and proportion with the intimacy and sacredness of their previous relationship. Then why—since the choice was with himself—should the individual, whose connection with the fallen woman had been the most intimate and sacred of them all, come forward to vindicate his claim to an inheritance so little desirable? He resolved not to be pilloried beside her on her pedestal of shame. Unknown to all but Hester Prynne, and possessing the lock and key of her silence, he chose to withdraw his name from the roll of mankind, and, as regarded his former ties and interests, to vanish out of life as completely as if he indeed lay at the bottom of the ocean, whither rumor had long ago consigned him. This purpose once effected, new interests would immediately spring up, and likewise a new purpose; dark, it is true, if not guilty, but of force enough to engage the full strength of his faculties.

In pursuance of this resolve, he took up his residence in the Puritan town, as Roger Chillingworth, without other introduction than the learning and intelligence of which he possessed more than a common measure. As his studies, at a previous period of his life,

had made him extensively acquainted with the medical science of the day, it was as a physician that he presented himself, and as such was cordially received. Skillful men, of the medical and chirurgical profession, were of rare occurrence in the colony. They seldom, it would appear, partook of the religious zeal that brought other emigrants across the Atlantic. In their researches into the human frame, it may be that the higher and more subtle faculties of such men were materialized, and that they lost the spiritual view of existence amid the intricacies of that wondrous mechanism, which seemed to involve art enough to comprise all of life within itself. At all events, the health of the good town of Boston, so far as medicine had aught to do with it, had hitherto lain in the guardianship of an aged deacon and apothecary, whose piety and godly deportment were stronger testimonials in his favor than any that he could have produced in the shape of a diploma. The only surgeon was one who combined the occasional exercise of that noble art with the daily and habitual flourish of a razor. To such a professional body Roger Chillingworth was a brilliant acquisition. He soon manifested his familiarity with the ponderous and imposing machinery of antique physic; in which every remedy contained a multitude of far-fetched and heterogeneous ingredients, as elaborately compounded as if the proposed result had been the Elixir of Life. In his Indian captivity, moreover, he had gained much knowledge of the properties of native herbs and roots; nor did he conceal from his patients, that these simple medicines, Nature's boon to the untutored savage, had quite as large a share of his own confidence as the European pharmacopœia, which so many learned doctors had spent centuries in elaborating.

This learned stranger was exemplary, as regarded, at least, the outward forms of a religious life, and, early after his arrival, had chosen for his spiritual guide the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale. The young divine, whose scholar-like renown still lived in Oxford, was considered by his more fervent admirers as little less than a heaven-ordained apostle, destined, should he live and labor for the ordinary term of life, to do as great deeds for the now feeble New England Church, as

the early Fathers had achieved for the infancy of the Christian faith. About this period, however, the health of Mr. Dimmesdale had evidently begun to fail. By those best acquainted with his habits, the paleness of the young minister's cheek was accounted for by his too earnest devotion to study, his scrupulous fulfillment of parochial duty, and, more than all, by the fasts and vigils of which he made a frequent practice, in order to keep the grossness of this earthly state from clogging and obscuring his spiritual lamp. Some declared, that, if Mr. Dimmesdale were really going to die, it was cause enough that the world was not worthy to be any longer trodden by his feet. He himself, on the other hand, with characteristic humility, avowed his belief, that, if Providence should see fit to remove him, it would be because of his own unworthiness to perform its humblest mission here on earth. With all this difference of opinion as to the cause of his decline, there could be no question of the fact. His form grew emaciated; his voice, though still rich and sweet, had a certain melancholy prophecy of decay in it; he was often observed, on any slight alarm or other sudden accident, to put his hand over his heart, with first a flush and then a paleness, indicative of pain.

Such was the young clergyman's condition, and so imminent the prospect that his dawning light would be extinguished, all untimely, when Roger Chillingworth made his advent to the town. His first entry on the scene, few people could tell whence, dropping down, as it were, out of the sky, or starting from the nether earth, had an aspect of mystery, which was easily heightened to the miraculous. He was now known to be a man of skill; it was observed that he gathered herbs, and the blossoms of wild-flowers, and dug up roots, and plucked off twigs from the forest-trees, like one acquainted with hidden virtues in what was valueless to common eyes. He was heard to speak of Sir Kenelm Digby, and other famous men,—whose scientific attainments were esteemed hardly less than supernatural,—as having been his correspondents or associates. Why, with such rank in the learned world, had he come hither? What could he, whose sphere was in great cities, be seeking in the wilderness? In answer to

this query, a rumor gained ground,—and, however absurd, was entertained by some very sensible people,—that Heaven had wrought an absolute miracle, by transporting an eminent Doctor of Physic, from a German university, bodily through the air, and setting him down at the door of Mr. Dimmesdale's study! Individuals of wiser faith, indeed, who knew that Heaven promotes its purposes without aiming at the stage-effect of what is called miraculous interposition, were inclined to see a providential hand in Roger Chillingworth's so opportune arrival.

This idea was countenanced by the strong interest which the physician ever manifested in the young clergyman; he attached himself to him as a parishioner, and sought to win a friendly regard and confidence from his naturally reserved sensibility. He expressed great alarm at his pastor's state of health, but was anxious to attempt the cure, and, if early undertaken, seemed not despondent of a favorable result. The elders, the deacons, the motherly dames, and the young and fair maidens, of Mr. Dimmesdale's flock, were alike importunate that he should make trial of the physician's frankly offered skill. Mr. Dimmesdale gently repelled their entreaties.

"I need no medicine," said he.

But how could the young minister say so, when, with every successive Sabbath, his cheek was paler and thinner, and his voice more tremulous than before,—when it had now become a constant habit, rather than a casual gesture, to press his hand over his heart? Was he weary of his labors? Did he wish to die? These questions were solemnly propounded to Mr. Dimmesdale by the elder ministers of Boston and the deacons of his church, who, to use their own phrase, "dealt with him" on the sin of rejecting the aid which Providence so manifestly held out. He listened in silence, and finally promised to confer with the physician.

"Were it God's will," said the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, when, in fulfillment of this pledge, he requested old Roger Chillingworth's professional advice, "I could be well content that my labors, and my sorrows, and my sins, and my pains, should shortly end with me, and what is earthly of them be buried in my grave, and the spiritual go with me to my eternal state, rather than that you

should put your skill to the proof in my behalf."

"Ah," replied Roger Chillingworth, with that quietness which, whether imposed or natural, marked all his deportment, "it is thus that a young clergyman is apt to speak. Youthful men, not having taken a deep root, give up their hold of life so easily! And saintly men, who walk with God on earth, would fain be away, to walk with him on the golden pavements of the New Jerusalem."

"Nay," rejoined the young minister, putting his hand to his heart, with a flush of pain flitting over his brow, "were I worthier to walk there, I could be better content to toil here."

"Good men ever interpret themselves too meanly," said the physician.

In this manner, the mysterious old Roger Chillingworth became the medical adviser of the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale. As not only the disease interested the physician, but he was strongly moved to look into the character and qualities of the patient, these two men, so different in age, came gradually to spend much time together. For the sake of the minister's health, and to enable the leech to gather plants with healing balm in them, they took long walks on the sea-shore, or in the forest; mingling various talk with the splash and murmur of the waves, and the solemn wind-anthem among the tree-tops. Often, likewise, one was the guest of the other, in his place of study and retirement. There was a fascination for the minister in the company of the man of science, in whom he recognized an intellectual cultivation of no moderate depth or scope; together with a range and freedom of ideas that he would have vainly looked for among the members of his own profession. In truth, he was startled, if not shocked, to find this attribute in the physician. Mr. Dimmesdale was a true priest, a true religionist, with the reverential sentiment largely developed, and an order of mind that impelled itself powerfully along the track of a creed, and wore its passage continually deeper with the lapse of time. In no state of society would he have been what is called a man of liberal views; it would always be essential to his peace to feel the pressure of a faith about him, supporting, while it confined him within its iron framework. Not the less, however, though

with a tremulous enjoyment, did he feel the occasional relief of looking at the universe through the medium of another kind of intellect than those with which he habitually held converse. It was as if a window were thrown open, admitting a freer atmosphere into the close and stifled study, where his life was wasting itself away, amid lamplight, or obstructed day-beams, and the musty fragrance, be it sensual or moral, that exhales from books. But the air was too fresh and chill to be long breathed with comfort. So the minister, and the physician with him, withdrew again within the limits of what their church defined as orthodox.

Thus Roger Chillingworth scrutinized his patient carefully, both as he saw him in his ordinary life, keeping an accustomed pathway in the range of thoughts familiar to him, and as he appeared when thrown amidst other moral scenery, the novelty of which might call out something new to the surface of his character. He deemed it essential, it would seem, to know the man, before attempting to do him good. Wherever there is a heart and an intellect, the diseases of the physical frame are tinged with the peculiarities of these. In Arthur Dimmesdale, thought and imagination were so active, and sensibility so intense, that the bodily infirmity would be likely to have its groundwork there. So Roger Chillingworth—the man of skill, the kind and friendly physician—strove to go deep into his patient's bosom, delving among his principles, prying into his recollections, and probing everything with a cautious touch, like a treasure-seeker in a dark cavern. Few secrets can escape an investigator, who has opportunity and license to undertake such a quest, and skill to follow it up. A man burdened with a secret should especially avoid the intimacy of his physician. If the latter possess native sagacity, and a nameless something more,—let us call it intuition; if he show no intrusive egotism, nor disagreeably prominent characteristics of his own; if he have the power, which must be born with him, to bring his mind into such affinity with his patient's that this last shall unawares have spoken what he imagines himself only to have thought; if such revelations be received without tumult, and acknowledged not so often by an uttered sympathy as by silence,

an inarticulate breath, and here and there a word, to indicate that all is understood; if to these qualifications of a confidant be joined the advantages afforded by his recognized character as a physician;—then, at some inevitable moment, will the soul of the sufferer be dissolved, and flow forth in a dark, but transparent stream, bringing all its mysteries into the daylight.

Roger Chillingworth possessed all, or most, of the attributes above enumerated. Nevertheless, time went on; a kind of intimacy, as we have said, grew up between these two cultivated minds, which had as wide a field as the whole sphere of human thought and study to meet upon; they discussed every topic of ethics and religion, of public affairs and private character; they talked much, on both sides, of matters that seemed personal to themselves; and yet no secret, such as the physician fancied must exist there, ever stole out of the minister's consciousness into his companion's ear. The latter had his suspicions, indeed, that even the nature of Mr. Dimmesdale's bodily disease had never fairly been revealed to him. It was a strange reserve!

After a time, at a hint from Roger Chillingworth, the friends of Mr. Dimmesdale effected an arrangement by which the two were lodged in the same house; so that every ebb and flow of the minister's life-tide might pass under the eye of his anxious and attached physician. There was much joy throughout the town, when this greatly desirable object was attained. It was held to be the best possible measure for the young clergyman's welfare; unless, indeed, as often urged by such as felt authorized to do so, he had selected some one of the many blooming damsels, spiritually devoted to him, to become his devoted wife. This latter step, however, there was no present prospect that Arthur Dimmesdale would be prevailed upon to take; he rejected all suggestions of the kind, as if priestly celibacy were one of his articles of church-discipline. Doomed by his own choice, therefore, as Mr. Dimmesdale so evidently was, to eat his unsavory morsel always at another's board, and endure the life-long chill which must be his lot who seeks to warm himself only at another's fireside, it truly seemed that this sagacious, experienced, benevolent old physician, with

his concord of paternal and reverential love for the young pastor, was the very man, of all mankind, to be constantly within reach of his voice.

The new abode of the two friends was with a pious widow, of good social rank, who dwelt in a house covering pretty nearly the site on which the venerable structure of King's Chapel has since been built. It had the graveyard, originally Isaac Johnson's home-field, on one side, and so was well adapted to call up serious reflections, suited to their respective employments, in both minister and man of physic. The motherly care of the good widow assigned to Mr. Dimmesdale a front apartment, with a sunny exposure, and heavy window-curtains to create a noontide shadow when desirable. The walls were hung round with tapestry, said to be from the Gobelin looms, and at all events representing the Scriptural story of David and Bathsheba, and Nathan the Prophet, in colors still unfaded, but which made the fair woman of the scene almost as grimly picturesque as the woe-denouncing seer. Here, the pale clergyman piled up his library, rich with parchment-bound folios of the Fathers, and the lore of Rabbis, and monkish erudition, of which the Protestant divines, even while they vilified and decried that class of writers, were yet constrained often to avail themselves. On the other side of the house, old Roger Chillingworth arranged his study and laboratory; not such as a modern man of science would reckon even tolerably complete, but provided with a distilling apparatus, and the means of compounding drugs and chemicals, which the practiced alchemist knew well how to turn to purpose. With such commodiousness of situation, these two learned persons sat themselves down, each in his own domain, yet familiarly passing from one apartment to the other, and bestowing a mutual and not incurious inspection into one another's business.

And the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale's best discerning friends, as we have intimated, very reasonably imagined that the hand of Providence had done all this, for the purpose—besought in so many public and domestic and secret prayers—of restoring the young minister to health. But—it must now be said—another portion of the

community had latterly begun to take its own view of the relation betwixt Mr. Dimmesdale and the mysterious old physician. When an uninstructed multitude attempts to see with its eyes, it is exceedingly apt to be deceived. When, however, it forms its judgment, as it usually does, on the intuitions of its great and warm heart, the conclusions thus attained are often so profound and so unerring, as to possess the character of truths supernaturally revealed. The people, in the case of which we speak, could justify its prejudice against Roger Chillingworth by no fact or argument worthy of serious refutation. There was an aged handicraftsman, it is true, who had been a citizen of London at the period of Sir Thomas Overbury's murder, now some thirty years ago; he testified to having seen the physician, under some other name, which the narrator of the story had now forgotten, in company with Doctor Forman, the famous old conjurer, who was implicated in the affair of Overbury. Two or three individuals hinted that the man of skill, during his Indian captivity, had enlarged his medical attainments by joining in the incantations of the savage priests; who were universally acknowledged to be powerful enchanters, often performing seemingly miraculous cures by their skill in the black art. A large number—and many of these were persons of such sober sense and practical observation that their opinions would have been valuable, in other matters—affirmed that Roger Chillingworth's aspect had undergone a remarkable change while he had dwelt in town, and especially since his abode with Mr. Dimmesdale. At first his expression had been calm, meditative, scholarlike. Now, there was something ugly and evil in his face, which they had not previously noticed, and which grew still the more obvious to sight, the oftener they looked upon him. According to the vulgar idea, the fire in his laboratory had been brought from the lower regions, and was fed with infernal fuel; and so, as might be expected, his visage was getting sooty with the smoke. To sum up the matter, it grew to be a widely diffused opinion that the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, like many other personages of especial sanctity, in all ages of the Christian world, was haunted either by

Satan himself, or Satan's emissary, in the guise of old Roger Chillingworth. This diabolical agent had the Divine permission, for a season, to burrow into the clergyman's intimacy, and plot against his soul. No sensible man, it was confessed, could doubt on which side the victory would turn. The people looked, with an unshaken hope, to see the minister come forth out of the conflict transfigured with the glory which he would unquestionably win. Meanwhile, nevertheless, it was sad to think of the perchance mortal agony through which he must struggle towards his triumph.

Alas! to judge from the gloom and terror in the depths of the poor minister's eyes, the battle was a sore one and the victory anything but secure.

X. THE LEECH AND HIS PATIENT

OLD Roger Chillingworth, throughout life, had been calm in temperament, kindly, though not of warm affections, but ever, and in all his relations with the world, a pure and upright man. He had begun an investigation, as he imagined, with the severe and equal integrity of a judge, desirous only of truth, even as if the question involved no more than the air-drawn lines and figures of a geometrical problem, instead of human passions, and wrongs inflicted on himself. But, as he proceeded, a terrible fascination, a kind of fierce, though still calm, necessity seized the old man within its grip, and never set him free again, until he had done all its bidding. He now dug into the poor clergyman's heart, like a miner searching for gold; or, rather, like a sexton delving into a grave, possibly in quest of a jewel that had been buried on the dead man's bosom, but likely to find nothing save mortality and corruption. Alas for his own soul, if these were what he sought!

Sometimes a light glimmered out of the physician's eyes, burning blue and ominous, like the reflection of a furnace, or, let us say, like one of those gleams of ghastly fire that darted from Bunyan's awful doorway in the hillside, and quivered on the pilgrim's face. The soil where this dark miner was working had perchance shown indications that encouraged him.

"This man," said he, at one such moment, to himself, "pure as they deem him,—all

spiritual as he seems,—hath inherited a strong animal nature from his father or his mother. Let us dig a little further in the direction of this vein!"

Then, after long search into the minister's dim interior, and turning over many precious materials, in the shape of high aspirations for the welfare of his race, warm love of souls, pure sentiments, natural piety, strengthened by thought and study, and illuminated by revelation,—all of which invaluable gold was perhaps no better than rubbish to the seeker,—he would turn back, discouraged, and begin his quest towards another point. He groped along as stealthily, with as cautious a tread, and as wary an outlook, as a thief entering a chamber where a man lies only half asleep,—or, it may be, broad awake,—with purpose to steal the very treasure which this man guards as the apple of his eye. In spite of his premeditated carefulness, the floor would now and then creak; his garments would rustle; the shadow of his presence, in a forbidden proximity, would be thrown across his victim. In other words, Mr. Dimmesdale, whose sensibility of nerve often produced the effect of spiritual intuition, would become vaguely aware that something inimical to his peace had thrust itself into relation with him. But old Roger Chillingworth, too, had perceptions that were almost intuitive; and when the minister threw his startled eyes towards him, there the physician sat; his kind, watchful, sympathizing, but never intrusive friend.

Yet Mr. Dimmesdale would perhaps have seen this individual's character more perfectly, if a certain morbidness, to which sick hearts are liable, had not rendered him suspicious of all mankind. Trusting no man as his friend, he could not recognize his enemy when the latter actually appeared. He therefore still kept up a familiar intercourse with him, daily receiving the old physician in his study; or visiting the laboratory, and, for recreation's sake, watching the processes by which weeds were converted into drugs of potency.

One day, leaning his forehead on his hand, and his elbow on the sill of the open window that looked towards the graveyard, he talked with Roger Chillingworth, while the old man was examining a bundle of unsightly plants.

"Where," asked he, with a look askance at them,—for it was the clergyman's peculiarity that he seldom, nowadays, looked straightforth at any object, whether human or inanimate,—"where, my kind doctor, did you gather those herbs, with such a dark, flabby leaf?"

"Even in the graveyard here at hand," answered the physician, continuing his employment. "They are new to me. I found them growing on a grave, which bore no tombstone, nor other memorial of the dead man, save these ugly weeds, that have taken upon themselves to keep him in remembrance. They grew out of his heart, and typify, it may be, some hideous secret that was buried with him, and which he had done better to confess during his lifetime."

"Perchance," said Mr. Dimmesdale, "he earnestly desired it, but could not."

"And wherefore?" rejoined the physician. "Wherefore not; since all the powers of nature call so earnestly for the confession of sin, that these black weeds have sprung up out of a buried heart, to make manifest an unspoken crime?"

"That, good Sir, is but a fantasy of yours," replied the minister. "There can be, if I forbode aright, no power, short of the Divine mercy, to disclose, whether by uttered words, or by type or emblem, the secrets that may be buried with a human heart. The heart, making itself guilty of such secrets, must perforce hold them, until the day when all hidden things shall be revealed. Nor have I so read or interpreted Holy Writ, as to understand that the disclosure of human thoughts and deeds, then to be made, is intended as a part of the retribution. That, surely, were a shallow view of it. No; these revelations, unless I greatly err, are meant merely to promote the intellectual satisfaction of all intelligent beings, who will stand waiting, on that day, to see the dark problem of this life made plain. A knowledge of men's hearts will be needful to the completest solution of that problem. And I conceive, moreover, that the hearts holding such miserable secrets as you speak of will yield them up, at that last day, not with reluctance, but with a joy unutterable."

"Then why not reveal them here?" asked Roger Chillingworth, glancing quietly aside at the minister. "Why should not the guilty

ones sooner avail themselves of this unutterable solace?"

"They mostly do," said the clergyman, gripping hard at his breast as if afflicted with an importunate throb of pain. "Many, many a poor soul hath given its confidence to me, not only on the death-bed, but while strong in life, and fair in reputation. And ever, after such an outpouring, O, what a relief have I witnessed in those sinful brethren! even as in one who at last draws free air, after long stifling with his own polluted breath. How can it be otherwise? Why should a wretched man, guilty, we will say, of murder, prefer to keep the dead corpse buried in his own heart, rather than fling it forth at once, and let the universe take care of it!"

"Yet some men bury their secrets thus," observed the calm physician.

"True; there are such men," answered Mr. Dimmesdale. "But, not to suggest more obvious reasons, it may be that they are kept silent by the very constitution of their nature. Or,—can we not suppose it?—guilty as they may be, retaining, nevertheless, a zeal for God's glory and man's welfare, they shrink from displaying themselves black and filthy in the view of men; because, thenceforward, no good can be achieved by them; no evil of the past be redeemed by better service. So, to their own unutterable torment, they go about among their fellow-creatures, looking pure as new-fallen snow while their hearts are all speckled and spotted with iniquity of which they cannot rid themselves."

"These men deceive themselves," said Roger Chillingworth, with somewhat more emphasis than usual, and making a slight gesture with his forefinger. "They fear to take up the shame that rightfully belongs to them. Their love for man, their zeal for God's service,—these holy impulses may or may not coexist in their hearts with the evil inmates to which their guilt has unbarred the door, and which must needs propagate a hellish breed within them. But, if they seek to glorify God, let them not lift heavenward their unclean hands! If they would serve their fellow-men, let them do it by making manifest the power and reality of conscience, in constraining them to penitential self-abasement! Wouldst thou have me to

believe, O wise and pious friend, that a false show can be better—can be more for God's glory, or man's welfare—than God's own truth? Trust me, such men deceive themselves!"

"It may be so," said the young clergyman, indifferently, as waiving a discussion that he considered irrelevant or unseasonable. He had a ready faculty, indeed, of escaping from any topic that agitated his too sensitive and nervous temperament.—"But, now, I would ask of my well-skilled physician, whether, in good sooth, he deems me to have profited by his kindly care of this weak frame of mine?"

Before Roger Chillingworth could answer, they heard the clear, wild laughter of a young child's voice, proceeding from the adjacent burial-ground. Looking instinctively from the open window,—for it was summer-time,—the minister beheld Hester Prynne and little Pearl passing along the footpath that traversed the enclosure. Pearl looked as beautiful as the day, but was in one of those moods of perverse merriment which, whenever they occurred, seemed to remove her entirely out of the sphere of sympathy or human contact. She now skipped irreverently from one grave to another; until, coming to the broad, flat, armorial tombstone of a departed worthy,—perhaps of Isaac Johnson himself,—she began to dance upon it. In reply to her mother's command and entreaty that she would behave more decorously, little Pearl paused to gather the prickly burs from a tall burdock which grew beside the tomb. Taking a handful of these, she arranged them along the lines of the scarlet letter that decorated the maternal bosom, to which the burs, as their nature was, tenaciously adhered. Hester did not pluck them off.

Roger Chillingworth had by this time approached the window, and smiled grimly down.

"There is no law, nor reverence for authority, no regard for human ordinances or opinions, right or wrong, mixed up with that child's composition," remarked he, as much to himself as to his companion. "I saw her, the other day, bespatter the Governor himself with water, at the cattle-trough in Spring Lane. What, in Heaven's name, is she? Is the imp altogether evil? Hath she affections? Hath she any discoverable principle of being?"

"None,—save the freedom of a broken law," answered Mr. Dimmesdale, in a quiet way, as if he had been discussing the point within himself. "Whether capable of good, I know not."

The child probably overheard their voices; for, looking up to the window, with a bright, but naughty smile of mirth and intelligence, she threw one of the prickly burs at the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale. The sensitive clergyman shrunk, with nervous dread, from the light missile. Detecting his emotion, Pearl clapped her little hands, in the most extravagant ecstasy. Hester Prynne, likewise, had involuntarily looked up; and all these four persons, old and young, regarded one another in silence, till the child laughed aloud, and shouted,—*"Come away, mother! Come away, or yonder old Black Man will catch you! He hath got hold of the minister already. Come away, mother, or he will catch you! But he cannot catch little Pearl!"*

So she drew her mother away, skipping, dancing, and frisking fantastically, among the hillocks of the dead people, like a creature that had nothing in common with a bygone and buried generation, nor owned herself akin to it. It was as if she had been made afresh, out of new elements, and must perforce be permitted to live her own life, and be a law unto herself, without her eccentricities being reckoned to her for a crime.

"There goes a woman," resumed Roger Chillingworth, after a pause, "who, be her demerits what they may, hath none of that mystery of hidden sinfulness which you deem so grievous to be borne. Is Hester Prynne the less miserable, think you, for that scarlet letter on her breast?"

"I do verily believe it," answered the clergyman. "Nevertheless, I cannot answer for her. There was a look of pain in her face, which I would gladly have been spared the sight of. But still, methinks, it must needs be better for the sufferer to be free to show his pain, as this poor woman Hester is, than to cover it all up in his heart."

There was another pause; and the physician began anew to examine and arrange the plants which he had gathered.

"You inquired of me, a little time ago," said he, at length, "my judgment as touching your health."

"I did," answered the clergyman, "and would gladly learn it. Speak frankly, I pray you, be it for life or death."

"Freely, then, and plainly," said the physician, still busy with his plants, but keeping a wary eye on Mr. Dimmesdale, "the disorder is a strange one; not so much in itself, nor as outwardly manifested,—in so far, at least, as the symptoms have been laid open to my observation. Looking daily at you, my good Sir, and watching the tokens of your aspect, now for months gone by, I should deem you a man sore sick, it may be, yet not so sick but that an instructed and watchful physician might well hope to cure you. But—I know not what to say—the disease is what I seem to know, yet know it not."

"You speak in riddles, learned Sir," said the pale minister, glancing aside out of the window.

"Then, to speak more plainly," continued the physician, "and I crave pardon, Sir,—should it seem to require pardon,—for this needful plainness of my speech. Let me ask,—as your friend,—as one having charge, under Providence, of your life and physical well-being,—hath all the operation of this disorder been fairly laid open and recounted to me?"

"How can you question it?" asked the minister. "Surely, it were child's play, to call in a physician, and then hide the sore!"

"You would tell me, then, that I know all!" said Roger Chillingworth, deliberately, and fixing an eye, bright with intense and concentrated intelligence, on the minister's face. "Be it so! But, again! He to whom only the outward and physical evil is laid open, knoweth, oftentimes, but half the evil which he is called upon to cure. A bodily disease, which we look upon as whole and entire within itself, may, after all, be but a symptom of some ailment in the spiritual part. Your pardon, once again, good Sir, if my speech give the shadow of offense. You, Sir, of all men whom I have known, are he whose body is the closest conjoined, and imbued, and identified, so to speak, with the spirit whereof it is the instrument."

"Then I need ask no further," said the clergyman, somewhat hastily rising from his chair. "You deal not, I take it, in medicine for the soul!"

"Thus, a sickness," continued Roger Chillingworth, going on, in an unaltered tone, without heeding the interruption,—but standing up, and confronting the emaciated and white-cheeked minister with his low, dark, and misshapen figure,—“a sickness, a sore place, if we may so call it, in your spirit, hath immediately its appropriate manifestation in your bodily frame. Would you, therefore, that your physician heal the bodily evil? How may this be, unless you first lay open to him the wound or trouble in your soul?"

"No!—not to thee!—not to an earthly physician!" cried Mr. Dimmesdale, passionately, and turning his eyes, full and bright, and with a kind of fierceness, on old Roger Chillingworth. "Not to thee! But, if it be the soul's disease, then do I commit myself to the one Physician of the soul! He, if it stand with his good pleasure, can cure; or he can kill! Let him do with me as, in his justice and wisdom, he shall see good. But who art thou, that meddlest in this matter?—that dares thrust himself between the sufferer and his God?"

With a frantic gesture he rushed out of the room.

"It is as well to have made this step," said Roger Chillingworth to himself, looking after the minister with a grave smile. "There is nothing lost. We shall be friends again anon. But see, now, how passion takes hold upon this man, and hurrieth him out of himself! As with one passion, so with another! He hath done a wild thing ere now, this pious Master Dimmesdale, in the hot passion of his heart!"

It proved not difficult to re-establish the intimacy of the two companions, on the same footing and in the same degree as heretofore. The young clergyman, after a few hours of privacy, was sensible that the disorder of his nerves had hurried him into an unseemly outbreak of temper, which there had been nothing in the physician's words to excuse or palliate. He marveled, indeed, at the violence with which he had thrust back the kind old man, when merely proffering the advice which it was his duty to bestow, and which the minister himself had expressly sought. With these remorseful feelings, he lost no time in making the amplest apologies, and besought his friend still to continue the

care, which, if not successful in restoring him to health, had, in all probability, been the means of prolonging his feeble existence to that hour. Roger Chillingworth readily assented, and went on with his medical supervision of the minister; doing his best for him, in all good faith, but always quitting the patient's apartment, at the close of a professional interview, with a mysterious and puzzled smile upon his lips. This expression was invisible in Mr. Dimmesdale's presence, but grew strongly evident as the physician crossed the threshold.

"A rare case!" he muttered. "I must needs look deeper into it. A strange sympathy betwixt soul and body! Were it only for the art's sake, I must search this matter to the bottom!"

It came to pass, not long after the scene above recorded, that the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, at noonday, and entirely unawares, fell into a deep, deep slumber, sitting in his chair, with a large black-letter volume open before him on the table. It must have been a work of vast ability in the somniferous school of literature. The profound depth of the minister's repose was the more remarkable, inasmuch as he was one of those persons whose sleep, ordinarily, is as light, as fitful, and as easily scared away, as a small bird hopping on a twig. To such an unwonted remoteness, however, had his spirit now withdrawn into itself, that he stirred not in his chair, when old Roger Chillingworth, without any extraordinary precaution, came into the room. The physician advanced directly in front of his patient, laid his hand upon his bosom, and thrust aside the vestment, that, hitherto, had always covered it even from the professional eye.

Then, indeed, Mr. Dimmesdale shuddered, and slightly stirred.

After a brief pause, the physician turned away.

But with what a wild look of wonder, joy, and horror! With what a ghastly rapture, as it were, too mighty to be expressed only by the eye and features, and therefore bursting forth through the whole ugliness of his figure, and making itself even riotously manifest by the extravagant gestures with which he threw up his arms towards the ceiling, and stamped his foot upon the floor! Had a man seen old Roger Chillingworth, at that mo-

ment of his ecstasy, he would have had no need to ask how Satan comports himself, when a precious human soul is lost to heaven, and won into his kingdom.

But what distinguished the physician's ecstasy from Satan's was the trait of wonder in it!

XI. THE INTERIOR OF A HEART

AFTER the incident last described, the intercourse between the clergyman and the physician, though externally the same, was really of another character than it had previously been. The intellect of Roger Chillingworth had now a sufficiently plain path before it. It was not, indeed, precisely that which he had laid out for himself to tread. Calm, gentle, passionless, as he appeared, there was yet, we fear, a quiet depth of malice, hitherto latent, but active now, in this unfortunate old man, which led him to imagine a more intimate revenge than any mortal had ever wreaked upon an enemy. To make himself the one trusted friend, to whom should be confided all the fear, the remorse, the agony, the ineffectual repentance, the backward rush of sinful thoughts, expelled in vain! All that guilty sorrow, hidden from the world, whose great heart would have pitied and forgiven, to be revealed to him, the Pitiless, to him, the Unforgiving! All that dark treasure to be lavished on the very man, to whom nothing else could so adequately pay the debt of vengeance!

The clergyman's shy and sensitive reserve had balked this scheme. Roger Chillingworth, however, was inclined to be hardly, if at all, less satisfied with the aspect of affairs which Providence—using the avenger and his victim for its own purpose, and perchance pardoning where it seemed most to punish—had substituted for his black devices. A revelation, he could almost say, had been granted to him. It mattered little, for his object, whether celestial, or from what other region. By its aid, in all the subsequent relations betwixt him and Mr. Dimmesdale, not merely the external presence, but the very inmost soul, of the latter, seemed to be brought out before his eyes, so that he could see and comprehend its every movement. He became, thenceforth, not a spectator only, but a chief actor, in the poor minister's interior world. He could play upon

him as he chose. Would he arouse him with a throb of agony? The victim was forever on the rack; it needed only to know the spring that controlled the engine;—and the physician knew it well! Would he startle him with sudden fear? As at the waving of a magician's wand, uprose a grisly phantom,—uprose a thousand phantoms,—in many shapes, of death, or more awful shame, all flocking round about the clergyman, and pointing with their fingers at his breast!

All this was accomplished with a subtlety so perfect, that the minister, though he had constantly a dim perception of some evil influence watching over him, could never gain a knowledge of its actual nature. True, he looked doubtfully, fearfully,—even, at times, with horror and the bitterness of hatred,—at the deformed figure of the old physician. His gestures, his gait, his grizzled beard, his slightest and most indifferent acts, the very fashion of his garments, were odious in the clergyman's sight; a token implicitly to be relied on, of a deeper antipathy in the breast of the latter than he was willing to acknowledge to himself. For, as it was impossible to assign a reason for such distrust and abhorrence, so Mr. Dimmesdale, conscious that the poison of one morbid spot was infecting his heart's entire substance, attributed all his presentiments to no other cause. He took himself to task for his bad sympathies in reference to Roger Chillingworth, disregarded the lesson that he should have drawn from them, and did his best to root them out. Unable to accomplish this, he nevertheless, as a matter of principle, continued his habits of social familiarity with the old man, and thus gave him constant opportunities for perfecting the purpose to which—poor, forlorn creature that he was, and more wretched than his victim—the avenger had devoted himself.

While thus suffering under bodily disease, and gnawed and tortured by some black trouble of the soul, and given over to the machinations of his deadliest enemy, the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale had achieved a brilliant popularity in his sacred office. He won it, indeed, in great part, by his sorrows. His intellectual gifts, his moral perceptions, his power of experiencing and communicating emotion, were kept in a state of preternatural activity by the prick and anguish of his

daily life. His fame, though still on its upward slope, already overshadowed the soberer reputations of his fellow-clergymen, eminent as several of them were. There were scholars among them, who had spent more years in acquiring abstruse lore, connected with the divine profession, than Mr Dimmesdale had lived; and who might well, therefore, be more profoundly versed in such solid and valuable attainments than their youthful brother. There were men, too, of a sturdier texture of mind than his, and endowed with a far greater share of shrewd, hard, iron, or granite understanding; which duly mingled with a fair proportion of doctrinal ingredient, constitutes a highly respectable, efficacious, and unamiable variety of the clerical species. There were others, again, true saintly fathers, whose faculties had been elaborated by weary toil among their books, and by patient thought, and etherealized, moreover, by spiritual communications with the better world, into which their purity of life had almost introduced these holy personages, with their garments of mortality still clinging to them. All that they lacked was the gift that descended upon the chosen disciples at Pentecost, in tongues of flame; symbolizing, it would seem, not the power of speech in foreign and unknown languages, but that of addressing the whole human brotherhood in the heart's native language. These fathers, otherwise so apostolic, lacked Heaven's last and rarest attestation of their office, the Tongue of Flame. They would have vainly sought—had they ever dreamed of seeking—to express the highest truths through the humblest medium of familiar words and images. Their voices came down, afar and indistinctly, from the upper heights where they habitually dwelt.

Not improbably, it was to this latter class of men that Mr. Dimmesdale, by many of his traits of character, naturally belonged. To the high mountain-peaks of faith and sanctity he would have climbed, had not the tendency been thwarted by the burden, whatever it might be, of crime or anguish, beneath which it was his doom to totter. It kept him down, on a level with the lowest; him, the man of ethereal attributes, whose voice the angels might else have listened to and answered! But this very burden it was that gave him sympathies so intimate with the sinful

brotherhood of mankind; so that his heart vibrated in unison with theirs, and received their pain into itself, and sent its own throb of pain through a thousand other hearts, in gushes of sad, persuasive eloquence. Oftenest persuasive, but sometimes terrible! The people knew not the power that moved them thus. They deemed the young clergyman a miracle of holiness. They fancied him the mouth-piece of Heaven's messages of wisdom, and rebuke, and love. In their eyes, the very ground on which he trod was sanctified. The virgins of his church grew pale around him, victims of a passion so imbued with religious sentiment that they imagined it to be all religion, and brought it openly, in their white bosoms, as their most acceptable sacrifice before the altar. The aged members of his flock, beholding Mr. Dimmesdale's frame so feeble, while they were themselves so rugged in their infirmity, believed that he would go heavenward before them, and enjoined it upon their children that their old bones should be buried close to their young pastor's holy grave. And, all this time, perchance, when poor Mr. Dimmesdale was thinking of his grave, he questioned with himself whether the grass would ever grow on it, because an accursed thing must there be buried!

It is inconceivable, the agony with which this public veneration tortured him! It was his genuine impulse to adore the truth, and to reckon all things shadow-like, and utterly devoid of weight or value, that had not its divine essence as the life within their life. Then, what was he?—a substance?—or the dimmest of all shadows? He longed to speak out, from his own pulpit, at the full height of his voice, and tell the people what he was. "I, whom you behold in these black garments of the priesthood,—I, who ascend the sacred desk, and turn my pale face heavenward, taking upon myself to hold communion, in your behalf, with the Most High Omniscience,—I, in whose daily life you discern the sanctity of Enoch,—I, whose footsteps, as you suppose, leave a gleam along my earthly track, whereby the pilgrims that shall come after me may be guided to the regions of the blest,—I, who have laid the hand of baptism upon your children,—I, who have breathed the parting prayer over your dying friends, to whom the Amen sounded faintly from a world which they had quitted,—I,

your pastor, whom you so reverence and trust, am utterly a pollution and a lie!"

More than once, Mr. Dimmesdale had gone into the pulpit, with a purpose never to come down its steps, until he should have spoken words like the above. More than once, he had cleared his throat, and drawn in the long, deep, and tremulous breath, which, when sent forth again, would come burdened with the black secret of his soul. More than once—nay, more than a hundred times—he had actually spoken! Spoken! But how? He had told his hearers that he was altogether vile, a viler companion of the vilest, the worst of sinners, an abomination, a thing of unimaginable iniquity; and that the only wonder was that they did not see his wretched body shriveled up before their eyes, by the burning wrath of the Almighty! Could there be plainer speech than this? Would not the people start up in their seats, by a simultaneous impulse, and tear him down out of the pulpit which he defiled? Not so, indeed! They heard it all, and did but reverence him the more. They little guessed what deadly purport lurked in those self-condemning words. "The godly youth!" said they among themselves. "The saint on earth! Alas, if he discern such sinfulness in his own white soul, what horrid spectacle would he behold in thine or mine!" The minister well knew—subtle, but remorseful hypocrite that he was!—the light in which his vague confession would be viewed. He had striven to put a cheat upon himself by making the avowal of a guilty conscience, but had gained only one other sin, and a self-acknowledged shame, without the momentary relief of being self-deceived. He had spoken the very truth, and transformed it into the veriest falsehood. And yet, by the constitution of his nature, he loved the truth, and loathed the lie, as few men ever did. Therefore, above all things else, he loathed his miserable self!

His inward trouble drove him to practices more in accordance with the old, corrupted faith of Rome, than with the better light of the church in which he had been born and bred. In Mr. Dimmesdale's secret closet, under lock and key, there was a bloody scourge. Oftentimes, this Protestant and Puritan divine had plied it on his own shoulders; laughing bitterly at himself the while,

and smiting so much the more pitilessly because of that bitter laugh. It was his custom, too, as it has been that of many other pious Puritans, to fast,—not, however, like them, in order to purify the body and render it the fitter medium of celestial illumination, but rigorously, and until his knees trembled beneath him, as an act of penance. He kept vigils, likewise, night after night, sometimes in utter darkness; sometimes with a glimmering lamp; and sometimes, viewing his own face in a looking-glass, by the most powerful light which he could throw upon it. He thus typified the constant introspection where-with he tortured, but could not purify, himself. In these lengthened vigils, his brain often reeled, and visions seemed to flit before him; perhaps seen doubtfully, and by a faint light of their own, in the remote dimness of the chamber, or more vividly, and close beside him, within the looking-glass. Now it was a herd of diabolic shapes, that grinned and mocked at the pale minister, and beckoned him away with them; now a group of shining angels, who flew upward heavily, as sorrow-laden, but grew more ethereal as they rose. Now came the dead friends of his youth, and his white-bearded father, with a saint-like frown, and his mother, turning her face away as she passed by. Ghost of a mother,—thinnest fantasy of a mother,—methinks she might yet have thrown a pitying glance towards her son! And now, through the chamber which these spectral thoughts had made so ghastly, glided Hester Prynne, leading along little Pearl, in her scarlet garb, and pointing her forefinger, first at the scarlet letter on her bosom, and then at the clergyman's own breast.

None of these visions ever quite deluded him. At any moment, by an effort of his will, he could discern substances through their misty lack of substance, and convince himself that they were not solid in their nature, like yonder table of carved oak, or that big, square, leathern-bound and brazen-clasped volume of divinity. But, for all that, they were, in one sense, the truest and most substantial things which the poor minister now dealt with. It is the unspeakable misery of a life so false as his, that it steals the pith and substance out of whatever realities there are around us, and which were meant by Heaven to be the spirit's joy and nutriment.

To the untrue man, the whole universe is false,—it is impalpable,—it shrinks to nothing within his grasp. And he himself, in so far as he shows himself in a false light, becomes a shadow, or, indeed, ceases to exist. The only truth that continued to give Mr. Dimmesdale a real existence on this earth was the anguish in his inmost soul, and the undissembled expression of it in his aspect. Had he once found power to smile, and wear a face of gayety, there would have been no such man!

On one of those ugly nights, which we have faintly hinted at, but forborne to picture forth, the minister started from his chair. A new thought had struck him. There might be a moment's peace in it. Attiring himself with as much care as if it had been for public worship, and precisely in the same manner, he stole softly down the staircase, undid the door, and issued forth.

XII. THE MINISTER'S VIGIL

WALKING in the shadow of a dream, as it were, and perhaps actually under the influence of a species of somnambulism, Mr. Dimmesdale reached the spot where, now so long since, Hester Prynne had lived through her first hours of public ignominy. The same platform or scaffold, black and weather-stained with the storm or sunshine of seven long years, and foot-worn, too, with the tread of many culprits who had since ascended it, remained standing beneath the balcony of the meeting-house. The minister went up the steps.

It was an obscure night of early May. An unvaried pall of cloud muffled the whole expanse of sky from zenith to horizon. If the same multitude which had stood as eye-witnesses while Hester Prynne sustained her punishment could now have been summoned forth, they would have discerned no face above the platform, nor hardly the outline of a human shape, in the dark gray of the midnight. But the town was all asleep. There was no peril of discovery. The minister might stand there, if it so pleased him, until morning should redden in the east, without other risk than that the dank and chill night-air would creep into his frame, and stiffen his joints with rheumatism, and clog his throat with catarrh and cough; thereby defrauding the expectant audience of to-

morrow's prayer and sermon. No eye could see him, save that ever-wakeful one which had seen him in his closet, wielding the bloody scourge. Why, then, had he come hither? Was it but the mockery of penitence? A mockery, indeed, but in which his soul trifled with itself! A mockery at which angels blushed and wept, while fiends rejoiced with jeering laughter! He had been driven hither by the impulse of that Remorse which dogged him everywhere, and whose own sister and closely linked companion was that Cowardice which invariably drew him back, with her tremulous grip, just when the other impulse had hurried him to the verge of a disclosure. Poor, miserable man! what right had infirmity like his to burden itself with crime? Crime is for the iron-nerved, who have their choice either to endure it, or, if it press too hard, to exert their fierce and savage strength for a good purpose, and fling it off at once! This feeble and most sensitive of spirits could do neither, yet continually did one thing or another, which intertwined, in the same inextricable knot, the agony of heaven-defying guilt and vain repentance.

And thus, while standing on the scaffold, in this vain show of expiation, Mr. Dimmesdale was overcome with a great horror of mind, as if the universe were gazing at a scarlet token on his naked breast, right over his heart. On that spot, in very truth, there was, and there had long been, the gnawing and poisonous tooth of bodily pain. Without any effort of his will, or power to restrain himself, he shrieked aloud; an outcry that went pealing through the night, and was beaten back from one house to another, and reverberated from the hills in the background; as if a company of devils, detecting so much misery and terror in it, had made a plaything of the sound, and were bandying it to and fro.

"It is done!" muttered the minister, covering his face with his hands. "The whole town will awake, and hurry forth, and find me here!"

But it was not so. The shriek had perhaps sounded with a far greater power to his own startled ears than it actually possessed. The town did not awake; or, if it did, the drowsy slumberers mistook the cry either for something frightful in a dream, or for the noise of witches; whose voices, at that period, were

often heard to pass over the settlements or lonely cottages, as they rode with Satan through the air. The clergyman, therefore, hearing no symptoms of disturbance, uncovered his eyes and looked about him. At one of the chamber-windows of Governor Bellingham's mansion, which stood at some distance, on the line of another street, he beheld the appearance of the old magistrate himself, with a lamp in his hand, a white nightcap on his head, and a long white gown enveloping his figure. He looked like a ghost, evoked unseasonably from the grave. The cry had evidently startled him. At another window of the same house, moreover, appeared old Mistress Hibbins, the Governor's sister, also with a lamp, which, even thus far off, revealed the expression of her sour and discontented face. She thrust forth her head from the lattice, and looked anxiously upward. Beyond the shadow of a doubt, this venerable witch-lady had heard Mr. Dimmesdale's outcry, and interpreted it, with its multitudinous echoes and reverberations, as the clamor of the fiends and night-hags, with whom she was well known to make excursions into the forest.

Detecting the gleam of Governor Bellingham's lamp, the old lady quickly extinguished her own, and vanished. Possibly she went up among the clouds. The minister saw nothing further of her motions. The magistrate, after a wary observation of the darkness,—into which, nevertheless, he could see but little further than he might into a millstone,—retired from the window.

The minister grew comparatively calm. His eyes, however, were soon greeted by a little, glimmering light which, at first a long way off, was approaching up the street. It threw a gleam of recognition on here a post, and there a garden-fence, and here a latticed window-pane and there a pump, with its full trough of water, and here, again, an arched door of oak, with an iron knocker, and a rough log for the doorstep. The Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale noted all these minute particulars, even while firmly convinced that the doom of his existence was stealing onward, in the footsteps which he now heard; and that the gleam of the lantern would fall upon him, in a few moments more, and reveal his long-hidden secret. As the light drew nearer, he beheld, within its illuminated circle, his

brother clergyman,—or, to speak more accurately, his professional father, as well as highly valued friend,—the Reverend Mr. Wilson; who, as Mr. Dimmesdale now conjectured, had been praying at the bedside of some dying man. And so he had. The good old minister came freshly from the death-chamber of Governor Winthrop, who had passed from earth to heaven within that very hour. And now, surrounded, like the saint-like personages of olden times, with a radiant halo, that glorified him amid this gloomy night of sin,—as if the departed Governor had left him an inheritance of his glory, or as if he had caught upon himself the distant shine of the celestial city, while looking thitherward to see the triumphant pilgrim pass within its gates,—now, in short, good Father Wilson was moving homeward, aiding his footsteps with a lighted lantern! The glimmer of this luminary suggested the above conceits to Mr. Dimmesdale, who smiled,—nay, almost laughed at them,—and then wondered if he were going mad.

As the Reverend Mr. Wilson passed beside the scaffold, closely muffling his Geneva cloak about him with one arm, and holding the lantern before his breast with the other, the minister could hardly restrain himself from speaking.

“A good evening to you, venerable Father Wilson! Come up hither, I pray you, and pass a pleasant hour with me!”

Good heavens! Had Mr. Dimmesdale actually spoken? For one instant, he believed that these words had passed his lips. But they were uttered only within his imagination. The venerable Father Wilson continued to step slowly onward, looking carefully at the muddy pathway before his feet, and never once turning his head towards the guilty platform. When the light of the glimmering lantern had faded quite away, the minister discovered, by the faintness which came over him, that the last few moments had been a crisis of terrible anxiety; although his mind had made an involuntary effort to relieve itself by a kind of lurid playfulness.

Shortly afterwards, the like grisly sense of the humorous again stole in among the solemn phantoms of his thought. He felt his limbs growing stiff with the unaccustomed chilliness of the night, and doubted whether he should be able to descend the steps of the

scaffold. Morning would break, and find him there. The neighborhood would begin to rouse itself. The earliest riser, coming forth in the dim twilight, would perceive a vaguely defined figure aloft on the place of shame; and, half crazed betwixt alarm and curiosity, would go, knocking from door to door, summoning all the people to behold the ghost—as he needs must think it—of some defunct transgressor. A dusky tumult would flap its wings from one house to another. Then—the morning light still waxing stronger—old patriarchs would rise up in great haste, each in his flannel gown, and matronly dames, without pausing to put off their night-gear. The whole tribe of decorous personages, who had never heretofore been seen with a single hair of their heads awry, would start into public view, with the disorder of a nightmare in their aspects. Old Governor Bellingham would come grimly forth, with his King James’s ruff fastened askew; and Mistress Hibbins, with some twigs of the forest clinging to her skirts, and looking sourer than ever, as having hardly got a wink of sleep after her night ride; and good Father Wilson, too, after spending half the night at a death-bed, and liking ill to be disturbed, thus early, out of his dreams about the glorified saints. Hither, likewise, would come the elders and deacons of Mr. Dimmesdale’s church, and the young virgins who so idolized their minister, and had made a shrine for him in their white bosoms; which now, by the by, in their hurry and confusion, they would scantily have given themselves time to cover with their kerchiefs. All people, in a word, would come, stumbling over their thresholds, and turning up their amazed and horror-stricken visages around the scaffold. Whom would they discern there, with the red eastern light upon his brow? Whom, but the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, half frozen to death, overwhelmed with shame, and standing where Hester Prynne had stood!

Carried away by the grotesque horror of this picture, the minister, unawares, and to his own infinite alarm, burst into a great peal of laughter. It was immediately responded to by a light, airy, childish laugh, in which, with a thrill of the heart,—but he knew not whether of exquisite pain, or pleasure as acute,—he recognized the tones of little Pearl.

"Pearl! Little Pearl!" cried he after a moment's pause; then, suppressing his voice,—"Hester! Hester Prynne! Are you there?"

"Yes; it is Hester Prynne!" she replied, in a tone of surprise; and the minister heard her footsteps approaching from the sidewalk, along which she had been passing. "It is I and my little Pearl."

"Whence come you, Hester?" asked the minister. "What sent you hither?"

"I have been watching at a death-bed," answered Hester Prynne;—"at Governor Winthrop's death-bed, and have taken his measure for a robe, and am now going homeward to my dwelling."

"Come up hither, Hester, thou and little Pearl," said the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale. "Ye have both been here before, but I was not with you. Come up hither once again, and we will stand all three together!"

She silently ascended the steps, and stood on the platform, holding little Pearl by the hand. The minister felt for the child's other hand, and took it. The moment that he did so, there came what seemed a tumultuous rush of new life, other life than his own, pouring like a torrent into his heart, and hurrying through all his veins, as if the mother and the child were communicating their vital warmth to his half-torpid system. The three formed an electric chain.

"Minister!" whispered little Pearl.

"What wouldst thou say, child?" asked Mr. Dimmesdale.

"Wilt thou stand here with mother and me, to-morrow noontide?" inquired Pearl.

"Nay; not so, my little Pearl," answered the minister; for, with the new energy of the moment, all the dread of public exposure, that had so long been the anguish of his life, had returned upon him; and he was already trembling at the conjunction in which—with a strange joy, nevertheless—he now found himself. "Not so, my child. I shall, indeed, stand with thy mother and thee one other day, but not to-morrow."

Pearl laughed, and attempted to pull away her hand. But the minister held it fast.

"A moment longer, my child!" said he.

"But wilt thou promise," asked Pearl, "to take my hand, and mother's hand, to-morrow noontide?"

"Not then, Pearl," said the minister, "but another time."

"And what other time?" persisted the child.

"At the great judgment day," whispered the minister,—and, strangely enough, the sense that he was a professional teacher of the truth impelled him to answer the child so. "Then, and there, before the judgment-seat, thy mother and thou and I must stand together. But the daylight of this world shall not see our meeting!"

Pearl laughed again.

But before Mr. Dimmesdale had done speaking, a light gleamed far and wide over all the muffled sky. It was doubtless caused by one of those meteors, which the night-watcher may so often observe burning out to waste, in the vacant regions of the atmosphere. So powerful was its radiance, that it thoroughly illuminated the dense medium of cloud betwixt the sky and earth. The great vault brightened, like the dome of an immense lamp. It showed the familiar scene of the street, with the distinctness of mid-day, but also with the awfulness that is always imparted to familiar objects by an unaccustomed light. The wooden houses, with their jutting stories and quaint gable-peaks; the door-steps and thresholds, with the early grass springing up about them; the garden-plots, black with freshly turned earth; the wheel-track, little worn, and, even in the market-place, margined with green on either side;—all were visible, but with a singularity of aspect that seemed to give another moral interpretation to the things of this world than they had ever borne before. And there stood the minister, with his hand over his heart; and Hester Prynne, with the embroidered letter glimmering on her bosom; and little Pearl, herself a symbol, and the connecting link between those two. They stood in the noon of that strange and solemn splendor, as if it were the light that is to reveal all secrets, and the daybreak that shall unite all who belong to one another.

There was witchcraft in little Pearl's eyes, and her face, as she glanced upward at the minister, wore that naughty smile which made its expression frequently so elfish. She withdrew her hand from Mr. Dimmesdale's, and pointed across the street. But he clasped both his hands over his breast, and cast his eyes towards the zenith.

Nothing was more common, in those days,

than to interpret all meteoric appearances, and other natural phenomena, that occurred with less regularity than the rise and set of sun and moon, as so many revelations from a supernatural source. Thus, a blazing spear, a sword of flame, a bow, or a sheaf of arrows, seen in the midnight sky, prefigured Indian warfare. Pestilence was known to have been foreboded by a shower of crimson light. We doubt whether any marked event, for good or evil, ever befell New England, from its settlement down to Revolutionary times, of which the inhabitants had not been previously warned by some spectacle of this nature. Not seldom, it had been seen by multitudes. Oftener, however, its credibility rested on the faith of some lonely eyewitness, who beheld the wonder through the colored, magnifying, and distorting medium of his imagination, and shaped it more distinctly in his afterthought. It was, indeed, a majestic idea, that the destiny of nations should be revealed, in these awful hieroglyphics, on the cope of heaven. A scroll so wide might not be deemed too expansive for Providence to write a people's doom upon. The belief was a favorite one with our forefathers, as betokening that their infant commonwealth was under a celestial guardianship of peculiar intimacy and strictness. But what shall we say, when an individual discovers a revelation addressed to himself alone, on the same vast sheet of record! In such a case, it could only be the symptom of a highly disordered mental state, when a man, rendered morbidly self-contemplative by long, intense, and secret pain, had extended his egotism over the whole expanse of nature, until the firmament itself should appear no more than a fitting page for his soul's history and fate!

We impute it, therefore, solely to the disease in his own eye and heart, that the minister, looking upward to the zenith, beheld there the appearance of an immense letter,—the letter A,—marked out in lines of dull red light. Not but the meteor may have shown itself at that point, burning duskily through a veil of cloud; but with no such shape as his guilty imagination gave it; or, at least, with so little definiteness, that another's guilt might have seen another symbol in it.

There was a singular circumstance that

characterized Mr. Dimmesdale's psychological state, at this moment. All the time that he gazed upward to the zenith, he was, nevertheless, perfectly aware that little Pearl was pointing her finger towards old Roger Chillingworth, who stood at no great distance from the scaffold. The minister appeared to see him, with the same glance that discerned the miraculous letter. To his features, as to all other objects, the meteoric light imparted a new expression; or it might well be that the physician was not careful then, as at all other times, to hide the malevolence with which he looked upon his victim. Certainly, if the meteor kindled up the sky, and disclosed the earth, with an awfulness that admonished Hester Prynne and the clergyman of the day of judgment, then might Roger Chillingworth have passed with them for the arch-fiend, standing there with a smile and scowl, to claim his own. So vivid was the expression, or so intense the minister's perception of it, that it seemed still to remain painted on the darkness, after the meteor had vanished, with an effect as if the street and all things else were at once annihilated.

"Who is that man, Hester?" gasped Mr. Dimmesdale, overcome with terror. "I shiver at him! Dost thou know the man? I hate him, Hester!"

She remembered her oath, and was silent.

"I tell thee, my soul shivers at him!" muttered the minister again. "Who is he? Who is he? Canst thou do nothing for me? I have a nameless horror of the man!"

"Minister," said little Pearl, "I can tell thee who he is!"

"Quickly, then, child!" said the minister, bending his ear close to her lips. "Quickly!—and as low as thou canst whisper."

Pearl mumbled something into his ear, that sounded, indeed, like human language, but was only such gibberish as children may be heard amusing themselves with, by the hour together. At all events, if it involved any secret information in regard to old Roger Chillingworth, it was in a tongue unknown to the erudite clergyman, and did but increase the bewilderment of his mind. The elfish child then laughed aloud.

"Dost thou mock me now?" said the minister.

"Thou wast not bold!—thou wast not

true!"—answered the child. "Thou wouldst not promise to take my hand, and mother's hand, to-morrow noontide!"

"Worthy Sir," answered the physician, who had now advanced to the foot of the platform. "Pious Master Dimmesdale, can this be you? Well, well, indeed! We men of study, whose heads are in our books, have need to be straitly looked after! We dream in our waking moments, and walk in our sleep. Come, good Sir, and my dear friend, I pray you, let me lead you home!"

"How knewest thou that I was here?" asked the minister, fearfully.

"Verily, and in good faith," answered Roger Chillingworth, "I know nothing of the matter. I had spent the better part of the night at the bedside of the worshipful Governor Winthrop, doing what my poor skill might to give him ease. He going home to a better world, I, likewise, was on my way homeward, when this strange light shone out. Come with me, I beseech you, Reverend Sir; else you will be poorly able to do Sabbath duty to-morrow. Aha! see now, how they trouble the brain,—these books!—these books! You should study less, good Sir, and take a little pastime; or these night whimsies will grow upon you."

"I will go home with you," said Mr. Dimmesdale.

With a chill despondency, like one awaking, all nerveless, from an ugly dream, he yielded himself to the physician and was led away.

The next day, however, being the Sabbath, he preached a discourse which was held to be the richest and most powerful, and the most replete with heavenly influences, that had ever proceeded from his lips. Souls, it is said more souls than one, were brought to the truth by the efficacy of that sermon, and vowed within themselves to cherish a holy gratitude towards Mr. Dimmesdale throughout the long hereafter. But, as he came down the pulpit steps, the gray-bearded sexton met him, holding up a black glove, which the minister recognized as his own.

"It was found," said the sexton, "this morning, on the scaffold where evil-doers are set up to public shame. Satan dropped it there, I take it, intending a scurrilous jest against your reverence. But, indeed, he was blind and foolish, as he ever and always is. A pure hand needs no glove to cover it!"

"Thank you, my good friend," said the minister, gravely, but startled at heart; for, so confused was his remembrance, that he had almost brought himself to look at the events of the past night as visionary. "Yes, it seems to be my glove, indeed!"

"And, since Satan saw fit to steal it, your reverence must needs handle him without gloves, henceforward," remarked the old sexton, grimly smiling. "But did your reverence hear of the portent that was seen last night?—a great red letter in the sky,—the letter A, which we interpret to stand for Angel. For, as our good Governor Winthrop was made an angel this past night, it was doubtless held fit that there should be some notice thereof!"

"No," answered the minister, "I had not heard of it."

XIII. ANOTHER VIEW OF HESTER

IN her late singular interview with Mr. Dimmesdale, Hester Prynne was shocked at the condition to which she found the clergyman reduced. His nerve seemed absolutely destroyed. His moral force was abased into more than childish weakness. It groveled helpless on the ground, even while his intellectual faculties retained their pristine strength, or had perhaps acquired a morbid energy, which disease only could have given them. With her knowledge of a train of circumstances hidden from all others, she could readily infer that, besides the legitimate action of his own conscience, a terrible machinery had been brought to bear, and was still operating, on Mr. Dimmesdale's well-being and repose. Knowing what this poor, fallen man had once been, her whole soul was moved by the shuddering terror with which he had appealed to her,—the outcast woman,—for support against his instinctively discovered enemy. She decided, moreover, that he had a right to her utmost aid. Little accustomed, in her long seclusion from society, to measure her ideas of right and wrong by any standard external to herself, Hester saw—or seemed to see—that there lay a responsibility upon her, in reference to the clergyman, which she owed to no other, nor to the whole world besides. The links that united her to the rest of human kind—links of flowers, or silk, or gold, or whatever the material—had all been

broken. Here was the iron link of mutual crime, which neither he nor she could break. Like all other ties, it brought along with it its obligations.

Hester Prynne did not now occupy precisely the same position in which we beheld her during the earlier periods of her ignominy. Years had come and gone. Pearl was now seven years old. Her mother, with the scarlet letter on her breast, glittering in its fantastic embroidery, had long been a familiar object to the townspeople. As is apt to be the case when a person stands out in any prominence before the community, and, at the same time, interferes neither with public nor individual interests and convenience, a species of general regard had ultimately grown up in reference to Hester Prynne. It is to the credit of human nature that, except where its selfishness is brought into play, it loves more readily than it hates. Hatred, by a gradual and quiet process, will even be transformed to love, unless the change be impeded by a continually new irritation of the original feeling of hostility. In this matter of Hester Prynne, there was neither irritation nor irksomeness. She never battled with the public, but submitted uncomplainingly to its worst usage; she made no claim upon it, in requital for what she suffered; she did not weigh upon its sympathies. Then, also, the blameless purity of her life during all these years in which she had been set apart to infamy, was reckoned largely in her favor. With nothing now to lose, in the sight of mankind, and with no hope, and seemingly no wish, of gaining anything, it could only be a genuine regard for virtue that had brought back the poor wanderer to its paths.

It was perceived, too, that while Hester never put forward even the humblest title to share in the world's privileges,—further than to breathe the common air, and earn daily bread for little Pearl and herself by the faithful labor of her hands,—she was quick to acknowledge her sisterhood with the race of man, whenever benefits were to be conferred. None so ready as she to give of her little substance to every demand of poverty; even though the bitter-hearted pauper threw back a gibe in requital of the food brought regularly to his door, or the garments wrought for him by the fingers that could

have embroidered a monarch's robe. None so self-devoted as Hester, when pestilence stalked through the town. In all seasons of calamity, indeed, whether general or of individuals, the outcast of society at once found her place. She came, not as a guest, but as a rightful inmate, into the household that was darkened by trouble; as if its gloomy twilight were a medium in which she was entitled to hold intercourse with her fellow-creatures. There glimmered the embroidered letter, with comfort in its unearthly ray. Elsewhere the token of sin, it was the taper of the sick-chamber. It had even thrown its gleam, in the sufferer's hard extremity, across the verge of time. It had shown him where to set his foot, while the light of earth was fast becoming dim, and ere the light of futurity could reach him. In such emergencies, Hester's nature showed itself warm and rich—a well-spring of human tenderness, unfailing to every real demand, and inexhaustible by the largest. Her breast, with its badge of shame, was but the softer pillow for the head that needed one. She was self-ordained a Sister of Mercy; or, we may rather say, the world's heavy hand had so ordained her, when neither the world nor she looked forward to this result. The letter was the symbol of her calling. Such helpfulness was found in her,—so much power to do, and power to sympathize,—that many people refused to interpret the scarlet A by its original signification. They said that it meant Able; so strong was Hester Prynne, with a woman's strength.

It was only the darkened house that could contain her. When sunshine came again, she was not there. Her shadow had faded across the threshold. The helpful inmate had departed, without one backward glance to gather up the meed of gratitude, if any were in the hearts of those whom she had served so zealously. Meeting them in the street, she never raised her head to receive their greeting. If they were resolute to accost her, she laid her finger on the scarlet letter, and passed on. This might be pride, but was so like humility, that it produced all the softening influence of the latter quality on the public mind. The public is despotic in its temper; it is capable of denying common justice, when too strenuously demanded as a right; but quite as frequently it awards

more than justice, when the appeal is made, as despots love to have it made, entirely to its generosity. Interpreting Hester Prynne's deportment as an appeal of this nature, society was inclined to show its former victim a more benign countenance than she cared to be favored with, or perchance, than she deserved.

The rulers, and the wise and learned men of the community, were longer in acknowledging the influence of Hester's good qualities than the people. The prejudices which they shared in common with the latter were fortified in themselves by an iron framework of reasoning, that made it a far tougher labor to expel them. Day by day, nevertheless, their sour and rigid wrinkles were relaxing into something which, in the due course of years, might grow to be an expression of almost benevolence. Thus it was with the men of rank, on whom their eminent position imposed the guardianship of the public morals. Individuals in private life, meanwhile, had quite forgiven Hester Prynne for her frailty; nay, more, they had begun to look upon the scarlet letter as the token, not of that one sin for which she had borne so long and dreary a penance, but of her many good deeds since. "Do you see that woman with the embroidered badge?" they would say to strangers. "It is our Hester,—the town's own Hester, who is so kind to the poor, so helpful to the sick, so comfortable to the afflicted!" Then, it is true, the propensity of human nature to tell the very worst of itself, when embodied in the person of another, would constrain them to whisper the black scandal of bygone years. It was none the less a fact, however, that, in the eyes of the very men who spoke thus, the scarlet letter had the effect of the cross on a nun's bosom. It imparted to the wearer a kind of sacredness, which enabled her to walk securely amid all peril. Had she fallen among thieves it would have kept her safe. It was reported, and believed by many, that an Indian had drawn his arrow against the badge, and that the missile struck it, but fell harmless to the ground.

The effect of the symbol—or, rather, of the position in respect to society that was indicated by it—on the mind of Hester Prynne herself, was powerful and peculiar. All the light and graceful foliage of her character had

been withered up by this red-hot brand, and had long ago fallen away, leaving a bare and harsh outline, which might have been repulsive, had she possessed friends or companions to be repelled by it. Even the attractiveness of her person had undergone a similar change. It might be partly owing to the studied austerity of her dress, and partly to the lack of demonstration in her manners. It was a sad transformation, too, that her rich and luxuriant hair had either been cut off, or was so completely hidden by a cap, that not a shining lock of it ever once gushed into the sunshine. It was due in part to all these causes, but still more to something else, that there seemed to be no longer anything in Hester's face for Love to dwell upon; nothing in Hester's form, though majestic and statue-like, that Passion would ever dream of clasping in its embrace; nothing in Hester's bosom to make it ever again the pillow of Affection. Some attribute had departed from her, the permanence of which had been essential to keep her a woman. Such is frequently the fate, and such the stern development, of the feminine character and person, when the woman has encountered, and lived through, an experience of peculiar severity. If she be all tenderness, she will die. If she survive, the tenderness will either be crushed out of her, or—and the outward semblance is the same—crushed so deeply into her heart that it can never show itself more. The latter is perhaps the truest theory. She who has once been woman, and ceased to be so, might at any moment become a woman again if there were only the magic touch to effect the transfiguration. We shall see whether Hester Prynne were ever afterwards so touched, and so transfigured.

Much of the marble coldness of Hester's impression was to be attributed to the circumstance that her life had turned, in a great measure, from passion and feeling, to thought. Standing alone in the world,—alone, as to any dependence on society, and with little Pearl to be guided and protected,—alone, and hopeless of retrieving her position, even had she not scorned to consider it desirable,—she cast away the fragments of a broken chain. The world's law was no law for her mind. It was an age in which the human intellect, newly emanci-

pated, had taken a more active and a wider range than for many centuries before. Men of the sword had overthrown nobles and kings. Men bolder than these had overthrown and rearranged—not actually, but within the sphere of theory, which was their most real abode—the whole system of ancient prejudice, wherewith was linked much of ancient principle. Hester Prynne imbibed this spirit. She assumed a freedom of speculation, then common enough on the other side of the Atlantic, but which our forefathers, had they known it, would have held to be a deadlier crime than that stigmatized by the scarlet letter. In her lonesome cottage by the sea-shore, thoughts visited her, such as dared to enter no other dwelling in New England—shadowy guests, that would have been as perilous as demons to their entertainer, could they have been seen so much as knocking at her door.

It is remarkable that persons who speculate the most boldly often conform with the most perfect quietude to the external regulations of society. The thought suffices them, without investing itself in the flesh and blood of action. So it seemed to be with Hester. Yet, had little Pearl never come to her from the spiritual world, it might have been far otherwise. Then, she might have come down to us in history, hand in hand with Ann Hutchinson, as the foundress of a religious sect. She might, in one of her phases, have been a prophetess. She might, and not improbably would, have suffered death from the stern tribunals of the period, for attempting to undermine the foundations of the Puritan establishment. But, in the education of her child, the mother's enthusiasm of thought had something to wreak itself upon. Providence, in the person of this little girl, had assigned to Hester's charge the germ and blossom of womanhood, to be cherished and developed amid a host of difficulties. Everything was against her. The world was hostile. The child's own nature had something wrong in it, which continually betokened that she had been born amiss,—the effluence of her mother's lawless passion,—and often impelled Hester to ask, in bitterness of heart, whether it were for ill or good that the poor little creature had been born at all.

Indeed, the same dark question often rose

into her mind, with reference to the whole race of womanhood. Was existence worth accepting, even to the happiest among them? As concerned her own individual existence, she had long ago decided in the negative, and dismissed the point as settled. A tendency to speculation, though it may keep woman quiet, as it does man, yet makes her sad. She discerns, it may be, such a hopeless task before her. As a first step, the whole system of society is to be torn down, and built up anew. Then, the very nature of the opposite sex, or its long hereditary habit, which has become like nature, is to be essentially modified, before woman can be allowed to assume what seems a fair and suitable position. Finally, all other difficulties being obviated, woman cannot take advantage of these preliminary reforms, until she herself shall have undergone a still mightier change; in which, perhaps, the ethereal essence, wherein she has her truest life, will be found to have evaporated. A woman never overcomes these problems by any exercise of thought. They are not to be solved, or only in one way. If her heart chance to come uppermost, they vanish. Thus, Hester Prynne, whose heart had lost its regular and healthy throb, wandered without a clew in the dark labyrinth of mind; now turned aside by an insurmountable precipice; now starting back from a deep chasm. There was wild and ghastly scenery all around her, and a home and comfort nowhere. At times, a fearful doubt strove to possess her soul, whether it were not better to send Pearl at once to heaven, and go herself to such futurity as Eternal Justice should provide.

The scarlet letter had not done its office.

Now, however, her interview with the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, on the night of his vigil, had given her a new theme of reflection, and held up to her an object that appeared worthy of any exertion and sacrifice for its attainment. She had witnessed the intense misery beneath which the minister struggled, or, to speak more accurately, had ceased to struggle. She saw that he stood on the verge of lunacy, if he had not already stepped across it. It was impossible to doubt that, whatever painful efficacy there might be in the secret sting of remorse, a deadlier venom had been infused into it by

the hand that proffered relief. A secret enemy had been continually by his side, under the semblance of a friend and helper, and had availed himself of the opportunities thus afforded for tampering with the delicate springs of Mr. Dimmesdale's nature. Hester could not but ask herself, whether there had not originally been a defect of truth, courage, and loyalty, on her own part, in allowing the minister to be thrown into a position where so much evil was to be foreboded, and nothing auspicious to be hoped. Her only justification lay in the fact that she had been able to discern no method of rescuing him from a blacker ruin than had overwhelmed herself, except by acquiescing in Roger Chillingworth's scheme of disguise. Under that impulse she had made her choice, and had chosen, as it now appeared, the more wretched alternative of the two. She determined to redeem her error, so far as it might yet be possible. Strengthened by years of hard and solemn trial, she felt herself no longer so inadequate to cope with Roger Chillingworth as on that night, abased by sin, and half maddened by the ignominy that was still new, when they had talked together in the prison-chamber. She had climbed her way, since then, to a higher point. The old man, on the other hand, had brought himself nearer to her level, or perhaps below it, by the revenge which he had stooped for.

In fine, Hester Prynne resolved to meet her former husband, and do what might be in her power for the rescue of the victim on whom he had so evidently set his grip. The occasion was not long to seek. One afternoon, walking with Pearl in a retired part of the peninsula, she beheld the old physician, with a basket on one arm, and a staff in the other hand, stooping along the ground, in quest of roots and herbs to concoct his medicines withal.

XIV. HESTER AND THE PHYSICIAN

HESTER bade little Pearl run down to the margin of the water, and play with the shells and tangled seaweed, until she should have talked awhile with yonder gatherer of herbs. So the child flew away like a bird, and, making bare her small white feet, went pattering along the moist margin of the sea. Here and there she came to a full stop, and peeped

curiously into a pool, left by the retiring tide as a mirror for Pearl to see her face in. Forth peeped at her out of the pool, with dark, glistening curls around her head, and an elf-smile in her eyes, the image of a little maid, whom Pearl, having no other playmate, invited to take her hand, and run a race with her. But the visionary little maid, on her part, beckoned likewise, as if to say,—“This is a better place! Come thou into the pool!” And Pearl, stepping in, mid-leg deep, beheld her own white feet at the bottom; while, out of a still lower depth, came the gleam of a kind of fragmentary smile, floating to and fro in the agitated water.

Meanwhile, her mother had accosted the physician.

“I would speak a word with you,” said she,—“a word that concerns us much.”

“Aha! and is it Mistress Hester that has a word for old Roger Chillingworth?” answered he, raising himself from his stooping posture. “With all my heart! Why, Mistress, I hear good tidings of you on all hands! No longer ago than yester-eve, a magistrate, a wise and godly man, was discoursing of your affairs, Mistress Hester, and whispered me that there had been question concerning you in the council. It was debated whether or no, with safety to the common weal, yonder scarlet letter might be taken off your bosom. On my life, Hester, I made my entreaty to the worshipful magistrate that it might be done forthwith!”

“It lies not in the pleasure of the magistrates to take off this badge,” calmly replied Hester. “Were I worthy to be quit of it, it would fall away of its own nature, or be transformed into something that should speak a different purport.”

“Nay, then, wear it, if it suit you better,” rejoined he. “A woman must needs follow her own fancy, touching the adornment of her person. The letter is gayly embroidered, and shows right bravely on your bosom!”

All this while, Hester had been looking steadily at the old man, and was shocked, as well as wonder-smitten, to discern what a change had been wrought upon him within the past seven years. It was not so much that he had grown older; for though the traces of advancing life were visible, he wore his age well, and seemed to retain a wiry vigor and alertness. But the former aspect of an intel-

lectual and studious man, calm and quiet, which was what she best remembered in him, had altogether vanished, and been succeeded by an eager, searching, almost fierce, yet carefully guarded look. It seemed to be his wish and purpose to mask this expression with a smile; but the latter played him false, and flickered over his visage so derisively, that the spectator could see his blackness all the better for it. Ever and anon, too, there came a glare of red light out of his eyes; as if the old man's soul were on fire, and kept on smoldering duskily within his breast, until, by some casual puff of passion, it was blown into a momentary flame. This he repressed, as speedily as possible, and strove to look as if nothing of the kind had happened.

In a word, old Roger Chillingworth was a striking evidence of man's faculty of transforming himself into a devil, if he will only, for a reasonable space of time, undertake a devil's office. This unhappy person had effected such a transformation, by devoting himself, for seven years, to the constant analysis of a heart full of torture, and deriving his enjoyment thence, and adding fuel to those fiery tortures which he analyzed and gloated over.

The scarlet letter burned on Hester Prynne's bosom. Here was another ruin, the responsibility of which came partly home to her.

"What see you in my face," asked the physician, "that you look at it so earnestly?"

"Something that would make me weep, if there were any tears bitter enough for it," answered she. "But let it pass! It is of yonder miserable man that I would speak."

"And what of him?" cried Roger Chillingworth eagerly, as if he loved the topic, and were glad of an opportunity to discuss it with the only person of whom he could make a confidant. "Not to hide the truth, Mistress Hester, my thoughts happen just now to be busy with the gentleman. So speak freely; and I will make answer."

"When we last spake together," said Hester, "now seven years ago, it was your pleasure to extort a promise of secrecy, as touching the former relation betwixt yourself and me. As the life and good fame of yonder man were in your hands, there seemed no choice to me save to be silent, in

accordance with your behest. Yet it was not without heavy misgivings that I thus bound myself; for, having cast off all duty towards other human beings, there remained a duty towards him; and something whispered me that I was betraying it, in pledging myself to keep your counsel. Since that day, no man is so near to him as you. You tread behind his every footstep. You are beside him, sleeping and waking. You search his thoughts. You burrow and rankle in his heart! Your clutch is on his life, and you cause him to die daily a living death; and still he knows you not. In permitting this, I have surely acted a false part by the only man to whom the power was left me to be true!"

"What choice had you?" asked Roger Chillingworth. "My finger, pointed at this man, would have hurled him from his pulpit into a dungeon,—thence, peradventure, to the gallows!"

"It had been better so!" said Hester Prynne.

"What evil have I done the man?" asked Roger Chillingworth again. "I tell thee, Hester Prynne, the richest fee that ever physician earned from monarch could not have bought such care as I have wasted on this miserable priest! But for my aid, his life would have burned away in torments, within the first two years after the perpetration of his crime and thine. For, Hester, his spirit lacked the strength that could have borne up, as thine has, beneath a burden like thy scarlet letter. O, I could reveal a goodly secret! But enough! What art can do, I have exhausted on him. That he now breathes, and creeps about on earth, is owing all to me!"

"Better he had died at once!" said Hester Prynne.

"Yea, woman, thou sayest truly!" cried old Roger Chillingworth, letting the lurid fire of his heart blaze out before her eyes. "Better had he died at once! Never did mortal suffer what this man has suffered. And all, all, in the sight of his worst enemy! He has been conscious of me. He has felt an influence dwelling always upon him like a curse. He knew, by some spiritual sense,—for the Creator never made another being so sensitive as this,—he knew that no friendly hand was pulling at his heart-strings, and that an

eye was looking curiously into him, which sought only evil, and found it. But he knew not that the eye and hand were mine! With the superstition common to his brotherhood, he fancied himself given over to a fiend, to be tortured with frightful dreams and desperate thoughts, the sting of remorse, and despair of pardon; as a foretaste of what awaits him beyond the grave. But it was the constant shadow of my presence!—the closest proximity of the man whom he had most vilely wronged!—and who had grown to exist only by this perpetual poison of the direst revenge! Yea, indeed!—he did not err!—there was a fiend at his elbow! A mortal man, with once a human heart, has become a fiend for his especial torment!”

The unfortunate physician, while uttering these words, lifted his hands with a look of horror, as if he had beheld some frightful shape, which he could not recognize, usurping the place of his own image in a glass. It was one of those moments—which sometimes occur only at the interval of years—when a man’s moral aspect is faithfully revealed to his mind’s eye. Not improbably, he had never before viewed himself as he did now.

“Hast thou not tortured him enough?” said Hester, noticing the old man’s look. “Has he not paid thee all?”

“No!—no! He has but increased the debt!” answered the physician; and as he proceeded, his manner lost its fiercer characteristics, and subsided into gloom. “Dost thou remember me, Hester, as I was nine years ago? Even then, I was in the autumn of my days, nor was it the early autumn. But all my life had been made up of earnest, studious, thoughtful, quiet years, bestowed faithfully for the increase of mine own knowledge, and faithfully, too, though this latter object was but casual to the other,—faithfully for the advancement of human welfare. No life had been more peaceful and innocent than mine; few lives so rich with benefits conferred. Dost thou remember me? Was I not, though you might deem me cold, nevertheless a man thoughtful for others, craving little for himself,—kind, true, just, and of constant, if not warm affections? Was I not all this?”

“All this, and more,” said Hester.

“And what am I now?” demanded he, looking into her face, and permitting the

whole evil within him to be written on his features. “I have already told thee what I am! A fiend! Who made me so?”

“It was myself!” cried Hester, shuddering. “It was I, not less than he. Why hast thou not avenged thyself on me?”

“I have left thee to the scarlet letter,” replied Roger Chillingworth. “If that have not avenged me, I can do no more!”

He laid his finger on it, with a smile.

“It has avenged thee!” answered Hester Prynne.

“I judged no less,” said the physician. “And now, what wouldst thou with me touching this man?”

“I must reveal the secret,” answered Hester firmly. “He must discern thee in thy true character. What may be the result, I know not. But this long debt of confidence, due from me to him, whose bane and ruin I have been, shall at length be paid. So far as concerns the overthrow or preservation of his fair fame and his earthly state, and perchance his life, he is in thy hands. Nor do I,—whom the scarlet letter has disciplined to truth, though it be the truth of red-hot iron, entering into the soul,—nor do I perceive such advantage in his living any longer a life of ghastly emptiness, that I shall stoop to implore thy mercy. Do with him as thou wilt! There is no good for him,—no good for me,—no good for thee! There is no good for little Pearl! There is no path to guide us out of this dismal maze!”

“Woman, I could wellnigh pity thee!” said Roger Chillingworth, unable to restrain a thrill of admiration too; for there was a quality almost majestic in the despair which she expressed. “Thou hadst great elements. Peradventure, hadst thou met earlier with a better love than mine, this evil had not been. I pity thee, for the good that has been wasted in thy nature!”

“And I thee,” answered Hester Prynne, “for the hatred that has transformed a wise and just man to a fiend! Wilt thou yet purge it out of thee, and be once more human? If not for his sake, then doubly for thine own! Forgive, and leave his further retribution to the Power that claims it! I said, but now, that there could be no good event for him, or thee, or me, who are here wandering together in this gloomy maze of evil, and stumbling, at every step, over the guilt where-

with we have strewn our path. It is not so! There might be good for thee, and thee alone, since thou hast been deeply wronged, and hast it at thy will to pardon. Wilt thou give up that only privilege? Wilt thou reject that priceless benefit?"

"Peace, Hester, peace!" replied the old man, with gloomy sternness. "It is not granted me to pardon. I have no such power as thou tellest me of. My old faith, long forgotten, comes back to me, and explains all that we do, and all we suffer. By thy first step awry thou didst plant the germ of evil; but since that moment, it has all been a dark necessity. Ye that have wronged me are not sinful, save in a kind of typical illusion; neither am I fiend-like, who have snatched a fiend's office from his hands. It is our fate. Let the black flower blossom as it may! Now go thy ways, and deal as thou wilt with yonder man."

He waved his hand, and betook himself again to his employment of gathering herbs.

XV. HESTER AND PEARL

So Roger Chillingworth—a deformed old figure, with a face that haunted men's memories longer than they liked—took leave of Hester Prynne, and went stooping away along the earth. He gathered here and there an herb, or grubbed up a root, and put it into the basket on his arm. His gray beard almost touched the ground, as he crept onward. Hester gazed after him a little while, looking with a half-fantastic curiosity to see whether the tender grass of early spring would not be blighted beneath him, and show the wavering track of his footsteps, sere and brown, across its cheerful verdure. She wondered what sort of herbs they were, which the old man was so sedulous to gather. Would not the earth, quickened to an evil purpose by the sympathy of his eye, greet him with poisonous shrubs, of species hitherto unknown, that would start up under his fingers? Or might it suffice him that every wholesome growth should be converted into something deleterious and malignant at his touch? Did the sun, which shone so brightly everywhere else, really fall upon him? Or was there, as it rather seemed, a circle of ominous shadow moving along with his deformity, whichever way he turned himself? And whither was he now going?

Would he not suddenly sink into the earth, leaving a barren and blasted spot, where, in due course of time, would be seen deadly nightshade, dogwood, henbane, and whatever else of vegetable wickedness the climate could produce, all flourishing with hideous luxuriance? Or would he spread bat's wings and flee away, looking so much the uglier, the higher he rose towards heaven?

"Be it sin or no," said Hester Prynne bitterly, as she still gazed after him, "I hate the man!"

She upbraided herself for the sentiment, but could not overcome or lessen it. Attempting to do so, she thought of those long-past days, in a distant land, when he used to emerge at eventide from the seclusion of his study, and sit down in the firelight of their home, and in the light of her nuptial smile. He needed to bask himself in that smile, he said, in order that the chill of so many lonely hours among his books might be taken off the scholar's heart. Such scenes had once appeared not otherwise than happy; but now, as viewed through the dismal medium of her subsequent life, they classed themselves among her ugliest remembrances. She marveled how such scenes could have been! She marveled how she could ever have been wrought upon to marry him! She deemed it her crime most to be repented of, that she had ever endured, and reciprocated, the lukewarm grasp of his hand, and had suffered the smile of her lips and eyes to mingle and melt into his own. And it seemed a fouler offense committed by Roger Chillingworth, than any which had since been done him, that, in the time when her heart knew no better, he had persuaded her to fancy herself happy by his side.

"Yes, I hate him!" repeated Hester, more bitterly than before. "He betrayed me! He has done me worse wrong than I did him!"

Let men tremble to win the hand of woman, unless they win along with it the utmost passion of her heart! Else it may be their miserable fortune, as it was Roger Chillingworth's, when some mightier touch than their own may have awakened all her sensibilities, to be reproached even for the calm content, the marble image of happiness, which they will have imposed upon her as the warm reality. But Hester ought long ago to

have done with this injustice. What did it betoken? Had seven long years, under the torture of the scarlet letter, inflicted so much of misery, and wrought out no repentance?

The emotions of that brief space, while she stood gazing after the crooked figure of old Roger Chillingworth, threw a dark light on Hester's state of mind, revealing much that she might not otherwise have acknowledged to herself.

He being gone, she summoned back her child.

"Pearl! Little Pearl! Where are you?"

Pearl, whose activity of spirit never flagged, had been at no loss for amusement while her mother talked with the old gatherer of herbs. At first, as already told, she had flirted fancifully with her own image in a pool of water, beckoning the phantom forth, and—as it declined to venture—seeking a passage for herself into its sphere of impalpable earth and unattainable sky. Soon finding, however, that either she or the image was unreal, she turned elsewhere for better pastime. She made little boats out of birch-bark, and freighted them with snail-shells, and sent out more ventures on the mighty deep than any merchant in New England; but the larger part of them foundered near the shore. She seized a live horseshoe by the tail, and made prize of several five-fingers, and laid out a jelly-fish to melt in the warm sun. Then she took up the white foam, that streaked the line of the advancing tide, and threw it upon the breeze, scampering after it, with winged footsteps, to catch the great snow-flakes ere they fell. Perceiving a flock of beach-birds, that fed and fluttered along the shore, the naughty child picked up her apron full of pebbles, and, creeping from rock to rock after these small sea-fowl, displayed remarkable dexterity in pelting them. One little gray bird, with a white breast, Pearl was almost sure, had been hit by a pebble, and fluttered away with a broken wing. But then the elf-child sighed, and gave up her sport; because it grieved her to have done harm to a little being that was as wild as the sea-breeze, or as wild as Pearl herself.

Her final employment was to gather seaweed, of various kinds, and make herself a scarf, or mantle, and a head-dress, and thus assume the aspect of a little mermaid. She inherited her mother's gift for devising drape-

ry and costume. As the last touch to her mermaid's garb, Pearl took some eel-grass, and imitated, as best she could, on her own bosom, the decoration with which she was so familiar on her mother's. A letter,—the letter A,—but freshly green, instead of scarlet! The child bent her chin upon her breast, and contemplated this device with strange interest; even as if the one only thing for which she had been sent into the world was to make out its hidden import.

"I wonder if mother will ask me what it means!" thought Pearl.

Just then, she heard her mother's voice, and flitting along as lightly as one of the little sea-birds, appeared before Hester Prynne, dancing, laughing, and pointing her finger to the ornament upon her bosom.

"My little Pearl," said Hester, after a moment's silence, "the green letter, and on thy childish bosom, has no purport. But dost thou know, my child, what this letter means which thy mother is doomed to wear?"

"Yes, mother," said the child. "It is the great letter A. Thou hast taught me in the horn-book."

Hester looked steadily into her little face; but, though there was that singular expression which she had so often remarked in her black eyes, she could not satisfy herself whether Pearl really attached any meaning to the symbol. She felt a morbid desire to ascertain the point.

"Dost thou know, child, wherefore thy mother wears this letter?"

"Truly do I!" answered Pearl, looking brightly into her mother's face. "It is for the same reason that the minister keeps his hand over his heart!"

"And what reason is that?" asked Hester, half smiling at the absurd incongruity of the child's observation; but, on second thoughts, turning pale. "What has the letter to do with any heart, save mine?"

"Nay, mother, I have told all I know," said Pearl, more seriously than she was wont to speak. "Ask yonder old man whom thou hast been talking with! It may be he can tell. But in good earnest now, mother dear, what does this scarlet letter mean?—and why dost thou wear it on thy bosom—and why does the minister keep his hand over his heart?"

She took her mother's hand in both her own, and gazed into her eyes with an earnestness that was seldom seen in her wild and capricious character. The thought occurred to Hester that the child might really be seeking to approach her with childlike confidence, and doing what she could and as intelligently as she knew how, to establish a meeting-point of sympathy. It showed Pearl in an unwonted aspect. Heretofore, the mother, while loving her child with the intensity of a sole affection, had schooled herself to hope for little other return than the waywardness of an April breeze; which spends its time in airy sport, and has its gusts of inexplicable passion, and is petulant in its best of moods, and chills oftener than caresses you, when you take it to your bosom; in requital of which misdemeanors, it will sometimes, of its own vague purpose, kiss your cheek with a kind of doubtful tenderness, and play gently with your hair, and then be gone about its other idle business, leaving a dreamy pleasure at your heart. And this, moreover, was a mother's estimate of the child's disposition. Any other observer might have seen few but unamiable traits, and have given them a far darker coloring. But now the idea came strongly into Hester's mind, that Pearl, with her remarkable precocity and acuteness, might already have approached the age when she could be made a friend, and intrusted with as much of her mother's sorrows as could be imparted without irreverence either to the parent or the child. In the little chaos of Pearl's character there might be seen emerging—and could have been, from the very first—the steadfast principles of an unflinching courage,—an uncontrollable will, a sturdy pride, which might be disciplined into self-respect,—and a bitter scorn of many things, which, when examined, might be found to have the taint of falsehood in them. She possessed affections, too, though hitherto acrid and disagreeable, as are the richest flavors of unripe fruit. With all these sterling attributes, thought Hester, the evil which she inherited from her mother must be great indeed, if a noble woman do not grow out of this elfish child.

Pearl's inevitable tendency to hover about the enigma of the scarlet letter seemed an innate quality of her being. From the earli-

est epoch of her conscious life, she had entered upon this as her appointed mission. Hester had often fancied that Providence had a design of justice and retribution, in endowing the child with this marked propensity; but never, until now, had she bethought herself to ask, whether, linked with that design, there might not likewise be a purpose of mercy and beneficence. If little Pearl were entertained with faith and trust, as a spirit messenger no less than an earthly child, might it not be her errand to soothe away the sorrow that lay cold in her mother's heart, and converted it into a tomb?—and to help her to overcome the passion, once so wild, and even yet neither dead nor asleep, but only imprisoned within the same tomb-like heart?

Such were some of the thoughts that now stirred in Hester's mind, with as much vivacity of impression as if they had actually been whispered into her ear. And there was little Pearl, all this while, holding her mother's hand in both her own, and turning her face upward, while she put these searching questions, once, and again, and still a third time.

"What does the letter mean, mother?—and why dost thou wear it?—and why does the minister keep his hand over his heart?"

"What shall I say?" thought Hester to herself. "No! If this be the price of the child's sympathy, I cannot pay it."

Then she spoke aloud.

"Silly Pearl," said she, "what questions are these? There are many things in this world that a child must not ask about. What know I of the minister's heart? And as for the scarlet letter, I wear it for the sake of its gold-thread."

In all the seven bygone years, Hester Prynne had never before been false to the symbol on her bosom. It may be that it was the talisman of a stern and severe, but yet a guardian spirit, who now forsook her; as recognizing that, in spite of his strict watch over her heart, some new evil had crept into it, or some old one had never been expelled. As for little Pearl, the earnestness soon passed out of her face.

But the child did not see fit to let the matter drop. Two or three times, as her mother and she went homeward, and as often at supper-time, and while Hester was

putting her to bed, and once after she seemed to be fairly asleep, Pearl looked up, with mischief gleaming in her black eyes.

"Mother," said she, "what does the scarlet letter mean?"

And the next morning, the first indication the child gave of being awake was by popping up her head from the pillow, and making that other inquiry, which she had so unaccountably connected with her investigations about the scarlet letter:—

"Mother!—Mother!—Why does the minister keep his hand over his heart?"

"Hold thy tongue, naughty child!" answered her mother, with an asperity that she had never permitted to herself before. "Do not tease me, else I shall shut thee into the dark closet!"

XVI. A FOREST WALK

HESTER PRYNNE remained constant in her resolve to make known to Mr. Dimmesdale, at whatever risk of present pain or ulterior consequences, the true character of the man who had crept into his intimacy. For several days, however, she vainly sought an opportunity of addressing him in some of the meditative walks which she knew him to be in the habit of taking, along the shores of the peninsula, or on the wooded hills of the neighboring country. There would have been no scandal, indeed, nor peril to the holy whiteness of the clergyman's good fame, had she visited him in his own study, where many a penitent, ere now, had confessed sins of perhaps as deep a dye as the one betokened by the scarlet letter. But, partly that she dreaded the secret or undisguised interference of old Roger Chillingworth, and partly that her conscious heart imputed suspicion where none could have been felt, and partly that both the minister and she would need the whole wide world to breathe in, while they talked together,—for all these reasons, Hester never thought of meeting him in any narrower privacy than beneath the open sky.

At last, while attending in a sick-chamber, whither the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale had been summoned to make a prayer, she learnt that he had gone, the day before, to visit the Apostle Eliot, among his Indian converts. He would probably return, by a certain hour, in the afternoon of the morrow. Betimes, therefore, the next day, Hester took little

Pearl,—who was necessarily the companion of all her mother's expeditions, however inconvenient her presence,—and set forth.

The road, after the two wayfarers had crossed from the peninsula to the mainland, was no other than a footpath. It straggled onward into the mystery of the primeval forest. This hemmed it in so narrowly, and stood so black and dense on either side, and disclosed such imperfect glimpses of the sky above, that, to Hester's mind, it imaged not amiss the moral wilderness in which she had so long been wandering. The day was chill and somber. Overhead was a gray expanse of cloud, slightly stirred, however, by a breeze; so that a gleam of flickering sunshine might now and then be seen at its solitary play along the path. This flitting cheerfulness was always at the farther extremity of some long vista through the forest. The sportive sunlight—feebly sportive, at best, in the predominant pensiveness of the day and scene—withdrew itself as they came nigh, and left the spots where it had danced the drearier, because they had hoped to find them bright.

"Mother," said little Pearl, "the sunshine does not love you. It runs away and hides itself, because it is afraid of something on your bosom. Now, see! There it is, playing, a good way off. Stand you here, and let me run and catch it. I am but a child. It will not flee from me; for I wear nothing on my bosom yet!"

"Nor ever will, my child, I hope," said Hester.

"And why not, mother?" asked Pearl, stopping short, just at the beginning of her race. "Will it not come of its own accord, when I am a woman grown?"

"Run away, child," answered her mother, "and catch the sunshine! It will soon be gone."

Pearl set forth, at a great pace, and, as Hester smiled to perceive, did actually catch the sunshine, and stood laughing in the midst of it, all brightened by its splendor, and scintillating with the vivacity excited by rapid motion. The light lingered about the lonely child, as if glad of such a playmate, until her mother had drawn almost nigh enough to step into the magic circle too.

"It will go now," said Pearl, shaking her head.

"See!" answered Hester, smiling. "Now I can stretch out my hand, and grasp some of it."

As she attempted to do so, the sunshine vanished; or, to judge from the bright expression that was dancing on Pearl's features, her mother could have fancied that the child had absorbed it into herself, and would give it forth again, with a gleam about her path, as they should plunge into some gloomier shade. There was no other attribute that so much impressed her with a sense of new and untransmitted vigor in Pearl's nature, as this never-failing vivacity of spirits; she had not the disease of sadness, which almost all children, in these latter days, inherit, with the scrofula, from the troubles of their ancestors. Perhaps this too was a disease, and but the reflex of the wild energy with which Hester had fought against her sorrows, before Pearl's birth. It was certainly a doubtful charm, imparting a hard, metallic luster to the child's character. She wanted—what some people want throughout life—a grief that should deeply touch her, and thus humanize and make her capable of sympathy. But there was time enough yet for little Pearl.

"Come, my child!" said Hester, looking about her from the spot where Pearl had stood still in the sunshine. "We will sit down a little way within the wood, and rest ourselves."

"I am not aweary, mother," replied the little girl. "But you may sit down, if you will tell me a story meanwhile."

"A story, child!" said Hester; "and about what?"

"O, a story about the Black Man," answered Pearl, taking hold of her mother's gown, and looking up, half earnestly, half mischievously, into her face. "How he haunts this forest, and carries a book with him,—a big, heavy book, with iron clasps; and how this ugly Black Man offers his book and an iron pen to everybody that meets him here among the trees; and they are to write their names with their own blood. And then he sets his mark on their bosoms! Didst thou ever meet the Black Man, mother?"

"And who told you this story, Pearl?" asked her mother, recognizing a common superstition of the period.

"It was the old dame in the chimney-corner, at the house where you watched last night," said the child. "But she fancied me asleep while she was talking of it. She said that a thousand and a thousand people had met him here, and had written in his book, and have his mark on them. And that ugly-tempered lady, old Mistress Hibbins, was one. And, mother, the old dame said that this scarlet letter was the Black Man's mark on thee, and that it glows like a red flame when thou meetest him at midnight, here in the dark wood. Is it true, mother? And dost thou go to meet him in the night-time?"

"Didst thou ever awake, and find thy mother gone?" asked Hester.

"Not that I remember," said the child. "If thou fearest to leave me in our cottage, thou mightest take me along with thee. I would very gladly go! But, mother, tell me now! Is there such a Black Man? And didst thou ever meet him? And is this his mark?"

"Wilt thou let me be at peace, if I once tell thee?" asked her mother.

"Yes, if thou tellest me all," answered Pearl.

"Once in my life I met the Black Man!" said her mother. "This scarlet letter is his mark!"

Thus conversing, they entered sufficiently deep into the wood to secure themselves from the observation of any casual passenger along the forest track. Here they sat down on a luxuriant heap of moss which, at some epoch of the preceding century, had been a gigantic pine, with its roots and trunk in the darksome shade, and its head aloft in the upper atmosphere. It was a little dell where they had seated themselves, with a leaf-strewn bank rising gently on either side, and a brook flowing through the midst, over a bed of fallen and drowned leaves. The trees impending over it had flung down great branches, from time to time, which choked up the current and compelled it to form eddies and black depths at some points; while, in its swifter and livelier passages, there appeared a channel-way of pebbles, and brown, sparkling sand. Letting the eyes follow along the course of the stream, they could catch the reflected light from its water, at some short distance within the forest, but

soon lost all traces of it amid the bewilderment of tree-trunks and underbrush, and here and there a huge rock covered over with gray lichens. All these giant trees and boulders of granite seemed intent on making a mystery of the course of this small brook; fearing, perhaps, that, with its never-ceasing loquacity, it should whisper tales out of the heart of the old forest whence it flowed, or mirror its revelations on the smooth surface of a pool. Continually, indeed, as it stole onward, the streamlet kept up a babble, kind, quiet, soothing, but melancholy, like the voice of a young child that was spending its infancy without playfulness, and knew not how to be merry among sad acquaintance and events of somber hue.

"O brook! O foolish and tiresome little brook!" cried Pearl, after listening awhile to its talk. "Why art thou so sad? Pluck up a spirit, and do not be all the time sighing and murmuring!"

But the brook, in the course of its little lifetime among the forest-trees, had gone through so solemn an experience that it could not help talking about it, and seemed to have nothing else to say. Pearl resembled the brook, inasmuch as the current of her life gushed from a wellspring as mysterious, and had flowed through scenes shadowed as heavily with gloom. But, unlike the little stream, she danced and sparkled, and prattled airily along her course.

"What does this sad little brook say, mother?" inquired she.

"If thou hadst a sorrow of thine own, the brook might tell thee of it," answered her mother, "even as it is telling me of mine! But now, Pearl, I hear a footstep along the path, and the noise of one putting aside the branches. I would have thee betake thyself to play, and leave me to speak with him that comes yonder."

"Is it the Black Man?" asked Pearl.

"Wilt thou go and play, child?" repeated her mother. "But do not stray far into the wood. And take heed that thou come at my first call."

"Yes, mother," answered Pearl. "But if it be the Black Man, wilt thou not let me stay a moment, and look at him, with his big book under his arm?"

"Go, silly child!" said her mother, impatiently. "It is no Black Man! Thou

canst see him now, through the trees. It is the minister!"

"And so it is!" said the child. "And, mother, he has his hand over his heart! Is it because, when the minister wrote his name in the book, the Black Man set his mark in that place? But why does he not wear it outside his bosom, as thou dost, mother?"

"Go now, child, and thou shalt tease me as thou wilt another time," cried Hester Prynne. "But do not stray far. Keep where thou canst hear the babble of the brook."

The child went singing away, following up the current of the brook, and striving to mingle a more lightsome cadence with its melancholy voice. But the little stream would not be comforted, and still kept telling its unintelligible secret of some very mournful mystery that had happened—or making a prophetic lamentation about something that was yet to happen—within the verge of the dismal forest. So Pearl, who had enough of shadow in her own little life, chose to break off all acquaintance with this repining brook. She set herself, therefore, to gathering violets and wood-anemones, and some scarlet columbines that she found growing in the crevices of a high rock.

When her elf-child had departed, Hester Prynne made a step or two towards the track that led through the forest, but still remained under the deep shadow of the trees. She beheld the minister advancing along the path, entirely alone, and leaning on a staff which he had cut by the wayside. He looked haggard and feeble, and betrayed a nerveless despondency in his air, which had never so remarkably characterized him in his walks about the settlement, nor in any other situation where he deemed himself liable to notice. Here it was woefully visible, in the intense seclusion of the forest, which of itself would have been a heavy trial to the spirits. There was a listlessness in his gait; as if he saw no reason for taking one step farther, nor felt any desire to do so, but would have been glad, could he be glad of anything, to fling himself down at the root of the nearest tree, and lie there passive, forevermore. The leaves might bestrew him, and the soil gradually accumulate and form a little hillock over his frame, no matter whether there were life in it or no. Death was too definite an object to be wished for, or avoided.

To Hester's eye, the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale exhibited no symptom of positive and vivacious suffering, except that, as little Pearl had remarked, he kept his hand over his heart.

XVII. THE PASTOR AND HIS PARISHIONER

SLOWLY as the minister walked, he had almost gone by, before Hester Prynne could gather voice enough to attract his observation. At length, she succeeded.

"Arthur Dimmesdale!" she said, faintly at first; then louder, but hoarsely. "Arthur Dimmesdale!"

"Who speaks?" answered the minister.

Gathering himself quickly up, he stood more erect, like a man taken by surprise in a mood to which he was reluctant to have witnesses. Throwing his eyes anxiously in the direction of the voice, he indistinctly beheld a form under the trees, clad in garments so somber and so little relieved from the gray twilight into which the clouded sky and the heavy foliage had darkened the noontide, that he knew not whether it were a woman or a shadow. It may be that his pathway through life was haunted thus, by a specter that had stolen out from among his thoughts.

He made a step nigher, and discovered the scarlet letter.

"Hester! Hester Prynne!" said he. "Is it thou? Art thou in life?"

"Even so!" she answered. "In such life as has been mine these seven years past! And thou, Arthur Dimmesdale, dost thou yet live?"

It was no wonder that they thus questioned one another's actual and bodily existence, and even doubted of their own. So strangely did they meet, in the dim wood, that it was like the first encounter, in the world beyond the grave, of two spirits who had been intimately connected in their former life, but now stood coldly shuddering, in mutual dread; as not yet familiar with their state, nor wonted to the companionship of disembodied beings. Each a ghost, and awe-stricken at the other ghost! They were awe-stricken likewise at themselves; because the crisis flung back to them their consciousness, and revealed to each heart its history and experience, as life never does, except at such breathless epochs. The soul beheld its features in the mirror of the passing moment.

It was with fear, and tremulously, and, as it were, by a slow, reluctant necessity, that Arthur Dimmesdale put forth his hand, chill as death, and touched the chill hand of Hester Prynne. The grasp, cold as it was, took away what was dreariest in the interview. They now felt themselves, at least, inhabitants of the same sphere.

Without a word more spoken,—neither he nor she assuming the guidance, but with an unexpressed consent,—they glided back into the shadow of the woods whence Hester had emerged, and sat down on the heap of moss where she and Pearl had before been sitting. When they found voice to speak, it was, at first, only to utter remarks and inquiries such as any two acquaintances might have made, about the gloomy sky, the threatening storm, and, next, the health of each. Thus they went onward, not boldly, but step by step, into the themes that were brooding deepest in their hearts. So long estranged by fate and circumstances, they needed something slight and casual to run before, and throw open the doors of intercourse, so that their real thoughts might be led across the threshold.

After a while, the minister fixed his eyes on Hester Prynne's.

"Hester," said he, "hast thou found peace?"

She smiled drearily, looking down upon her bosom.

"Hast thou?" she asked.

"None!—nothing but despair!" he answered. "What else could I look for, being what I am, and leading such a life as mine? Were I an atheist,—a man devoid of conscience,—a wretch with coarse and brutal instincts,—I might have found peace, long ere now. Nay, I never should have lost it! But, as matters stand with my soul, whatever of good capacity there originally was in me, all of God's gifts that were the choicest have become the ministers of spiritual torment. Hester, I am most miserable!"

"The people reverence thee," said Hester. "And surely thou workest good among them! Doth this bring thee no comfort?"

"More misery, Hester!—only the more misery!" answered the clergyman, with a bitter smile. "As concerns the good which I may appear to do, I have no faith in it. It must needs be a delusion. What can a

ruined soul, like mine, effect towards the redemption of other souls?—or a polluted soul towards their purification? And as for the people's reverence, would that it were turned to scorn and hatred! Canst thou deem it, Hester, a consolation, that I must stand up in my pulpit, and meet so many eyes turned upward to my face, as if the light of heaven were beaming from it!—must see my flock hungry for the truth, and listening to my words as if a tongue of Pentecost were speaking!—and then look inward, and discern the black reality of what they idolize? I have laughed, in bitterness and agony of heart, at the contrast between what I seem and what I am! And Satan laughs at it!"

"You wrong yourself in this," said Hester gently. "You have deeply and sorely repented. Your sin is left behind you, in the days long past. Your present life is not less holy, in very truth, than it seems in people's eyes. Is there no reality in the penitence thus sealed and witnessed by good works? And wherefore should it not bring you peace?"

"No, Hester, no!" replied the clergyman. "There is no substance in it! It is cold and dead, and can do nothing for me! Of penance, I have had enough! Of penitence, there has been none! Else, I should long ago have thrown off these garments of mock holiness, and have shown myself to mankind as they will see me at the judgment-seat. Happy are you, Hester, that wear the scarlet letter openly upon your bosom! Mine burns in secret! Thou little knowest what a relief it is, after the torment of a seven years' cheat, to look into an eye that recognizes me for what I am! Had I one friend,—or were it my worst enemy!—to whom, when sickened with the praises of all other men, I could daily betake myself, and be known as the vilest of all sinners, methinks my soul might keep itself alive thereby. Even thus much of truth would save me! But, now, it is all falsehood!—all emptiness!—all death!"

Hester Prynne looked into his face, but hesitated to speak. Yet, uttering his long-restrained emotions so vehemently as he did, his words here offered her the very point of circumstances in which to interpose what she came to say. She conquered her fears, and spoke.

"Such a friend as thou hast even now

wished for," said she, "with whom to weep over thy sin, thou hast in me, the partner of it!"—Again she hesitated, but brought out the words with an effort.—"Thou hast long had such an enemy, and dwellest with him, under the same roof!"

The minister started to his feet, gasping for breath, and clutching at his heart, as if he would have torn it out of his bosom.

"Ha! What sayest thou!" cried he. "An enemy! And under mine own roof! What mean you?"

Hester Prynne was now fully sensible of the deep injury for which she was responsible to this unhappy man, in permitting him to lie for so many years, or, indeed, for a single moment, at the mercy of one whose purposes could not be other than malevolent. The very contiguity of his enemy, beneath whatever mask the latter might conceal himself, was enough to disturb the magnetic sphere of a being so sensitive as Arthur Dimmesdale. There had been a period when Hester was less alive to this consideration; or, perhaps, in the misanthropy of her own trouble, she left the minister to bear what she might picture to herself as a more tolerable doom. But of late, since the night of his vigil, all her sympathies towards him had been both softened and invigorated. She now read his heart more accurately. She doubted not that the continual presence of Roger Chillingworth,—the secret poison of his malignity, infecting all the air about him,—and his authorized interference, as a physician, with the minister's physical and spiritual infirmities,—that these bad opportunities had been turned to a cruel purpose. By means of them, the sufferer's conscience had been kept in an irritated state, the tendency of which was, not to cure by wholesome pain, but to disorganize and corrupt his spiritual being. Its result, on earth, could hardly fail to be insanity, and hereafter, that eternal alienation from the Good and True,—of which madness is perhaps the earthly type.

Such was the ruin to which she had brought the man, once,—nay, why should we not speak it?—still so passionately loved! Hester felt that the sacrifice of the clergyman's good name, and death itself, as she had already told Roger Chillingworth, would have been infinitely preferable to the

alternative which she had taken upon herself to choose. And now, rather than have had this grievous wrong to confess, she would gladly have lain down on the forest-leaves, and died there, at Arthur Dimmesdale's feet.

"O Arthur," cried she, "forgive me! In all things else, I have striven to be true! Truth was the one virtue which I might have held fast, and did hold fast, through all extremity; save when thy good,—thy life,—thy fame,—were put in question! Then I consented to a deception. But a lie is never good, even though death threaten on the other side! Dost thou not see what I would say? That old man!—the physician!—he whom they call Roger Chillingworth!—he was my husband!"

The minister looked at her, for an instant, with all that violence of passion, which—intermixed, in more shapes than one, with his higher, purer, softer qualities—was, in fact, the portion of him which the Devil claimed, and through which he sought to win the rest. Never was there a blacker or a fiercer frown than Hester now encountered. For the brief space that it lasted, it was a dark transfiguration. But his character had been so much enfeebled by suffering, that even its lower energies were incapable of more than a temporary struggle. He sank down on the ground, and buried his face in his hands.

"I might have known it," murmured he. "I did know it! Was not the secret told me, in the natural recoil of my heart, at the first sight of him, and as often as I have seen him since! Why did I not understand? O Hester Prynne, thou little, little knowest all the horror of this thing! And the shame!—the indelicacy!—the horrible ugliness of this exposure of a sick and guilty heart to the very eye that would gloat over it! Woman, woman, thou art accountable for this! I cannot forgive thee!"

"Thou shalt forgive me!" cried Hester, flinging herself on the fallen leaves beside him. "Let God punish! Thou shalt forgive!"

With sudden and desperate tenderness, she threw her arms around him, and pressed his head against her bosom; little caring though his cheek rested on the scarlet letter. He would have released himself, but strove

in vain to do so. Hester would not set him free, lest he should look her sternly in the face. All the world had frowned on her,—for seven long years had it frowned upon this lonely woman,—and still she bore it all, nor ever once turned away her firm, sad eyes. Heaven, likewise, had frowned upon her, and she had not died. But the frown of this pale, weak, sinful, and sorrow-stricken man was what Hester could not bear and live!

"Wilt thou yet forgive me!" she repeated, over and over again. "Wilt thou not frown? Wilt thou forgive?"

"I do forgive you, Hester," replied the minister, at length, with a deep utterance, out of an abyss of sadness, but no anger. "I freely forgive you now. May God forgive us both! We are not, Hester, the worst sinners in the world. There is one worse than even the polluted priest! That old man's revenge has been blacker than my sin. He has violated, in cold blood, the sanctity of a human heart. Thou and I, Hester, never did so!"

"Never, never!" whispered she. "What we did had a consecration of its own. We felt it so! We said so to each other! Hast thou forgotten it?"

"Hush, Hester!" said Arthur Dimmesdale, rising from the ground. "No; I have not forgotten!"

They sat down again, side by side, and hand clasped in hand, on the mossy trunk of the fallen tree. Life had never brought them a gloomier hour; it was the point whither their pathway had so long been tending, and darkening ever, as it stole along;—and yet it enclosed a charm that made them linger upon it, and claim another, and another, and, after all, another moment. The forest was obscure around them, and creaked with a blast that was passing through it. The boughs were tossing heavily above their heads; while one solemn old tree groaned dolefully to another, as if telling the sad story of the pair that sat beneath, or constrained to forebode evil to come.

And yet they lingered. How dreary looked the forest-track that led backward to the settlement, where Hester Prynne must take up again the burden of her ignominy, and the minister the hollow mockery of his good name! So they lingered an instant longer. No golden light had ever been so precious as

the gloom of this dark forest. Here, seen only by his eyes, the scarlet letter need not burn into the bosom of the fallen woman! Here, seen only by her eyes, Arthur Dimmesdale, false to God and man, might be, for one moment, true!

He started at a thought that suddenly occurred to him.

"Hester," cried he, "here is a new horror! Roger Chillingworth knows your purpose to reveal his true character. Will he continue, then, to keep our secret? What will now be the course of his revenge?"

"There is a strange secrecy in his nature," replied Hester thoughtfully; "and it has grown upon him by the hidden practices of his revenge. I deem it not likely that he will betray the secret. He will doubtless seek other means of satiating his dark passion."

"And I!—how am I to live longer, breathing the same air with this deadly enemy?" exclaimed Arthur Dimmesdale, shrinking within himself, and pressing his hand nervously against his heart,—a gesture that had grown involuntary with him. "Think for me, Hester! Thou art strong. Resolve for me!"

"Thou must dwell no longer with this man," said Hester, slowly and firmly. "Thy heart must be no longer under his evil eye!"

"It were far worse than death!" replied the minister. "But how to avoid it? What choice remains to me? Shall I lie down again on these withered leaves, where I cast myself when thou didst tell me what he was? Must I sink down there, and die at once?"

"Alas, what a ruin has befallen thee!" said Hester, with the tears gushing into her eyes. "Wilt thou die for very weakness? There is no other cause!"

"The judgment of God is on me," answered the conscience-stricken priest. "It is too mighty for me to struggle with!"

"Heaven would show mercy," rejoined Hester, "hadst thou but the strength to take advantage of it."

"Be thou strong for me!" answered he. "Advise me what to do."

"Is the world, then, so narrow?" exclaimed Hester Prynne, fixing her deep eyes on the minister's, and instinctively exercising a magnetic power over a spirit so shattered and subdued that it could hardly hold itself erect. "Doth the universe lie within the

compass of yonder town, which only a little time ago was but a leaf-strewn desert, as lonely as this around us? Whither leads yonder forest-track? Backward to the settlement, thou sayest! Yes; but onward, too. Deeper it goes, and deeper, into the wilderness, less plainly to be seen at every step; until, some few miles hence, the yellow leaves will show no vestige of the white man's tread. There thou art free! So brief a journey would bring thee from a world where thou hast been most wretched, to one where thou mayest still be happy. Is there not shade enough in all this boundless forest to hide thy heart from the gaze of Roger Chillingworth?"

"Yes, Hester; but only under the fallen leaves!" replied the minister, with a sad smile.

"Then there is the broad pathway of the sea!" continued Hester. "It brought thee hither. If thou so choose, it will bear thee back again. In our native land, whether in some remote rural village or in vast London,—or, surely, in Germany, in France, in pleasant Italy,—thou wouldst be beyond his power and knowledge! And what hast thou to do with all these iron men, and their opinions? They have kept thy better part in bondage too long already!"

"It cannot be!" answered the minister, listening as if he were called upon to realize a dream. "I am powerless to go! Wretched and sinful as I am, I have had no other thought than to drag on my earthly existence in the sphere where Providence hath placed me. Lost as my own soul is, I would still do what I may for other human souls! I dare not quit my post, though an unfaithful sentinel, whose sure reward is death and dishonor, when his dreary watch shall come to an end!"

"Thou art crushed under this seven years' weight of misery," replied Hester, fervently resolved to buoy him up with her own energy. "But thou shalt leave it all behind thee! It shall not cumber thy steps, as thou treadest along the forest-path; neither shalt thou freight the ship with it, if thou prefer to cross the sea. Leave this wreck and ruin here where it hath happened. Meddle no more with it! Begin all anew! Hast thou exhausted possibility in the failure of this one trial? Not so! The future is yet full of

trial and success. There is happiness to be enjoyed! There is good to be done! Exchange this false life of thine for a true one. Be, if thy spirit summon thee to such a mission, the teacher and apostle of the red men. Or,—as is more thy nature,—be a scholar and a sage among the wisest and most renowned of the cultivated world. Preach! Write! Act! Do anything, save to lie down and die! Give up this name of Arthur Dimmesdale, and make thyself another, and a high one, such as thou canst wear without fear or shame. Why shouldst thou tarry so much as one other day in the torments that have so gnawed into thy life!—that have made thee feeble to will and to do!—that will leave thee powerless even to repent! Up, and away!”

“Oh, Hester!” cried Arthur Dimmesdale, in whose eyes a fitful light, kindled by her enthusiasm, flashed up and died away, “thou tellest of running a race to a man whose knees are tottering beneath him! I must die here! There is not the strength or courage left me to venture into the wide, strange, difficult world, alone!”

It was the last expression of the despondency of a broken spirit. He lacked energy to grasp the better fortune that seemed within his reach.

He repeated the word.

“Alone, Hester!”

“Thou shalt not go alone!” answered she, in a deep whisper.

Then, all was spoken!

XVIII. A FLOOD OF SUNSHINE

ARTHUR DIMMESDALE gazed into Hester's face with a look in which hope and joy shone out, indeed, but with fear betwixt them, and a kind of horror at her boldness, who had spoken what he vaguely hinted at, but dared not speak.

But Hester Prynne, with a mind of native courage and activity, and for so long a period not merely estranged, but outlawed, from society, had habituated herself to such latitude of speculation as was altogether foreign to the clergyman. She had wandered, without rule or guidance, in a moral wilderness; as vast, as intricate and shadowy, as the untamed forest, amid the gloom of which they were now holding a colloquy that was to decide their fate. Her intellect and heart

had their home, as it were, in desert places, where she roamed as freely as the wild Indian in his woods. For years past she had looked from this estranged point of view at human institutions, and whatever priests or legislators had established; criticizing all with hardly more reverence than the Indian would feel for the clerical band, the judicial robe, the pillory, the gallows, the fireside, or the church. The tendency of her fate and fortunes had been to set her free. The scarlet letter was her passport into regions where other women dared not tread. Shame, Despair, Solitude! These had been her teachers,—stern and wild ones,—and they had made her strong, but taught her much amiss.

The minister, on the other hand, had never gone through an experience calculated to lead him beyond the scope of generally received laws; although, in a single instance, he had so fearfully transgressed one of the most sacred of them. But this had been a sin of passion, not of principle, nor even purpose. Since that wretched epoch, he had watched, with morbid zeal and minuteness, not his acts,—for those it was easy to arrange,—but each breath of emotion, and his every thought. At the head of the social system, as the clergymen of that day stood, he was only the more trammelled by its regulations, its principles, and even its prejudices. As a priest, the framework of his order inevitably hemmed him in. As a man who had once sinned, but who kept his conscience all alive and painfully sensitive by the fretting of an unhealed wound, he might have been supposed safer within the line of virtue than if he had never sinned at all.

Thus, we seem to see that, as regarded Hester Prynne, the whole seven years of outlaw and ignominy had been little other than a preparation for this very hour. But Arthur Dimmesdale! Were such a man once more to fall, what plea could be urged in extenuation of his crime? None; unless it avail him somewhat, that he was broken down by long and exquisite suffering; that his mind was darkened and confused by the very remorse which harrowed it; that between fleeing as an avowed criminal and remaining as a hypocrite, conscience might find it hard to strike the balance; that it was human to avoid the peril of death and

infamy, and the inscrutable machinations of an enemy; that, finally, to this poor pilgrim on his dreary and desert path, faint, sick, miserable, there appeared a glimpse of human affection and sympathy, a new life, and a true one, in exchange for the heavy doom which he was now expiating. And be the stern and sad truth spoken, that the breach which guilt has once made into the human soul is never, in this mortal state, repaired. It may be watched and guarded; so that the enemy shall not force his way again into the citadel, and might even, in his subsequent assaults, select some other avenue, in preference to that where he had formerly succeeded. But there is still the ruined wall, and, near it, the stealthy tread of the foe that would win over again his unforgotten triumph.

The struggle, if it were one, need not be described. Let it suffice that the clergyman resolved to flee, and not alone.

"If, in all these past seven years," thought he, "I could recall one instant of peace or hope, I would yet endure, for the sake of that earnest of Heaven's mercy. But now,—since I am irrevocably doomed,—wherefore should I not snatch the solace allowed to the condemned culprit before his execution? Or, if this be the path to a better life, as Hester would persuade me, I surely give up no fairer prospect by pursuing it! Neither can I any longer live without her companionship; so powerful is she to sustain,—so tender to soothe! O Thou to whom I dare not lift mine eyes, wilt Thou yet pardon me!"

"Thou wilt go!" said Hester calmly, as he met her glance.

The decision once made, a glow of strange enjoyment threw its flickering brightness over the trouble of his breast. It was the exhilarating effect—upon a prisoner just escaped from the dungeon of his own heart—of breathing the wild, free atmosphere of an unredeemed, unchristianized, lawless region. His spirit rose, as it were with a bound, and attained a nearer prospect of the sky, than throughout all the misery which had kept him groveling on the earth. Of a deeply religious temperament, there was inevitably a tinge of the devotional in his mood.

"Do I feel joy again?" cried he, wondering at himself. "Methought the germ of it

was dead in me! O Hester, thou art my better angel! I seem to have flung myself—sick, sin-stained, and sorrow-blackened—down upon these forest-leaves, and to have risen up all made anew, and with new powers to glorify Him that hath been merciful! This is already the better life! Why did we not find it sooner?"

"Let us not look back," answered Hester Prynne. "The past is gone! Wherefore should we linger upon it now? See! With this symbol, I undo it all, and make it as it had never been!"

So speaking, she undid the clasp that fastened the scarlet letter, and, taking it from her bosom, threw it to a distance among the withered leaves. The mystic token alighted on the hither verge of the stream. With a hand's breadth farther flight it would have fallen into the water, and have given the little brook another woe to carry onward, besides the unintelligible tale which it still kept murmuring about. But there lay the embroidered letter, glittering like a lost jewel, which some ill-fated wanderer might pick up, and thenceforth be haunted by strange phantoms of guilt, sinkings of the heart, and unaccountable misfortune.

The stigma gone, Hester heaved a long, deep sigh, in which the burden of shame and anguish departed from her spirit. O exquisite relief! She had not known the weight until she felt the freedom! By another impulse, she took off the formal cap that confined her hair; and down it fell upon her shoulders, dark and rich, with at once a shadow and a light in its abundance, and imparting the charm of softness to her features. There played around her mouth, and beamed out of her eyes, a radiant and tender smile, that seemed gushing from the very heart of womanhood. A crimson flush was glowing on her cheek, that had been long so pale. Her sex, her youth, and the whole richness of her beauty, came back from what men call the irrevocable past, and clustered themselves, with her maiden hope, and a happiness before unknown, within the magic circle of this hour. And, as if the gloom of the earth and sky had been but the effluence of these two mortal hearts, it vanished with their sorrow. All at once, as with a sudden smile of heaven, forth burst the

sunshine, pouring a very flood into the obscure forest, gladdening each green leaf, transmuting the yellow fallen ones to gold, and gleaming adown the gray trunks of the solemn trees. The objects that had made a shadow hitherto, embodied the brightness now. The course of the little brook might be traced by its merry gleam afar into the wood's heart of mystery, which had become a mystery of joy.

Such was the sympathy of Nature—that wild, heathen Nature of the forest, never subjugated by human law, nor illumined by higher truth—with the bliss of these two spirits! Love, whether newly born, or aroused from a death-like slumber, must always create a sunshine, filling the heart so full of radiance that it overflows upon the outward world. Had the forest still kept its gloom, it would have been bright in Hester's eyes, and bright in Arthur Dimmesdale's!

Hester looked at him with the thrill of another joy.

"Thou must know Pearl!" said she. "Our little Pearl! Thou hast seen her,—yes, I know it!—but thou wilt see her now with other eyes. She is a strange child! I hardly comprehend her! But thou wilt love her dearly, as I do, and wilt advise me how to deal with her."

"Dost thou think the child will be glad to know me?" asked the minister, somewhat uneasily. "I have long shrunk from children, because they often show a distrust,—a backwardness to be familiar with me. I have even been afraid of little Pearl!"

"Ah, that was sad!" answered the mother. "But she will love thee dearly, and thou her. She is not far off. I will call her! Pearl! Pearl!"

"I see the child," observed the minister. "Yonder she is, standing in a streak of sunshine, a good way off, on the other side of the brook. So thou thinkest the child will love me?"

Hester smiled, and again called to Pearl, who was visible, at some distance, as the minister had described her, like a bright-appareled vision, in a sunbeam, which fell down upon her through an arch of boughs. The ray quivered to and fro, making her figure dim or distinct,—now like a real child, now like a child's spirit,—as the splendor went and came again. She heard her

mother's voice, and approached slowly through the forest.

Pearl had not found the hour pass wearisomely, while her mother sat talking with the clergyman. The great black forest—stern as it showed itself to those who brought the guilt and troubles of the world into its bosom—became the playmate of the lonely infant, as well as it knew how. Somber as it was, it put on the kindest of its moods to welcome her. It offered her the partridge-berries, the growth of the preceding autumn, but ripening only in the spring, and now red as drops of blood upon the withered leaves. These Pearl gathered, and was pleased with their wild flavor. The small denizens of the wilderness hardly took pains to move out of her path. A partridge, indeed, with a brood of ten behind her, ran forward threateningly, but soon repented of her fierceness, and clucked to her young ones not to be afraid. A pigeon, alone on a low branch, allowed Pearl to come beneath, and uttered a sound as much of greeting as alarm. A squirrel, from the lofty depths of his domestic tree, chattered either in anger or merriment,—for a squirrel is such a choleric and humorous little personage, that it is hard to distinguish between his moods,—so he chattered at the child, and flung down a nut upon her head. It was a last year's nut, and already gnawed by his sharp tooth. A fox, startled from his sleep by her light footstep on the leaves, looked inquisitively at Pearl, as doubting whether it were better to steal off, or renew his nap on the same spot. A wolf, it is said,—but here the tale has surely lapsed into the improbable,—came up, and smelt of Pearl's robe, and offered his savage head to be patted by her hand. The truth seems to be, however, that the mother-forest, and these wild things which it nourished, all recognized a kindred wildness in the human child.

And she was gentler here than in the grassy margined streets of the settlement, or in her mother's cottage. The flowers appeared to know it; and one and another whispered as she passed, "Adorn thyself with me, thou beautiful child, adorn thyself with me!"—and, to please them, Pearl gathered the violets, and anemones, and columbines, and some twigs of the freshest green, which the old trees held down before

her eyes. With these she decorated her hair and her young waist, and became a nymph-child, or an infant dryad, or whatever else was in closest sympathy with the antique wood. In such guise had Pearl adorned herself, when she heard her mother's voice, and came slowly back.

Slowly; for she saw the clergyman.

XIX. THE CHILD AT THE BROOK-SIDE

"THOU wilt love her dearly," repeated Hester Prynne, as she and the minister sat watching little Pearl. "Dost thou not think her beautiful? And see with what natural skill she has made those simple flowers adorn her! Had she gathered pearls, and diamonds, and rubies, in the wood, they could not have become her better. She is a splendid child! But I know whose brow she has!"

"Dost thou know, Hester," said Arthur Dimmesdale, with an unquiet smile, "that this dear child, tripping about always at thy side, hath caused me many an alarm? Methought—O Hester, what a thought is that, and how terrible to dread it!—that my own features were partly repeated in her face, and so strikingly that the world might see them! But she is mostly thine!"

"No, no! Not mostly!" answered the mother, with a tender smile. "A little longer, and thou needest not to be afraid to trace whose child she is. But how strangely beautiful she looks, with those wild-flowers in her hair! It is as if one of the fairies, whom we left in our dear old England, had decked her out to meet us."

It was with a feeling which neither of them had ever before experienced, that they sat and watched Pearl's slow advance. In her was visible the tie that united them. She had been offered to the world, these seven years past, as the living hieroglyphic, in which was revealed the secret they so darkly sought to hide,—all written in this symbol,—all plainly manifest,—had there been a prophet or magician skilled to read the character of flame! And Pearl was the oneness of their being. Be the foregone evil what it might, how could they doubt that their earthly lives and future destinies were conjoined, when they beheld at once the material union, and the spiritual idea, in whom they met, and were to dwell immortally together? Thoughts like these—

and perhaps other thoughts, which they did not acknowledge or define—threw an awe about the child, as she came onward.

"Let her see nothing strange—no passion nor eagerness—in thy way of accosting her," whispered Hester. "Our Pearl is a fitful and fantastic little elf, sometimes. Especially, she is seldom tolerant of emotion, when she does not fully comprehend the why and wherefore. But the child hath strong affections! She loves me, and will love thee!"

"Thou canst not think," said the minister, glancing aside at Hester Prynne, "how my heart dreads this interview, and yearns for it! But, in truth, as I already told thee, children are not readily won to be familiar with me. They will not climb my knee, nor prattle in my ear, nor answer to my smile; but stand apart, and eye me strangely. Even little babes, when I take them in my arms, weep bitterly. Yet Pearl, twice in her little lifetime, hath been kind to me! The first time,—thou knowest it well! The last was when thou ledst her with thee to the house of yonder stern old Governor."

"And thou didst plead so bravely in her behalf and mine!" answered the mother. "I remember it; and so shall little Pearl. Fear nothing! She may be strange and shy at first, but will soon learn to love thee!"

By this time Pearl had reached the margin of the brook, and stood on the farther side, gazing silently at Hester and the clergyman, who still sat together on the mossy tree-trunk, waiting to receive her. Just where she had paused, the brook chanced to form a pool, so smooth and quiet that it reflected a perfect image of her little figure, with all the brilliant picturesqueness of her beauty, in its adornment of flowers and wreathed foliage, but more refined and spiritualized than the reality. This image, so nearly identical with the living Pearl, seemed to communicate somewhat of its own shadowy and intangible quality to the child herself. It was strange, the way in which Pearl stood, looking so steadfastly at them through the dim medium of the forest-gloom; herself, meanwhile, all glorified with a ray of sunshine, that was attracted thitherward as by a certain sympathy. In the brook beneath stood another child,—another and the same,—with likewise its ray of golden light.

Hester felt herself, in some indistinct and tantalizing manner, estranged from Pearl; as if the child, in her lonely ramble through the forest, had strayed out of the sphere in which she and her mother dwelt together, and was now vainly seeking to return to it.

There was both truth and error in the impression; the child and mother were estranged, but through Hester's fault, not Pearl's. Since the latter rambled from her side, another inmate had been admitted within the circle of the mother's feelings, and so modified the aspect of them all, that Pearl, the returning wanderer, could not find her wonted place; and hardly knew where she was.

"I have a strange fancy," observed the sensitive minister, "that this brook is the boundary between two worlds, and that thou canst never meet thy Pearl again. Or is she an elfish spirit, who, as the legends of our childhood taught us, is forbidden to cross a running stream? Pray hasten her; for this delay has already imparted a tremor to my nerves."

"Come, dearest child!" said Hester, encouragingly, and stretching out both her arms. "How slow thou art! When hast thou been so sluggish before now? Here is a friend of mine, who must be thy friend also. Thou wilt have twice as much love, henceforward, as thy mother alone could give thee! Leap across the brook, and come to us. Thou canst leap like a young deer!"

Pearl, without responding in any manner to these honey-sweet expressions, remained on the other side of the brook. Now she fixed her bright, wild eyes on her mother, now on the minister, and now included them both in the same glance; as if to detect and explain to herself the relation which they bore to one another. For some unaccountable reason, as Arthur Dimmesdale felt the child's eye upon himself, his hand—with that gesture so habitual as to have become involuntary—stole over his heart. At length, assuming a singular air of authority, Pearl stretched out her hand, with the small forefinger extended, and pointing evidently towards her mother's breast. And beneath, in the mirror of the brook, there was the flower-girdled and sunny image of little Pearl, pointing her small forefinger too.

"Thou strange child, why dost thou not come to me?" exclaimed Hester.

Pearl still pointed with her forefinger and a frown gathered on her brow; the more impressive from the childish, the almost baby-like aspect of the features that conveyed it. As her mother still kept beckoning to her, and arraying her face in a holiday suit of unaccustomed smiles, the child stamped her foot with a yet more imperious look and gesture. In the brook, again, was the fantastic beauty of the image, with its reflected frown, its pointed finger, and imperious gesture, giving emphasis to the aspect of little Pearl.

"Hasten, Pearl; or I shall be angry with thee!" cried Hester Prynne, who, however inured to such behavior on the elf-child's part at other seasons, was naturally anxious for a more seemly deportment now. "Leap across the brook, naughty child, and run hither! Else I must come to thee!"

But Pearl, not a whit startled at her mother's threats, any more than mollified by her entreaties, now suddenly burst into a fit of passion, gesticulating violently, and throwing her small figure into the most extravagant contortions. She accompanied this wild outbreak with piercing shrieks, which the woods reverberated on all sides; so that, alone as she was in her childish and unreasonable wrath, it seemed as if a hidden multitude were lending her their sympathy and encouragement. Seen in the brook, once more, was the shadowy wrath of Pearl's image, crowned and girdled with flowers, but stamping its foot, wildly gesticulating, and, in the midst of all, still pointing its small forefinger at Hester's bosom!

"I see what ails the child," whispered Hester to the clergyman, and turning pale in spite of a strong effort to conceal her trouble and annoyance. "Children will not abide any, the slightest, change in the accustomed aspect of things that are daily before their eyes. Pearl misses something which she has always seen me wear!"

"I pray you," answered the minister, "if thou hast any means of pacifying the child, do it forthwith! Save it were the cankered wrath of an old witch, like Mistress Hibbins," added he, attempting to smile, "I know nothing that I would not sooner encounter than this passion in a child. In

Pearl's young beauty, as in the wrinkled witch, it has a preternatural effect. Pacify her, if thou lovest me!"

Hester turned again towards Pearl, with a crimson blush upon her cheek, a conscious glance aside at the clergyman, and then a heavy sigh; while, even before she had time to speak, the blush yielded to a deadly pallor.

"Pearl," said she sadly, "look down at thy feet! There!—before thee!—on the hither side of the brook!"

The child turned her eyes to the point indicated; and there lay the scarlet letter, so close upon the margin of the stream that the gold embroidery was reflected in it.

"Bring it hither!" said Hester.

"Come thou and take it up!" answered Pearl.

"Was ever such a child!" observed Hester, aside to the minister. "Oh, I have much to tell thee about her! But, in very truth, she is right as regards this hateful token. I must bear its torture yet a little longer,—only a few days longer,—until we shall have left this region, and look back hither as to a land which we have dreamed of. The forest cannot hide it! The mid-ocean shall take it from my hand, and swallow it up forever!"

With these words she advanced to the margin of the brook, took up the scarlet letter, and fastened it again into her bosom. Hopefully, but a moment ago, as Hester had spoken of drowning it in the deep sea, there was a sense of inevitable doom upon her, as she thus received back this deadly symbol from the hand of fate. She had flung it into infinite space!—she had drawn an hour's free breath!—and here again was the scarlet misery, glittering on the old spot! So it ever is, whether thus typified or no, that an evil deed invests itself with the character of doom. Hester next gathered up the heavy tresses of her hair, and confined them beneath her cap. As if there were a withering spell in the sad letter, her beauty, the warmth and richness of her womanhood, departed, like fading sunshine; and a gray shadow seemed to fall across her.

When the dreary change was wrought, she extended her hand to Pearl.

"Dost thou know thy mother now, child?" asked she, reproachfully, but with a subdued tone. "Wilt thou come across the brook,

and own thy mother, now that she has her shame upon her,—now that she is sad?"

"Yes; now I will!" answered the child, bounding across the brook, and clasping Hester in her arms. "Now thou art my mother indeed! And I am thy little Pearl!"

In a mood of tenderness that was not usual with her, she drew down her mother's head, and kissed her brow and both her cheeks. But then—by a kind of necessity that always impelled this child to alloy whatever comfort she might chance to give with a throb of anguish—Pearl put up her mouth, and kissed the scarlet letter too!

"That was not kind!" said Hester. "When thou hast shown me a little love, thou mockest me!"

"Why doth the minister sit yonder?" asked Pearl.

"He waits to welcome thee," replied her mother. "Come thou, and entreat his blessing! He loves thee, my little Pearl, and loves thy mother too. Wilt thou not love him? Come! he longs to greet thee!"

"Doth he love us?" said Pearl, looking up, with acute intelligence, into her mother's face. "Will he go back with us, hand in hand, we three together, into the town?"

"Not now, my dear child," answered Hester. "But in days to come he will walk hand in hand with us. We will have a home and fireside of our own; and thou shalt sit upon his knee; and he will teach thee many things, and love thee dearly. Thou wilt love him; wilt thou not?"

"And will he always keep his hand over his heart?" inquired Pearl.

"Foolish child, what a question is that!" exclaimed her mother. "Come and ask his blessing!"

But, whether influenced by the jealousy that seems instinctive with every petted child towards a dangerous rival, or from whatever caprice of her freakish nature, Pearl would show no favor to the clergyman. It was only by an exertion of force that her mother brought her up to him, hanging back, and manifesting her reluctance by odd grimaces; of which, ever since her babyhood, she had possessed a singular variety, and could transform her mobile physiognomy into a series of different aspects, with a new mischief in them, each and all. The minister—painfully embarrassed, but hoping that

a kiss might prove a talisman to admit him into the child's kindlier regards—bent forward, and impressed one on her brow. Hereupon, Pearl broke away from her mother, and, running to the brook, stooped over it, and bathed her forehead, until the unwelcome kiss was quite washed off, and diffused through a long lapse of the gliding water. She then remained apart, silently watching Hester and the clergyman; while they talked together, and made such arrangements as were suggested by their new position, and the purposes soon to be fulfilled.

And now this fateful interview had come to a close. The dell was to be left a solitude among its dark, old trees, which, with their multitudinous tongues, would whisper long of what had passed there, and no mortal be the wiser. And the melancholy brook would add this other tale to the mystery with which its little heart was already overburdened, and whereof it still kept up a murmuring babble, with not a whit more cheerfulness of tone than for ages heretofore.

XX. THE MINISTER IN A MAZE

As the minister departed, in advance of Hester Prynne and little Pearl, he threw a backward glance, half expecting that he should discover only some faintly traced features or outline of the mother and the child, slowly fading into the twilight of the woods. So great a vicissitude in his life could not at once be received as real. But there was Hester, clad in her gray robe, still standing beside the tree-trunk, which some blast had overthrown a long antiquity ago, and which time had ever since been covering with moss, so that these two fated ones, with earth's heaviest burden on them, might there sit down together, and find a single hour's rest and solace. And there was Pearl, too, lightly dancing from the margin of the brook,—now that the intrusive third person was gone,—and taking her old place by her mother's side. So the minister had not fallen asleep and dreamed!

In order to free his mind from this indistinctness and duplicity of impression, which vexed it with a strange disquietude, he recalled and more thoroughly defined the plans which Hester and himself had sketched for their departure. It had been determined

between them that the Old World, with its crowds and cities, offered them a more eligible shelter and concealment than the wilds of New England, or all America, with its alternatives of an Indian wigwam, or the few settlements of Europeans scattered thinly along the seaboard. Not to speak of the clergyman's health, so inadequate to sustain the hardships of a forest life, his native gifts, his culture, and his entire development, would secure him a home only in the midst of civilization and refinement; the higher the state, the more delicately adapted to it the man. In furtherance of this choice, it so happened that a ship lay in the harbor; one of those questionable cruisers, frequent at that day, which, without being absolutely outlaws of the deep, yet roamed over its surface with a remarkable irresponsibility of character. This vessel had recently arrived from the Spanish Main, and, within three days' time, would sail for Bristol. Hester Prynne—whose vocation, as a self-enlisted Sister of Charity, had brought her acquainted with the captain and crew—could take upon herself to secure the passage of two individuals and a child, with all the secrecy which circumstances rendered more than desirable.

The minister had inquired of Hester, with no little interest, the precise time at which the vessel might be expected to depart. It would probably be on the fourth day from the present. "That is most fortunate!" he had then said to himself. Now, why the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale considered it so very fortunate, we hesitate to reveal. Nevertheless,—to hold nothing back from the reader,—it was because, on the third day from the present, he was to preach the Election Sermon; and, as such an occasion formed an honorable epoch in the life of a New England clergyman, he could not have chanced upon a more suitable mode and time of terminating his professional career. "At least, they shall say of me," thought this exemplary man, "that I leave no public duty unperformed, nor ill performed!" Sad, indeed, that an introspection so profound and acute as this poor minister's should be so miserably deceived! We have had, and may still have, worse things to tell of him; but none, we apprehend, so pitiably weak; no evidence, at once so slight and irrefra-

gable, of a subtle disease, that had long since begun to eat into the real substance of his character. No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true.

The excitement of Mr. Dimmesdale's feelings, as he returned from his interview with Hester, lent him unaccustomed physical energy, and hurried him townward at a rapid pace. The pathway among the woods seemed wilder, more uncouth with its rude natural obstacles, and less trodden by the foot of man, than he remembered it on his outward journey. But he leaped across the splashy places, thrust himself through the clinging underbrush, climbed the ascent, plunged into the hollow, and overcame, in short, all the difficulties of the track, with an unweariable activity that astonished him. He could not but recall how feebly, and with what frequent pauses for breath, he had toiled over the same ground, only two days before. As he drew near the town, he took an impression of change from the series of familiar objects that presented themselves. It seemed not yesterday, not one, nor two, but many days, or even years ago, since he had quitted them. There, indeed, was each former trace of the street, as he remembered it, and all the peculiarities of the houses, with the due multitude of gable-peaks, and a weathercock at every point where his memory suggested one. Not the less, however, came this importunately obtrusive sense of change. The same was true as regarded the acquaintances whom he met, and all the well-known shapes of human life, about the little town. They looked neither older nor younger now; the beards of the aged were no whiter, nor could the creeping babe of yesterday walk on his feet to-day; it was impossible to describe in what respect they differed from the individuals on whom he had so recently bestowed a parting glance; and yet the minister's deepest sense seemed to inform him of their mutability. A similar impression struck him most remarkably, as he passed under the walls of his own church. The edifice had so very strange, and yet so familiar, an aspect, that Mr. Dimmesdale's mind vibrated between two ideas; either that he had seen it

only in a dream hitherto, or that he was merely dreaming about it now.

This phenomenon, in the various shapes which it assumed, indicated no external change, but so sudden and important a change in the spectator of the familiar scene, that the intervening space of a single day had operated on his consciousness like the lapse of years. The minister's own will, and Hester's will, and the fate that grew between them, had wrought this transformation. It was the same town as heretofore; but the same minister returned not from the forest. He might have said to the friends who greeted him,—“I am not the man for whom you take me! I left him yonder in the forest, withdrawn into a secret dell, by a mossy tree-trunk, and near a melancholy brook! Go, seek your minister, and see if his emaciated figure, his thin cheek, his white, heavy, pain-wrinkled brow, be not flung down there, like a cast-off garment!” His friends, no doubt, would still have insisted with him,—“Thou art thyself the man!”—but the error would have been their own, not his.

Before Mr. Dimmesdale reached home, his inner man gave him other evidences of a revolution in the sphere of thought and feeling. In truth, nothing short of a total change of dynasty and moral code, in that interior kingdom, was adequate to account for the impulses now communicated to the unfortunate and startled minister. At every step he was incited to do some strange, wild, wicked thing or other, with a sense that it would be at once involuntary and intentional; in spite of himself, yet growing out of a profounder self than that which opposed the impulse. For instance, he met one of his own deacons. The good old man addressed him with the paternal affection and patriarchal privilege, which his venerable age, his upright and holy character, and his station in the Church, entitled him to use; and, conjoined with this, the deep, almost worshiping respect, which the minister's professional and private claims alike demanded. Never was there a more beautiful example of how the majesty of age and wisdom may comport with the obeisance and respect enjoined upon it, as from a lower social rank, and inferior order of endowment, towards a higher. Now, during a conversation of some two or three moments between the

Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale and this excellent and hoary-bearded deacon, it was only by the most careful self-control that the former could refrain from uttering certain blasphemous suggestions that rose into his mind, respecting the communion supper. He absolutely trembled and turned pale as ashes, lest his tongue should wag itself, in utterance of these horrible matters, and plead his own consent for so doing, without his having fairly given it. And, even with this terror in his heart, he could hardly avoid laughing, to imagine how the sanctified old patriarchal deacon would have been petrified by his minister's impiety!

Again, another incident of the same nature. Hurrying along the street, the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale encountered the eldest female member of his church; a most pious and exemplary old dame; poor, widowed, lonely, and with a heart as full of reminiscences about her dead husband and children, and her dead friends of long ago, as a burial-ground is full of storied gravestones. Yet all this, which would else have been such heavy sorrow, was made almost a solemn joy to her devout old soul, by religious consolations and the truths of Scripture, wherewith she had fed herself continually for more than thirty years. And, since Mr. Dimmesdale had taken her in charge, the good grandam's chief earthly comfort—which, unless it had been likewise a heavenly comfort, could have been none at all—was to meet her pastor, whether casually or of set purpose, and be refreshed with a word of warm, fragrant, heaven-breathing Gospel truth, from his beloved lips, into her dulled but rapturously attentive ear. But, on this occasion, up to the moment of putting his lips to the old woman's ear, Mr. Dimmesdale, as the great enemy of souls would have it, could recall no text of Scripture, nor aught else, except a brief, pithy, and, as it then appeared to him, unanswerable argument against the immortality of the human soul. The instillment thereof into her mind would probably have caused this aged sister to drop down dead, at once, as by the effect of an intensely poisonous infusion. What he really did whisper, the minister could never afterwards recollect. There was, perhaps, a fortunate disorder in his utterance, which failed to impart any distinct idea to the good widow's comprehen-

sion, or which Providence interpreted after a method of its own. Assuredly, as the minister looked back, he beheld an expression of divine gratitude and ecstasy that seemed like the shine of the celestial city on her face, so wrinkled and ashy pale.

Again, a third instance. After parting from the old church-member, he met the youngest sister of them all. It was a maiden newly won—and won by the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale's own sermon, on the Sabbath after his vigil—to barter the transitory pleasures of the world for the heavenly hope, that was to assume brighter substance as life grew dark around her, and which would gild the utter gloom with final glory. She was fair and pure as a lily that had bloomed in Paradise. The minister knew well that he was himself enshrined within the stainless sanctity of her heart, which hung its snowy curtains about his image, imparting to religion the warmth of love, and to love a religious purity. Satan, that afternoon, had surely led the poor young girl away from her mother's side, and thrown her into the pathway of this sorely tempted, or—shall we not rather say?—this lost and desperate man. As she drew nigh, the arch fiend whispered him to condense into small compass and drop into her tender bosom a germ of evil that would be sure to blossom darkly soon, and bear black fruit betimes. Such was his sense of power over this virgin soul, trusting him as she did, that the minister felt potent to blight all the field of innocence with but one wicked look, and develop all its opposite with but a word. So—with a mightier struggle than he had yet sustained—he held his Geneva cloak before his face, and hurried onward, making no sign of recognition, and leaving the young sister to digest his rudeness as she might. She ransacked her conscience,—which was full of harmless little matters, like her pocket or her work-bag,—and took herself to task, poor thing! for a thousand imaginary faults; and went about her household duties with swollen eyelids the next morning.

Before the minister had time to celebrate his victory over this last temptation, he was conscious of another impulse, more ludicrous, and almost as horrible. It was,—we blush to tell it,—it was to stop short in the road and teach some very wicked words to a

knot of little Puritan children who were playing there, and had but just begun to talk. Denying himself this freak, as unworthy of his cloth, he met a drunken seaman, one of the ship's crew from the Spanish Main. And here, since he had so valiantly forborne all other wickedness, poor Mr. Dimmesdale longed, at least, to shake hands with the tarry blackguard, and recreate himself with a few improper jests, such as dissolute sailors so abound with, and a volley of good, round, solid, satisfactory, and heaven-defying oaths! It was not so much a better principle as partly his natural good taste, and still more his buckramed habit of clerical decorum, that carried him safely through the latter crisis.

"What is it that haunts and tempts me thus?" cried the minister to himself, at length, pausing in the street, and striking his hand against his forehead. "Am I mad? or am I given over utterly to the fiend? Did I make a contract with him in the forest, and sign it with my blood? And does he now summon me to its fulfillment, by suggesting the performance of every wickedness which his most foul imagination can conceive?"

At the moment when the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale thus communed with himself, and struck his forehead with his hand, old Mistress Hibbins, the reputed witch-lady, is said to have been passing by. She made a very grand appearance; having on a high head-dress, a rich gown of velvet, and a ruff done up with the famous yellow starch, of which Ann Turner, her especial friend, had taught her the secret, before this last good lady had been hanged for Sir Thomas Overbury's murder. Whether the witch had read the minister's thoughts or no, she came to a full stop, looked shrewdly into his face, smiled craftily, and—though little given to converse with clergymen—began a conversation.

"So, reverend Sir, you have made a visit into the forest," observed the witch-lady, nodding her high head-dress at him. "The next time, I pray you to allow me only a fair warning, and I shall be proud to bear you company. Without taking overmuch upon myself, my good word will go far towards gaining any strange gentleman a fair reception from yonder potentate you wot of!"

"I profess, madam," answered the clergyman with a grave obeisance, such as the lady's rank demanded, and his own good-breeding

made imperative,—*"I profess, on my conscience and character, that I am utterly bewildered as touching the purport of your words! I went not into the forest to seek a potentate; neither do I, at any future time, design a visit thither, with a view to gaining the favor of such a personage. My one sufficient object was to greet that pious friend of mine, the Apostle Eliot, and rejoice with him over the many precious souls he hath won from heathendom!"*

"Ha, ha, ha!" cackled the old witch-lady, still nodding her high head-dress at the minister. "Well, well, we must needs talk thus in the daytime! You carry it off like an old hand! But at midnight, and in the forest, we shall have other talk together!"

She passed on with her aged stateliness, but often turning back her head and smiling at him, like one willing to recognize a secret intimacy of connection.

"Have I then sold myself," thought the minister, "to the fiend whom, if men say true, this yellow-starched and velveteed old hag has chosen for her prince and master!"

The wretched minister! He had made a bargain very like it! Tempted by a dream of happiness, he had yielded himself, with deliberate choice, as he had never done before, to what he knew was deadly sin. And the infectious poison of that sin had been thus rapidly diffused throughout his moral system. It had stupefied all blessed impulses, and awakened into vivid life the whole brotherhood of bad ones. Scorn, bitterness, unprovoked malignity, gratuitous desire of ill, ridicule of whatever was good and holy, all awoke, to tempt, even while they frightened him. And his encounter with old Mistress Hibbins, if it were a real incident, did but show his sympathy and fellowship with wicked mortals, and the world of perverted spirits.

He had, by this time, reached his dwelling on the edge of the burial-ground, and, hastening up the stairs, took refuge in his study. The minister was glad to have reached this shelter, without first betraying himself to the world by any of those strange and wicked eccentricities to which he had been continually impelled while passing through the streets. He entered the accustomed room, and looked around him on its books, its windows, its fireplace, and the tapestried com-

fort of the walls, with the same perception of strangeness that had haunted him throughout his walk from the forest-dell into the town, and thitherward. Here he had studied and written; here, gone through fast and vigil, and come forth half alive; here, striven to pray; here, borne a hundred thousand agonies! There was the Bible, in its rich old Hebrew, with Moses and the Prophets speaking to him, and God's voice through all! There, on the table, with the inky pen beside it, was an unfinished sermon, with a sentence broken in the midst, where his thoughts had ceased to gush out upon the page, two days before. He knew that it was himself, the thin and white-checked minister, who had done and suffered these things, and written thus far into the Election Sermon! But he seemed to stand apart, and eye this former self with scornful, pitying, but half-envious curiosity. That self was gone. Another man had returned out of the forest; a wiser one; with a knowledge of hidden mysteries which the simplicity of the former never could have reached. A bitter kind of knowledge that!

While occupied with these reflections, a knock came at the door of the study, and the minister said, "Come in!"—not wholly devoid of an idea that he might behold an evil spirit. And so he did! It was old Roger Chillingworth that entered. The minister stood, white and speechless, with one hand on the Hebrew Scriptures, and the other spread upon his breast.

"Welcome home, reverend Sir," said the physician. "And how found you that godly man, the Apostle Eliot? But methinks, dear Sir, you look pale; as if the travel through the wilderness had been too sore for you. Will not my aid be requisite to put you in heart and strength to preach your Election Sermon?"

"Nay, I think not so," rejoined the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale. "My journey, and the sight of the holy Apostle yonder, and the free air which I have breathed, have done me good, after so long confinement in my study. I think to need no more of your drugs, my kind physician, good though they be, and administered by a friendly hand."

All this time, Roger Chillingworth was looking at the minister with the grave and intent regard of a physician towards his

patient. But, in spite of this outward show, the latter was almost convinced of the old man's knowledge, or, at least, his confident suspicion, with respect to his own interview with Hester Prynne. The physician knew then, that, in the minister's regard, he was no longer a trusted friend, but his bitterest enemy. So much being known, it would appear natural that a part of it should be expressed. It is singular, however, how long a time often passes before words embody things; and with what security two persons, who choose to avoid a certain subject, may approach its very verge, and retire without disturbing it. Thus, the minister felt no apprehension that Roger Chillingworth would touch, in express words, upon the real position which they sustained towards one another. Yet did the physician, in his dark way, creep frightfully near the secret.

"Were it not better," said he, "that you use my poor skill to-night? Verily, dear Sir, we must take pains to make you strong and vigorous for this occasion of the Election discourse. The people look for great things from you; apprehending that another year may come about, and find their pastor gone."

"Yea, to another world," replied the minister, with pious resignation. "Heaven grant it be a better one; for, in good sooth, I hardly think to tarry with my flock through the flitting seasons of another year! But, touching your medicine, kind Sir, in my present frame of body I need it not."

"I joy to hear it," answered the physician. "It may be that my remedies, so long administered in vain, begin now to take due effect. Happy man were I, and well deserving of New England's gratitude, could I achieve this cure!"

"I thank you from my heart, most watchful friend," said the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, with a solemn smile. "I thank you, and can but requite your good deeds with my prayers."

"A good man's prayers are golden recompense!" rejoined old Roger Chillingworth, as he took his leave. "Yea, they are the current gold coin of the New Jerusalem, with the King's own mint-mark on them!"

Left alone, the minister summoned a servant of the house, and requested food, which, being set before him, he ate with ravenous appetite. Then, flinging the already written

pages of the Election Sermon into the fire, he forthwith began another, which he wrote with such an impulsive flow of thought and emotion that he fancied himself inspired; and only wondered that Heaven should see fit to transmit the grand and solemn music of its oracles through so foul an organ-pipe as he. However, leaving that mystery to solve itself, or go unsolved forever, he drove his task onward, with earnest haste and ecstasy. Thus the night fled away, as if it were a winged steed, and he careering on it; morning came, and peeped, blushing, through the curtains; and at last sunrise threw a golden beam into the study and laid it right across the minister's bedazzled eyes. There he was, with the pen still between his fingers, and a vast, immeasurable tract of written space behind him!

XXI. THE NEW ENGLAND HOLIDAY

BETIMES in the morning of the day on which the new Governor was to receive his office at the hands of the people, Hester Prynne and little Pearl came into the marketplace. It was already thronged with the craftsmen and other plebeian inhabitants of the town, in considerable numbers; among whom, likewise, were many rough figures, whose attire of deer-skins marked them as belonging to some of the forest settlements, which surrounded the little metropolis of the colony.

On this public holiday, as on all other occasions, for seven years past, Hester was clad in a garment of coarse gray cloth. Not more by its hue than by some indescribable peculiarity in its fashion, it had the effect of making her fade personally out of sight and outline; while, again, the scarlet letter brought her back from this twilight in distinctness, and revealed her under the moral aspect of its own illumination. Her face, so long familiar to the townspeople, showed the marble quietude which they were accustomed to behold there. It was like a mask; or, rather, like the frozen calmness of a dead woman's features; owing this dreary resemblance to the fact that Hester was actually dead, in respect to any claim of sympathy, and had departed out of the world with which she still seemed to mingle.

It might be, on this one day, that there was an expression unseen before, nor, indeed,

vivid enough to be detected now; unless some preternaturally gifted observer should have first read the heart, and have afterwards sought a corresponding development in the countenance and mien. Such a spiritual seer might have conceived that, after sustaining the gaze of the multitude through seven miserable years as a necessity, a penance, and something which it was a stern religion to endure, she now, for one last time more, encountered it freely and voluntarily, in order to convert what had so long been agony into a kind of triumph. "Look your last on the scarlet letter and its wearer!"—the people's victim and life-long bond-slave, as they fancied her, might say to them. "Yet a little while, and she will be beyond your reach! A few hours longer, and the deep, mysterious ocean will quench and hide forever the symbol which ye have caused to burn upon her bosom!" Nor were it an inconsistency too improbable to be assigned to human nature, should we suppose a feeling of regret in Hester's mind, at the moment when she was about to win her freedom from the pain which had been thus deeply incorporated with her being. Might there not be an irresistible desire to quaff a last, long, breathless draught of the cup of wormwood and aloes, with which nearly all her years of womanhood had been perpetually flavored? The wine of life, henceforth to be presented to her lips, must be indeed rich, delicious, and exhilarating, in its chased and golden beaker; or else leave an inevitable and weary languor, after the lees of bitterness wherewith she had been drugged, as with a cordial of intensest potency.

Pearl was decked out with airy gayety. It would have been impossible to guess that this bright and sunny apparition owed its existence to the shape of gloomy gray; or that a fancy, at once so gorgeous and so delicate as must have been requisite to contrive the child's apparel, was the same that had achieved a task perhaps more difficult, in imparting so distinct a peculiarity to Hester's simple robe. The dress, so proper was it to little Pearl, seemed an effluence, or inevitable development and outward manifestation of her character, no more to be separated from her than the many-hued brilliancy from a butterfly's wing, or the painted glory from the leaf of a bright flower. As with these, so

with the child; her garb was all of one idea with her nature. On this eventful day, moreover, there was a certain singular inquietude and excitement in her mood, resembling nothing so much as the shimmer of a diamond, that sparkles and flashes with the varied throbbings of the breast on which it is displayed. Children have always a sympathy in the agitations of those connected with them; always, especially, a sense of any trouble or impending revolution, of whatever kind, in domestic circumstances; and therefore Pearl, who was the gem on her mother's unquiet bosom, betrayed, by the very dance of her spirits, the emotions which none could detect in the marble passiveness of Hester's brow.

This effervescence made her flit with a birdlike movement, rather than walk by her mother's side. She broke continually into shouts of a wild, inarticulate, and sometimes piercing music. When they reached the market-place, she became still more restless, on perceiving the stir and bustle that enlivened the spot; for it was usually more like the broad and lonesome green before a village meeting-house, than the center of a town's business.

"Why, what is this, mother?" cried she. "Wherefore have all the people left their work to-day? Is it a play-day for the whole world? See, there is the blacksmith! He has washed his sooty face, and put on his Sabbath-day clothes, and looks as if he would gladly be merry, if any kind body would only teach him how! And there is Master Brackett, the old jailer, nodding and smiling at me. Why does he do so, mother?"

"He remembers thee a little babe, my child," answered Hester.

"He should not nod and smile at me, for all that,—the black, grim, ugly-eyed old man!" said Pearl. "He may nod at thee, if he will; for thou art clad in gray, and wearest the scarlet letter. But see, mother, how many faces of strange people, and Indians among them, and sailors! What have they all come to do, here in the market-place?"

"They wait to see the procession pass," said Hester. "For the Governor and the magistrates are to go by, and the ministers, and all the great people and good people, with the music and the soldiers marching before them."

"And will the minister be there?" asked Pearl. "And will he hold out both his hands to me, as when thou ledst me to him from the brookside?"

"He will be there, child," answered her mother. "But he will not greet thee to-day; nor must thou greet him."

"What a strange, sad man is he!" said the child, as if speaking partly to herself. "In the dark night-time he calls us to him, and holds thy hand and mine, as when we stood with him on the scaffold yonder. And in the deep forest, where only the old trees can hear and the strip of sky see it, he talks with thee, sitting on a heap of moss! And he kisses my forehead, too, so that the little brook would hardly wash it off! But here, in the sunny day, and among all the people, he knows us not; nor must we know him! A strange, sad man is he, with his hand always over his heart!"

"Be quiet, Pearl! Thou understandest not these things," said her mother. "Think not now of the minister, but look about thee, and see how cheery is everybody's face to-day. The children have come from their schools, and the grown people from their workshops and their fields, on purpose to be happy. For to-day a new man is beginning to rule over them; and so—as has been the custom of mankind ever since a nation was first gathered—they make merry and rejoice; as if a good and golden year were at length to pass over the poor old world!"

It was as Hester said, in regard to the unwonted jollity that brightened the faces of the people. Into this festal season of the year—as it already was, and continued to be during the greater part of two centuries—the Puritans compressed whatever mirth and public joy they deemed allowable to human infirmity; thereby so far dispelling the customary cloud that, for the space of a single holiday, they appeared scarcely more grave than most other communities at a period of general affliction.

But we perhaps exaggerate the gray or sable tinge, which undoubtedly characterized the mood and manners of the age. The persons now in the market-place of Boston had not been born to an inheritance of Puritanic gloom. They were native Englishmen, whose fathers had lived in the sunny richness of the Elizabethan epoch; a time

when the life of England, viewed as one great mass, would appear to have been as stately, magnificent, and joyous as the world has ever witnessed. Had they followed their hereditary taste, the New England settlers would have illustrated all events of public importance by bonfires, banquets, pageantries, and processions. Nor would it have been impracticable, in the observance of majestic ceremonies, to combine mirthful recreation with solemnity, and give, as it were, a grotesque and brilliant embroidery to the great robe of state, which a nation, at such festivals, puts on. There was some shadow of an attempt of this kind in the mode of celebrating the day on which the political year of the colony commenced. The dim reflection of a remembered splendor, a colorless and manifold diluted repetition of what they had beheld in proud old London,—we will not say at a royal coronation, but at a Lord Mayor's show,—might be traced in the customs which our forefathers instituted, with reference to the annual installation of magistrates. The fathers and founders of the commonwealth—the statesman, the priest, and the soldier—deemed it a duty then to assume the outward state and majesty, which, in accordance with antique style, was looked upon as the proper garb of public or social eminence. All came forth, to move in procession before the people's eye, and thus impart a needed dignity to the simple framework of a government so newly constructed.

Then, too, the people were countenanced, if not encouraged, in relaxing the severe and close application to their various modes of rugged industry, which, at all other times, seemed of the same piece and material with their religion. Here, it is true, were none of the appliances which popular merriment would so readily have found in the England of Elizabeth's time, or that of James,—no rude shows of a theatrical kind; no minstrel, with his harp and legendary ballad, nor glee-man, with an ape dancing to his music; no juggler, with his tricks of mimic witchcraft; no Merry Andrew, to stir up the multitude with jests, perhaps hundreds of years old, but still effective, by their appeals to the very broadest sources of mirthful sympathy. All such professors of the several branches of jocularly would have been sternly repressed, not only by the rigid discipline of law, but

by the general sentiment which gives law its vitality. Not the less, however, the great, honest face of the people smiled, grimly, perhaps, but widely too. Nor were sports wanting, such as the colonists had witnessed, and shared in long ago at the country fairs and on the village-greens of England; and which it was thought well to keep alive on this new soil, for the sake of the courage and manliness that were essential in them. Wrestling-matches, in the different fashions of Cornwall and Devonshire, were seen here and there about the market-place; in one corner, there was a friendly bout at quarterstaff; and—what attracted most interest of all—on the platform of the pillory, already so noted in our pages, two masters of defense were commencing an exhibition with the buckler and broadsword. But, much to the disappointment of the crowd, this latter business was broken off by the interposition of the town beadle, who had no idea of permitting the majesty of the law to be violated by such an abuse of one of its consecrated places.

It may not be too much to affirm, on the whole (the people being then in the first stages of joyless deportment, and the offspring of sires who had known how to be merry, in their day), that they would compare favorably, in point of holiday keeping, with their descendants, even at so long an interval as ourselves. Their immediate posterity, the generation next to the early emigrants, wore the blackest shade of Puritanism, and so darkened the national visage with it that all the subsequent years have not sufficed to clear it up. We have yet to learn again the forgotten art of gayety.

The picture of human life in the market-place, though its general tint was the sad gray, brown, or black of the English emigrants, was yet enlivened by some diversity of hue. A party of Indians—in their savage finery of curiously embroidered deer-skin robes, wampum-belts, red and yellow ocher, and feathers, and armed with the bow and arrow and stone-headed spear—stood apart, with countenances of inflexible gravity, beyond what even the Puritan aspect could attain. Nor, wild as were these painted barbarians, were they the wildest feature of the scene. This distinction could more justly be claimed by some mariners,—a part of the crew of the vessel from the Spanish

Main,—who had come ashore to see the humors of Election Day. They were rough-looking desperadoes, with sun-blackened faces and an immensity of beard; their wide, short trousers were confined about the waist by belts, often clasped with a rough plate of gold, and sustaining always a long knife, and, in some instances, a sword. From beneath their broad-brimmed hats of palm-leaf gleamed eyes which, even in good-nature and merriment, had a kind of animal ferocity. They transgressed, without fear or scruple, the rules of behavior that were binding on all others; smoking tobacco under the beadle's very nose, although each whiff would have cost a townsman a shilling; and quaffing, at their pleasure, draughts of wine or aqua-vitæ from pocket-flasks, which they freely tendered to the gaping crowd around them. It remarkably characterized the incomplete morality of the age, rigid as we call it, that a license was allowed the seafaring class, not merely for their freaks on shore, but for far more desperate deeds on their proper element. The sailor of that day would go near to be arraigned as a pirate in our own. There could be little doubt, for instance, that this very ship's crew, though no unfavorable specimens of the nautical brotherhood, had been guilty, as we should phrase it, of depredations on the Spanish commerce, such as would have periled all their necks in a modern court of justice.

But the sea, in those old times, heaved, swelled, and foamed, very much at its own will, or subject only to the tempestuous wind, with hardly any attempts at regulation by human law. The buccaneer on the wave might relinquish his calling, and become at once, if he chose, a man of probity and piety on land; nor, even in the full career of his reckless life, was he regarded as a personage with whom it was disreputable to traffic, or casually associate. Thus the Puritan elders, in their black cloaks, starched bands, and steeple-crowned hats, smiled not unbenignantly at the clamor and rude deportment of these jolly seafaring men; and it excited neither surprise nor animadversion, when so reputable a citizen as old Roger Chillingworth, the physician, was seen to enter the market-place, in close and familiar talk with the commander of the questionable vessel.

The latter was by far the most showy and

gallant figure, so far as apparel went, anywhere to be seen among the multitude. He wore a profusion of ribbons on his garment, and gold-lace on his hat, which was also encircled by a gold chain, and surmounted with a feather. There was a sword at his side, and a sword-cut on his forehead, which, by the arrangement of his hair, he seemed anxious rather to display than hide. A landsman could hardly have worn this garb and shown this face, and worn and shown them both with such a galliard air, without undergoing stern question before a magistrate, and probably incurring fine or imprisonment, or perhaps an exhibition in the stocks. As regarded the shipmaster, however, all was looked upon as pertaining to the character, as to a fish his glistening scales.

After parting from the physician, the commander of the Bristol ship strolled idly through the market-place; until happening to approach the spot where Hester Prynne was standing, he appeared to recognize, and did not hesitate to address her. As was usually the case wherever Hester stood, a small vacant area—a sort of magic circle—had formed itself about her, into which, though the people were elbowing one another at a little distance, none ventured, or felt disposed to intrude. It was a forcible type of the moral solitude in which the scarlet letter enveloped its fated wearer; partly by her own reserve, and partly by the instinctive, though no longer so unkindly, withdrawal of her fellow-creatures. Now, if never before, it answered a good purpose, by enabling Hester and the seaman to speak together without risk of being overheard; and so changed was Hester Prynne's repute before the public, that the matron in town most eminent for rigid morality could not have held such intercourse with less result of scandal than herself.

"So, mistress," said the mariner, "I must bid the steward make ready one more berth than you bargained for! No fear of scurvy or ship-fever, this voyage! What with the ship's surgeon and this other doctor, our only danger will be from drug or pill; more by token, as there is a lot of apothecary's stuff aboard, which I traded for with a Spanish vessel."

"What mean you?" inquired Hester, startled more than she permitted to appear. "Have you another passenger?"

"Why, know you not," cried the ship-master, "that this physician here—Chillingworth, he calls himself—is minded to try my cabin-fare with you? Ay, ay, you must have known it; for he tells me he is of your party, and a close friend to the gentleman you spoke of,—he that is in peril from these sour old Puritan rulers!"

"They know each other well, indeed," replied Hester with a mien of calmness, though in the utmost consternation. "They have long dwelt together."

Nothing further passed between the mariner and Hester Prynne. But, at that instant, she beheld old Roger Chillingworth himself, standing in the remotest corner of the market-place, and smiling on her; a smile which—across the wide and bustling square, and through all the talk and laughter, and various thoughts, moods, and interests of the crowd—conveyed secret and fearful meaning.

XXII. THE PROCESSION

BEFORE Hester Prynne could call together her thoughts, and consider what was practicable to be done in this new and startling aspect of affairs, the sound of military music was heard approaching along a contiguous street. It denoted the advance of the procession of magistrates and citizens, on its way towards the meeting-house; where, in compliance with a custom thus early established, and ever since observed, the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale was to deliver an Election Sermon.

Soon the head of the procession showed itself, with a slow and stately march, turning a corner, and making its way across the market-place. First came the music. It comprised a variety of instruments, perhaps imperfectly adapted to one another, and played with no great skill; but yet attaining the great object for which the harmony of drum and clarion addresses itself to the multitude,—that of imparting a higher and more heroic air to the scene of life that passes before the eye. Little Pearl at first clapped her hands, but then lost, for an instant, the restless agitation that had kept her in a continual effervescence throughout the morning; she gazed silently, and seemed to be borne upward, like a floating sea-bird, on the long heaves and swells of sound. But she was brought back to her former mood by the

shimmer of the sunshine on the weapons and bright armor of the military company, which followed after the music, and formed the honorary escort of the procession. This body of soldiery—which still sustains a corporate existence, and marches down from past ages with an ancient and honorable fame—was composed of no mercenary materials. Its ranks were filled with gentlemen, who felt the stirrings of martial impulse, and sought to establish a kind of College of Arms, where, as in an association of Knights Templars, they might learn the science, and, so far as peaceful exercise would teach them, the practices of war. The high estimation then placed upon the military character might be seen in the lofty port of each individual member of the company. Some of them, indeed, by their services in the Low Countries and on other fields of warfare, had fairly won their title to assume the name and pomp of soldiership. The entire array, moreover, clad in burnished steel, and with plumage nodding over their bright morions, had a brilliancy of effect which no modern display can aspire to equal.

And yet the men of civil eminence, who came immediately behind the military escort, were better worth a thoughtful observer's eye. Even in outward demeanor, they showed a stamp of majesty that made the warriors' haughty stride look vulgar, if not absurd. It was an age when what we call talent had far less consideration than now, but the massive materials which produce stability and dignity of character a great deal more. The people possessed, by hereditary right, the quality of reverence; which, in their descendants, if it survive at all, exists in smaller proportion, and with a vastly diminished force, in the selection and estimate of public men. The change may be for good or ill, and is partly, perhaps, for both. In that old day, the English settler on these rude shores—having left king, nobles, and all degrees of awful rank behind, while still the faculty and necessity of reverence were strong in him—bestowed it on the white hair and venerable brow of age; on long-tried integrity; on solid wisdom and sad-colored experience; on endowments of that grave and weighty order which gives the idea of permanence, and comes under the general definition of respectability. These primitive statesmen, therefore,

—Bradstreet, Endicott, Dudley, Bellingham, and their compeers,—who were elevated to power by the early choice of the people, seem to have been not often brilliant, but distinguished by a ponderous sobriety, rather than activity of intellect. They had fortitude and self-reliance, and, in time of difficulty or peril, stood up for the welfare of the state like a line of cliffs against a tempestuous tide. The traits of character here indicated were well represented in the square cast of countenance and large physical development of the new colonial magistrates. So far as a demeanor of natural authority was concerned, the mother country need not have been ashamed to see these foremost men of an actual democracy adopted into the House of Peers, or made the Privy Council of the sovereign.

Next in order to the magistrates came the young and eminently distinguished divine, from whose lips the religious discourse of the anniversary was expected. His was the profession, at that era, in which intellectual ability displayed itself far more than in political life; for—leaving a higher motive out of the question—it offered inducements powerful enough, in the almost worshiping respect of the community, to win the most aspiring ambition into its service. Even political power—as in the case of Increase Mather—was within the grasp of a successful priest.

It was the observation of those who beheld him now, that never, since Mr. Dimmesdale first set his foot on the New England shore, had he exhibited such energy as was seen in the gait and air with which he kept his pace in the procession. There was no feebleness of step, as at other times; his frame was not bent; nor did his hand rest ominously upon his heart. Yet, if the clergyman were rightly viewed, his strength seemed not of the body. It might be spiritual, and imparted to him by angelic ministrations. It might be the exhilaration of that potent cordial which is distilled only in the furnace-glow of earnest and long-continued thought. Or, perchance, his sensitive temperament was invigorated by the loud and piercing music, that swelled heavenward, and uplifted him on its ascending wave. Nevertheless, so abstracted was his look, it might be questioned whether Mr. Dimmesdale even heard the music. There was his body,

moving onward, and with an unaccustomed force. But where was his mind? Far and deep in its own region, busying itself, with preternatural activity, to marshal a procession of stately thoughts that were soon to issue thence; and so he saw nothing, heard nothing, knew nothing, of what was around him; but the spiritual element took up the feeble frame, and carried it along, unconscious of the burden, and converting it to spirit like itself. Men of uncommon intellect, who have grown morbid, possess this occasional power of mighty effort, into which they throw the life of many days, and then are lifeless for as many more.

Hester Prynne, gazing steadfastly at the clergyman, felt a dreary influence come over her, but wherefore or whence she knew not; unless that he seemed so remote from her own sphere, and utterly beyond her reach. One glance of recognition, she had imagined, must needs pass between them. She thought of the dim forest, with its little dell of solitude and love and anguish, and the mossy tree-trunk, where, sitting hand in hand, they had mingled their sad and passionate talk with the melancholy murmur of the brook. How deeply had they known each other then! And was this the man? She hardly knew him now! He, moving proudly past, enveloped, as it were, in the rich music, with the procession of majestic and venerable fathers; he, so unattainable in his worldly position, and still more so in that far vista of his unsympathizing thoughts through which she now beheld him! Her spirit sank with the idea that all must have been a delusion, and that, vividly as she had dreamed it, there could be no real bond betwixt the clergyman and herself. And thus much of woman was there in Hester, that she could scarcely forgive him,—least of all now, when the heavy footstep of their approaching Fate might be heard, nearer, nearer, nearer!—for being able so completely to withdraw himself from their mutual world; while she groped darkly, and stretched forth her cold hands, and found him not.

Pearl either saw and responded to her mother's feelings, or herself felt the remoteness and intangibility that had fallen around the minister. While the procession passed, the child was uneasy, fluttering up and down.

like a bird on the point of taking flight. When the whole had gone by, she looked up into Hester's face.

"Mother," said she, "was that the same minister that kissed me by the brook?"

"Hold thy peace, dear little Pearl!" whispered her mother. "We must not always talk in the market-place of what happens to us in the forest."

"I could not be sure that it was he; so strange he looked," continued the child. "Else I would have run to him, and bid him kiss me now, before all the people; even as he did yonder among the dark old trees. What would the minister have said, mother? Would he have clapped his hand over his heart, and scowled on me, and bid me be gone?"

"What should he say, Pearl," answered Hester, "save that it was no time to kiss, and that kisses are not to be given in the market-place? Well for thee, foolish child, that thou didst not speak to him!"

Another shade of the same sentiment, in reference to Mr. Dimmesdale, was expressed by a person whose eccentricities—or insanity, as we should term it—led her to do what few of the townspeople would have ventured on; to begin a conversation with the wearer of the scarlet letter, in public. It was Mistress Hibbins, who, arrayed in great magnificence, with a triple ruff, a brodered stomacher, a gown of rich velvet, and a gold-headed cane, had come forth to see the procession. As this ancient lady had the renown (which subsequently cost her no less a price than her life) of being a principal actor in all the works of necromancy that were continually going forward, the crowd gave way before her, and seemed to fear the touch of her garment, as if it carried the plague among its gorgeous folds. Seen in conjunction with Hester Prynne,—kindly as so many now felt towards the latter,—the dread inspired by Mistress Hibbins was doubled, and caused a general movement from that part of the market-place in which the two women stood.

"Now, what mortal imagination could conceive it!" whispered the old lady, confidentially, to Hester. "Yonder divine man! That saint on earth, as the people uphold him to be, and as—I must needs say—he really looks! Who, now, that saw

him pass in the procession, would think how little while it is since he went forth out of his study,—chewing a Hebrew text of Scripture in his mouth, I warrant,—to take an airing in the forest! Aha! we know what that means, Hester Prynne! But truly, forsooth, I find it hard to believe him the same man. Many a church-member saw I, walking behind the music, that has danced in the same measure with me, when Somebody was fiddler, and, it might be, an Indian powwow or a Lapland wizard changing hands with us! That is but a trifle, when a woman knows the world. But this minister! Couldst thou surely tell, Hester, whether he was the same man that encountered thee upon the forest-path?"

"Madam, I know not of what you speak," answered Hester Prynne, feeling Mistress Hibbins to be of infirm mind; yet strangely startled and awe-stricken by the confidence with which she affirmed a personal connection between so many persons (herself among them) and the Evil One. "It is not for me to talk lightly of a learned and pious minister of the Word, like the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale!"

"Fie, woman, fie!" cried the old lady, shaking her finger at Hester. "Dost thou think I have been to the forest so many times, and have yet no skill to judge who else has been there? Yea; though no leaf of the wild garlands which they wore while they danced be left in their hair! I know thee, Hester; for I behold the token. We may all see it in the sunshine; and it glows like a red flame in the dark. Thou wearest it openly; so there need be no question about that. But this minister! Let me tell thee, in thine ear! When the Black Man sees one of his own servants, signed and sealed, so shy of owning to the bond as is the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, he hath a way of ordering matters so that the mark shall be disclosed in open daylight to the eyes of all the world! What is it that the minister seeks to hide, with his hand always over his heart? Ha, Hester Prynne!"

"What is it, good Mistress Hibbins?" eagerly asked little Pearl. "Hast thou seen it?"

"No matter, darling!" responded Mistress Hibbins, making Pearl a profound reverence. "Thou thyself wilt see it, one time or another.

"They say, child, thou art of the lineage of the Prince of the Air! Wilt thou ride with me, some fine night, to see thy father? Then thou shalt know wherefore the minister keeps his hand over his heart!"

Laughing so shrilly that all the market-place could hear her, the weird old gentlewoman took her departure.

By this time the preliminary prayer had been offered in the meeting-house, and the accents of the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale were heard commencing his discourse. An irresistible feeling kept Hester near the spot. As the sacred edifice was too much thronged to admit another auditor, she took up her position close beside the scaffold of the pillory. It was in sufficient proximity to bring the whole sermon to her ears, in the shape of an indistinct, but varied, murmur and flow of the minister's very peculiar voice.

This vocal organ was in itself a rich endowment; insomuch that a listener, comprehending nothing of the language in which the preacher spoke, might still have been swayed to and fro by the mere tone and cadence. Like all other music, it breathed passion and pathos, and emotions high or tender, in a tongue native to the human heart, wherever educated. Muffled as the sound was by its passage through the church-walls, Hester Prynne listened with such intentness, and sympathized so intimately, that the sermon had throughout a meaning for her, entirely apart from its indistinguishable words. These, perhaps, if more distinctly heard, might have been only a grosser medium, and have clogged the spiritual sense. Now she caught the low undertone, as of the wind sinking down to repose itself; then ascended with it, as it rose through progressive gradations of sweetness and power, until its volume seemed to envelop her with an atmosphere of awe and solemn grandeur. And yet, majestic as the voice sometimes became, there was forever in it an essential character of plaintiveness. A loud or low expression of anguish,—the whisper, or the shriek, as it might be conceived, of suffering humanity, that touched a sensibility in every bosom! At times this deep strain of pathos was all that could be heard, and scarcely heard, sighing amid a desolate silence. But even when

the minister's voice grew high and commanding,—when it gushed irrepressibly upward,—when it assumed its utmost breadth and power, so overfilling the church as to burst its way through the solid walls, and diffuse itself in the open air,—still, if the auditor listened intently, and for the purpose, he could detect the same cry of pain. What was it? The complaint of a human heart, sorrow-laden, perchance guilty, telling its secret, whether of guilt or sorrow, to the great heart of mankind; beseeching its sympathy or forgiveness,—at every moment,—in each accent,—and never in vain! It was this profound and continual undertone that gave the clergyman his most appropriate power.

During all this time, Hester stood, statue-like, at the foot of the scaffold. If the minister's voice had not kept her there, there would nevertheless have been an inevitable magnetism in that spot, whence she dated the first hour of her life of ignominy. There was a sense within her,—too ill-defined to be made a thought, but weighing heavily on her mind,—that her whole orb of life, both before and after, was connected with this spot, as with the one point that gave it unity.

Little Pearl, meanwhile, had quitted her mother's side, and was playing at her own will about the market-place. She made the somber crowd cheerful by her erratic and glistening ray; even as a bird of bright plumage illuminates a whole tree of dusky foliage, by darting to and fro, half seen and half concealed amid the twilight of the clustering leaves. She had an undulating, but, oftentimes, a sharp and irregular movement. It indicated the restless vivacity of her spirit, which to-day was doubly indefatigable in its tiptoe dance, because it was played upon and vibrated with her mother's disquietude. Whenever Pearl saw anything to excite her ever-active and wandering curiosity, she flew thitherward and, as we might say, seized upon that man or thing as her own property, so far as she desired it; but without yielding the minutest degree of control over her motions in requital. The Puritans looked on, and, if they smiled, were none the less inclined to pronounce the child a demon offspring, from the indescribable charm of beauty and

eccentricity that shone through her little figure, and sparkled with its activity. She ran and looked the wild Indian in the face; and he grew conscious of a nature wilder than his own. Thence, with native audacity, but still with a reserve as characteristic, she flew into the midst of a group of mariners, the swarthy-cheeked wild men of the ocean, as the Indians were of the land; and they gazed wonderingly and admiringly at Pearl, as if a flake of the sea-foam had taken the shape of a little maid, and were gifted with a soul of the sea-fire that flashes beneath the prow in the night-time.

One of these seafaring men—the ship-master, indeed, who had spoken to Hester Prynne—was so smitten with Pearl's aspect, that he attempted to lay hands upon her, with purpose to snatch a kiss. Finding it as impossible to touch her as to catch a humming-bird in the air, he took from his hat the gold chain that was twisted about it, and threw it to the child. Pearl immediately twined it around her neck and waist, with such happy skill, that, once seen there, it became a part of her, and it was difficult to imagine her without it.

"Thy mother is yonder woman with the scarlet letter," said the seaman. "Wilt thou carry her a message from me?"

"If the message pleases me, I will," answered Pearl.

"Then tell her," rejoined he, "that I spake again with the black-a-visaged, hump-shouldered old doctor, and he engages to bring his friend, the gentleman she wots of, aboard with him. So let thy mother take no thought, save for herself and thee. Wilt thou tell her this, thou witch-baby?"

"Mistress Hibbins says my father is the Prince of the Air!" cried Pearl, with a naughty smile. "If thou callest me that ill name, I shall tell him of thee; and he will chase thy ship with a tempest!"

Pursuing a zigzag course across the market-place, the child returned to her mother, and communicated what the mariner had said. Hester's strong, calm, steadfastly enduring spirit almost sank, at last, on beholding this dark and grim countenance of an inevitable doom, which—at the moment when a passage seemed to open for the minister and herself out of their labyrinth

of misery—showed itself, with an unrelenting smile, right in the midst of their path.

With her mind harassed by the terrible perplexity in which the shipmaster's intelligence involved her, she was also subjected to another trial. There were many people present, from the country round about, who had often heard of the scarlet letter, and to whom it had been made terrific by a hundred false or exaggerated rumors, but who had never beheld it with their own bodily eyes. These, after exhausting other modes of amusement, now thronged about Hester Prynne with rude and boorish intrusiveness. Unscrupulous as it was, however, it could not bring them nearer than a circuit of several yards. At that distance they accordingly stood, fixed there by the centrifugal force of the repugnance which the mystic symbol inspired. The whole gang of sailors, likewise, observing the press of spectators, and learning the purport of the scarlet letter, came and thrust their sunburnt and desperado-looking faces into the ring. Even the Indians were affected by a sort of cold shadow of the white man's curiosity, and, gliding through the crowd, fastened their snake-like black eyes on Hester's bosom; conceiving, perhaps, that the wearer of this brilliantly embroidered badge must needs be a personage of high dignity among her people. Lastly the inhabitants of the town (their own interest in this worn-out subject languidly reviving itself, by sympathy with what they saw others feel) lounged idly to the same quarter, and tormented Hester Prynne, perhaps more than all the rest, with their cool, well-acquainted gaze at her familiar shame. Hester saw and recognized the self-same faces of that group of matrons, who had awaited her forthcoming from the prison-door, seven years ago; all save one, the youngest and only compassionate among them, whose burial-robe she had since made. At the final hour, when she was so soon to fling aside the burning letter, it had strangely become the center of more remark and excitement, and was thus made to sear her breast more painfully than at any time since the first day she put it on.

While Hester stood in that magic circle of ignominy, where the cunning cruelty of her sentence seemed to have fixed her for-

ever, the admirable preacher was looking down from the sacred pulpit upon an audience whose very inmost spirits had yielded to his control. The sainted minister in the church! The woman of the scarlet letter in the market-place! What imagination would have been irreverent enough to surmise that the same scorching stigma was on them both!

XXIII. THE REVELATION OF THE SCARLET LETTER

THE eloquent voice, on which the souls of the listening audience had been borne aloft as on the swelling waves of the sea, at length came to a pause. There was a momentary silence, profound as what should follow the utterance of oracles. Then ensued a murmur and half-hushed tumult; as if the auditors, released from the high spell that had transported them into the region of another's mind, were returning into themselves, with all their awe and wonder still heavy on them. In a moment more, the crowd began to gush forth from the doors of the church. Now that there was an end, they needed other breath, more fit to support the gross and earthly life into which they relapsed, than that atmosphere which the preacher had converted into words of flame, and had burdened with the rich fragrance of his thought.

In the open air their rapture broke into speech. The street and the market-place absolutely babbled, from side to side, with applauses of the minister. His hearers could not rest until they had told one another of what each knew better than he could tell or hear. According to their united testimony, never had man spoken in so wise, so high, and so holy a spirit, as he that spake this day; nor had inspiration ever breathed through mortal lips more evidently than it did through his. Its influence could be seen, as it were, descending upon him and possessing him, and continually lifting him out of the written discourse that lay before him, and filling him with ideas that must have been as marvelous to himself as to his audience. His subject, it appeared, had been the relation between the Deity and the communities of mankind, with a special reference to the New England which they were here planting in the wilder-

ness. And, as he drew towards the close, a spirit as of prophecy had come upon him, constraining him to its purpose as mightily as the old prophets of Israel were constrained; only with this difference, that, whereas the Jewish seers had denounced judgments and ruin on their country, it was his mission to foretell a high and glorious destiny for the newly gathered people of the Lord. But throughout it all, and through the whole discourse, there had been a certain deep, sad undertone of pathos, which could not be interpreted otherwise than as the natural regret of one soon to pass away. Yes; their minister whom they so loved—and who so loved them all, that he could not depart heavenward without a sigh—had the foreboding of untimely death upon him and would soon leave them in their tears! This idea of his transitory stay on earth gave the last emphasis to the effect which the preacher had produced; it was as if an angel, in his passage to the skies, had shaken his bright wings over the people for an instant,—at once a shadow and a splendor,—and had shed down a shower of golden truths upon them.

Thus there had come to the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale—as to most men, in their various spheres, though seldom recognized until they see it far behind them—an epoch of life more brilliant and full of triumph than any previous one, or than any which could hereafter be. He stood, at this moment, on the very proudest eminence of superiority, to which the gifts of intellect, rich lore, prevailing eloquence, and a reputation of whitest sanctity, could exalt a clergyman in New England's earliest days, when the professional character was of itself a lofty pedestal. Such was the position which the minister occupied, as he bowed his head forward on the cushions of the pulpit, at the close of his Election Sermon. Meanwhile Hester Prynne was standing beside the scaffold of the pillory, with the scarlet letter still burning on her breast!

Now was heard again the clangor of music, and the measured tramp of the military escort issuing from the church-door. The procession was to be marshaled thence to the town-hall, where a solemn banquet would complete the ceremonies of the day.

Once more, therefore, the train of venerable and majestic fathers was seen moving through a broad pathway of the people, who drew back reverently, on either side, as the Governor and magistrates, the old and wise men, the holy ministers, and all that were eminent and renowned, advanced into the midst of them. When they were fairly in the market-place, their presence was greeted by a shout. This—though doubtless it might acquire additional force and volume from the childlike loyalty which the age awarded to its rulers—was felt to be an irrepressible outburst of enthusiasm kindled in the auditors by that high strain of eloquence which was yet reverberating in their ears. Each felt the impulse in himself, and, in the same breath, caught it from his neighbor. Within the church, it had hardly been kept down; beneath the sky, it pealed upward to the zenith. There were human beings enough, and enough of highly wrought and symphonious feeling, to produce that more impressive sound than the organ tones of the blast, or the thunder, or the roar of the sea; even that mighty swell of many voices, blended into one great voice by the universal impulse which makes likewise one vast heart out of the many. Never, from the soil of New England, had gone up such a shout! Never, on New England soil, had stood the man so honored by his mortal brethren as the preacher!

How fared it with him then? Were there not the brilliant particles of a halo in the air about his head? So etherealized by spirit as he was, and so apotheosized by worshipping admirers, did his footsteps, in the procession, really tread upon the dust of earth?

As the ranks of military men and civil fathers moved onward, all eyes were turned towards the point where the minister was seen to approach among them. The shout died into a murmur, as one portion of the crowd after another obtained a glimpse of him. How feeble and pale he looked, amid all his triumph! The energy—or say, rather, the inspiration which had held him up until he should have delivered the sacred message that brought its own strength along with it from Heaven—was withdrawn, now that it had so faithfully performed its office. The glow, which they had just before beheld burning on his cheek, was

extinguished, like a flame that sinks down hopelessly among the late-decaying embers. It seemed hardly the face of a man alive, with such a deathlike hue; it was hardly a man with life in him, that tottered on his path so nervously, yet tottered, and did not fall!

One of his clerical brethren,—it was the venerable John Wilson,—observing the state in which Mr. Dimmesdale was left by the retiring wave of intellect and sensibility, stepped forward hastily to offer his support. The minister tremulously, but decidedly, repelled the old man's arm. He still walked onward, if that movement could be so described, which rather resembled the wavering effort of an infant, with its mother's arms in view, outstretched to tempt him forward. And now, almost imperceptible as were the latter steps of his progress, he had come opposite the well-remembered and weather-darkened scaffold, where, long since, with all that dreary lapse of time between, Hester Prynne had encountered the world's ignominious stare. There stood Hester, holding little Pearl by the hand! And there was the scarlet letter on her breast! The minister here made a pause; although the music still played the stately and rejoicing march to which the procession moved. It summoned him onward,—onward to the festival!—but here he made a pause.

Bellingham, for the last few moments, had kept an anxious eye upon him. He now left his own place in the procession, and advanced to give assistance; judging, from Mr. Dimmesdale's aspect, that he must otherwise inevitably fall. But there was something in the latter's expression that warned back the magistrate, although a man not readily obeying the vague intimations that pass from one spirit to another. The crowd, meanwhile, looked on with awe and wonder. This earthly faintness was, in their view, only another phase of the minister's celestial strength; nor would it have seemed a miracle too high to be wrought for one so holy, had he ascended before their eyes, waxing dimmer and brighter, and fading at last into the light of heaven.

He turned towards the scaffold, and stretched forth his arms.

"Hester," said he, "come hither! Come, my little Pearl!"

It was a ghastly look with which he regarded them; but there was something at once tender and strangely triumphant in it. The child, with the bird-like motion which was one of her characteristics, flew to him, and clasped her arms about his knees. Hester Prynne—slowly, as if impelled by inevitable fate, and against her strongest will—likewise drew near, but paused before she reached him. At this instant, old Roger Chillingworth thrust himself through the crowd,—or perhaps, so dark, disturbed, and evil was his look, he rose up out of some nether region,—to snatch back his victim from what he sought to do! Be that as it might, the old man rushed forward, and caught the minister by the arm.

"Madman, hold! what is your purpose?" whispered he. "Wave back that woman! Cast off this child! All shall be well! Do not blacken your fame, and perish in dishonor! I can yet save you! Would you bring infamy on your sacred profession?"

"Ha, tempter! Methinks thou art too late!" answered the minister, encountering his eye, fearfully, but firmly. "Thy power is not what it was! With God's help, I shall escape thee now!"

He again extended his hand to the woman of the scarlet letter.

"Hester Prynne," cried he, with a piercing earnestness, "in the name of Him, so terrible and so merciful, who gives me grace at this last moment to do what—for my own heavy sin and miserable agony—I withheld myself from doing seven years ago, come hither now, and twine thy strength about me! Thy strength, Hester; but let it be guided by the will which God hath granted me! This wretched and wronged old man is opposing it with all his might!—with all his own might, and the fiend's! Come, Hester, come! Support me up yonder scaffold!"

The crowd was in a tumult. The men of rank and dignity, who stood more immediately around the clergyman, were so taken by surprise, and so perplexed as to the purport of what they saw,—unable to receive the explanation which mostly readily presented itself, or to imagine any other,—that they remained silent and inactive spectators of the judgment which Providence seemed about to work. They beheld the

minister, leaning on Hester's shoulder, and supported by her arm around him, approach the scaffold, and ascend its steps; while still the little hand of the sin-born child was clasped in his. Old Roger Chillingworth followed, as one intimately connected with the drama of guilt and sorrow in which they had all been actors, and well entitled, therefore, to be present at its closing scene.

"Hadst thou sought the whole earth over," said he, looking darkly at the clergyman, "there was no one place so secret,—no high place nor lowly place, where thou couldst have escaped me,—save on this very scaffold!"

"Thanks be to Him who hath led me hither!" answered the minister.

Yet he trembled, and turned to Hester with an expression of doubt and anxiety in his eyes, not the less evidently betrayed that there was a feeble smile upon his lips.

"Is not this better," murmured he, "than what we dreamed of in the forest?"

"I know not! I know not!" she hurriedly replied. "Better? Yea; so we may both die, and little Pearl die with us!"

"For thee and Pearl, be it as God shall order," said the minister; "and God is merciful! Let me now do the will which He hath made plain before my sight. For, Hester, I am a dying man. So let me make haste to take my shame upon me!"

Partly supported by Hester Prynne, and holding one hand of little Pearl's, the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale turned to the dignified and venerable rulers; to the holy ministers, who were his brethren; to the people, whose great heart was thoroughly appalled, yet overflowing with tearful sympathy, as knowing that some deep life-matter—which, if full of sin, was full of anguish and repentance likewise—was now to be laid open to them. The sun, but little past its meridian, shone down upon the clergyman, and gave a distinctness to his figure, as he stood out from all the earth, to put in his plea of guilty at the bar of Eternal Justice.

"People of New England!" cried he, with a voice that rose over them, high, solemn, and majestic,—yet had always a tremor through it, and sometimes a shriek, struggling up out of a fathomless depth of remorse and woe,—“ye, that have loved me!—ye,

that have deemed me holy!—behold me here, the one sinner of the world! At last!—at last!—I stand upon the spot where, seven years since, I should have stood; here, with this woman, whose arm, more than the little strength wherewith I have crept hitherward, sustains me, at this dreadful moment, from groveling down upon my face! Lo, the scarlet letter which Hester wears! Ye have all shuddered at it! Wherever her walk hath been,—wherever, so miserably burdened, she may have hoped to find repose,—it hath cast a lurid gleam of awe and horrible repugnance round about her. But there stood one in the midst of you, at whose brand of sin and infamy ye have not shuddered!”

It seemed, at this point, as if the minister must leave the remainder of his secret undisclosed. But he fought back the bodily weakness,—and, still more, the faintness of heart,—that was striving for the mastery with him. He threw off all assistance, and stepped passionately forward a pace before the woman and the child.

“It was on him!” he continued, with a kind of fierceness; so determined was he to speak out the whole. “God’s eye beheld it! The angels were forever pointing at it! The Devil knew it well, and fretted it continually with the touch of his burning finger! But he hid it cunningly from men, and walked among you with the mien of a spirit, mournful, because so pure in a sinful world!—and sad, because he missed his heavenly kindred! Now, at the death-hour, he stands up before you! He bids you look again at Hester’s scarlet letter! He tells you that, with all its mysterious horror, it is but the shadow of what he bears on his own breast, and that even this, his own red stigma, is no more than the type of what has seared his inmost heart! Stand any here that question God’s judgment on a sinner? Behold! Behold a dreadful witness of it!”

With a convulsive motion, he tore away the ministerial band from before his breast. It was revealed! But it were irreverent to describe that revelation. For an instant, the gaze of the horror-stricken multitude was concentrated on the ghastly miracle; while the minister stood, with a flush of triumph in his face, as one who, in the crisis of acutest pain, had won a victory. Then,

down he sank upon the scaffold! Hester partly raised him, and supported his head against her bosom. Old Roger Chillingworth knelt down beside him, with a blank, dull countenance, out of which the life seemed to have departed.

“Thou hast escaped me!” he repeated more than once. “Thou hast escaped me!”

“May God forgive thee!” said the minister. “Thou, too, hast deeply sinned!”

He withdrew his dying eyes from the old man, and fixed them on the woman and the child.

“My little Pearl,” said he, feebly,—and there was a sweet and gentle smile over his face, as of a spirit sinking into deep repose; nay, now that the burden was removed, it seemed almost as if he would be sportive with the child,—“dear little Pearl, wilt thou kiss me now? Thou wouldst not, yonder, in the forest! But now thou wilt?”

Pearl kissed his lips. A spell was broken. The great scene of grief, in which the wild infant bore a part, had developed all her sympathies; and as her tears fell upon her father’s cheek, they were the pledge that she would grow up amid human joy and sorrow, nor forever do battle with the world, but be a woman in it. Towards her mother, too, Pearl’s errand as a messenger of anguish was all fulfilled.

“Hester,” said the clergyman, “farewell!”

“Shall we not meet again?” whispered she, bending her face down close to his. “Shall we not spend our immortal life together? Surely, surely, we have ransomed one another, with all this woe! Thou lookest far into eternity, with those bright dying eyes! Then tell me what thou seest?”

“Hush, Hester, hush!” said he, with tremulous solemnity. “The law we broke!—the sin here so awfully revealed!—let these alone be in thy thoughts! I fear! I fear! It may be that, when we forgot our God,—when we violated our reverence each for the other’s soul,—it was thenceforth vain to hope that we could meet hereafter, in an everlasting and pure reunion. God knows; and He is merciful! He hath proved His mercy, most of all, in my afflictions. By giving me this burning torture to bear upon my breast! By sending

yonder dark and terrible old man, to keep the torture always at red-heat! By bringing me hither, to die this death of triumphant ignominy before the people! Had either of these agonies been wanting, I had been lost forever! Praised be his name! His will be done! Farewell!"

That final word came forth with the minister's expiring breath. The multitude, silent till then, broke out in a strange, deep voice of awe and wonder, which could not as yet find utterance, save in this murmur that rolled so heavily after the departed spirit.

XXIV. CONCLUSION

AFTER many days, when time sufficed for the people to arrange their thoughts in reference to the foregoing scene, there was more than one account of what had been witnessed on the scaffold.

Most of the spectators testified to having seen, on the breast of the unhappy minister, a SCARLET LETTER—the very semblance of that worn by Hester Prynne—imprinted in the flesh. As regarded its origin, there were various explanations, all of which must necessarily have been conjectural. Some affirmed that the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, on the very day when Hester Prynne first wore her ignominious badge, had begun a course of penance,—which he afterwards, in so many futile methods, followed out,—by inflicting a hideous torture on himself. Others contended that the stigma had not been produced until a long time subsequent, when old Roger Chillingworth, being a potent necromancer, had caused it to appear, through the agency of magic and poisonous drugs. Others, again,—and those best able to appreciate the minister's peculiar sensibility, and the wonderful operation of his spirit upon the body,—whispered their belief that the awful symbol was the effect of the ever-active tooth of remorse, gnawing from the inmost heart outwardly, and at last manifesting Heaven's dreadful judgment by the visible presence of the letter. The reader may choose among these theories. We have thrown all the light we could acquire upon the portent, and would gladly, now that it has done its office, erase its deep print out of our own brain; where long

meditation has fixed it in very undesirable distinctness.

It is singular, nevertheless, that certain persons, who were spectators of the whole scene, and professed never once to have removed their eyes from the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, denied that there was any mark whatever on his breast, more than on a new-born infant's. Neither, by their report, had his dying words acknowledged, nor even remotely implied, any, the slightest connection, on his part, with the guilt for which Hester Prynne had so long worn the scarlet letter. According to these highly respectable witnesses, the minister, conscious that he was dying,—conscious, also, that the reverence of the multitude placed him already among saints and angels,—had desired, by yielding up his breath in the arms of that fallen woman, to express to the world how utterly nugatory is the choicest of man's own righteousness. After exhausting life in his efforts for mankind's spiritual good, he had made the manner of his death a parable, in order to impress on his admirers the mighty and mournful lesson that, in the view of Infinite Purity, we are sinners all alike. It was to teach them that the holiest among us has but attained so far above his fellows as to discern more clearly the Mercy which looks down, and repudiate more utterly the phantom of human merit, which would look aspiringly upward. Without disputing a truth so momentous, we must be allowed to consider this version of Mr. Dimmesdale's story as only an instance of that stubborn fidelity with which a man's friends—and especially a clergyman's—will sometimes uphold his character, when proofs, clear as the mid-day sunshine on the scarlet letter, establish him a false and sin-stained creature of the dust.

The authority which we have chiefly followed,—a manuscript of old date, drawn up from the verbal testimony of individuals, some of whom had known Hester Prynne, while others had heard the tale from contemporary witnesses,—fully confirms the view taken in the foregoing pages. Among many morals which press upon us from the poor minister's miserable experience, we put only this into a sentence:—"Be true! Be true! Be true! Show freely to the world,

if not your worst, yet some trait whereby the worst may be inferred!"

Nothing was more remarkable than the change which took place, almost immediately after Mr. Dimmesdale's death, in the appearance and demeanor of the old man known as Roger Chillingworth. All his strength and energy—all his vital and intellectual force—seemed at once to desert him; insomuch that he positively withered up, shriveled away, and almost vanished from mortal sight, like an unrooted weed that lies wilting in the sun. This unhappy man had made the very principle of his life to consist in the pursuit and systematic exercise of revenge; and when, by its completest triumph and consummation, that evil principle was left with no further material to support it, when, in short, there was no more Devil's work on earth for him to do, it only remained for the unhumanized mortal to betake himself whither his Master would find him tasks enough, and pay him his wages duly. But to all these shadowy beings, so long our near acquaintances,—as well Roger Chillingworth as his companions,—we would fain be merciful. It is a curious subject of observation and inquiry, whether hatred and love be not the same thing at bottom. Each, in its utmost development, supposes a high degree of intimacy and heart-knowledge; each renders one individual dependent for the food of his affections and spiritual life upon another; each leaves the passionate lover, or the no less passionate hater, forlorn and desolate by the withdrawal of his subject. Philosophically considered, therefore, the two passions seem essentially the same, except that one happens to be seen in a celestial radiance, and the other in a dusky and lurid glow. In the spiritual world, the old physician and the minister—mutual victims as they have been—may, unawares, have found their earthly stock of hatred and antipathy transmuted into golden love.

Leaving this discussion apart, we have a matter of business to communicate to the reader. At old Roger Chillingworth's decease (which took place within the year), and by his last will and testament, of which Governor Bellingham and the Reverend Mr. Wilson were executors, he bequeathed a very considerable amount of property,

both here and in England, to little Pearl, the daughter of Hester Prynne.

So Pearl—the elf-child—the demon offspring as some people, up to that epoch, persisted in considering her,—became the richest heiress of her day, in the New World. Not improbably, this circumstance wrought a very material change in the public estimation; and, had the mother and child remained here, little Pearl, at a marriageable period of life, might have mingled her wild blood with the lineage of the devoutest Puritan among them all. But, in no long time after the physician's death, the wearer of the scarlet letter disappeared, and Pearl along with her. For many years, though a vague report would now and then find its way across the sea,—like a shapeless piece of drift-wood tossed ashore, with the initials of a name upon it,—yet no tidings of them unquestionably authentic were received. The story of the scarlet letter grew into a legend. Its spell, however, was still potent, and kept the scaffold awful where the poor minister had died, and likewise the cottage by the sea-shore, where Hester Prynne had dwelt. Near this latter spot, one afternoon, some children were at play, when they beheld a tall woman, in a gray robe, approach the cottage-door. In all those years it had never once been opened; but either she unlocked it, or the decaying wood and iron yielded to her hand, or she glided shadow-like through these impediments,—and, at all events, went in.

On the threshold she paused,—turned partly round,—for, perchance, the idea of entering all alone, and all so changed, the home of so intense a former life, was more dreary and desolate than even she could bear. But her hesitation was only for an instant, though long enough to display a scarlet letter on her breast.

And Hester Prynne had returned, and taken up her long-forsaken shame! But where was little Pearl? If still alive, she must now have been in the flush and bloom of early womanhood. None knew—nor ever learned, with the fullness of perfect certainty—whether the elf-child had gone thus untimely to a maiden grave; or whether her wild, rich nature had been softened and subdued, and made capable of a woman's gentle happiness. But, through the re-

mainder of Hester's life, there were indications that the recluse of the scarlet letter was the object of love and interest with some inhabitant of another land. Letters came, with armorial seals upon them, though of bearings unknown to English heraldry. In the cottage there were articles of comfort and luxury such as Hester never cared to use, but which only wealth could have purchased, and affection have imagined for her. There were trifles, too, little ornaments, beautiful tokens of a continual remembrance, that must have been wrought by delicate fingers, at the impulse of a fond heart. And, once, Hester was seen embroidering a baby-garment, with such a lavish richness of golden fancy as would have raised a public tumult, had any infant, thus appareled, been shown to our sober-hued community.

In fine, the gossips of that day believed,—and Mr. Surveyor Pue, who made investigations a century later, believed,—and one of his recent successors in office, moreover, faithfully believes,—that Pearl was not only alive, but married, and happy, and mindful of her mother, and that she would most joyfully have entertained that sad and lonely mother at her fireside.

But there was a more real life for Hester Prynne here, in New England, than in that unknown region where Pearl had found a home. Here had been her sin; here, her sorrow; and here was yet to be her penitence. She had returned, therefore, and resumed,—of her own free will, for not the sternest magistrate of that iron period would have imposed it,—resumed the symbol of which we have related so dark a tale. Never afterwards did it quit her bosom. But, in the lapse of the toilsome, thoughtful, and self-devoted years that made up Hester's life, the scarlet letter ceased to be a stigma which attracted the world's scorn and bitterness, and became a type of something to be sorrowed over, and looked upon with awe, yet with reverence too. And, as Hester Prynne had no selfish ends, nor lived in any measure for her own profit and enjoyment, people brought all their sorrows and perplexities, and besought her counsel, as one who had herself gone through a

mighty trouble. Women, more especially,—in the continually recurring trials of wounded, wasted, wronged, misplaced, or erring and sinful passion,—or with the dreary burden of a heart unyielded, because unvalued and unsought,—came to Hester's cottage, demanding why they were so wretched, and what the remedy! Hester comforted and counseled them as best she might. She assured them, too, of her firm belief that, at some brighter period, when the world should have grown ripe for it, in Heaven's own time, a new truth would be revealed, in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness. Earlier in life, Hester had vainly imagined that she herself might be the destined prophetess, but had long since recognized the impossibility that any mission of divine and mysterious truth should be confided to a woman stained with sin, bowed down with shame, or even burdened with a life-long sorrow. The angel and apostle of the coming revelation must be a woman, indeed, but lofty, pure, and beautiful; and wise, moreover, not through dusky grief, but the ethereal medium of joy; and showing how sacred love should make us happy, by the truest test of a life successful to such an end!

So said Hester Prynne, and glanced her sad eyes downward at the scarlet letter. And, after many, many years, a new grave was delved, near an old and sunken one, in that burial-ground beside which King's Chapel has since been built. It was near that old and sunken grave, yet with a space between, as if the dust of the two sleepers had no right to mingle. Yet one tombstone served for both. All around, there were monuments carved with armorial bearings; and on this simple slab of slate—as the curious investigator may still discern, and perplex himself with the purport—there appeared the semblance of an engraved escutcheon. It bore a device, a herald's wording of which might serve for a motto and brief description of our now concluded legend; so somber is it, and relieved only by one ever-glowing point of light gloomier than the shadow:—

ON A FIELD, SABLE, THE LETTER A, GULES.

EDGAR ALLAN POE (1809-1849)

Poe's father came of a Baltimore family. His mother was born in England, and he was told by relatives or friends of the family in Baltimore that she was the daughter of Benedict Arnold. Both parents were actors, who played in various cities along the Atlantic coast. Poe was born in Boston on 19 January, 1809. In December, 1811, his mother died in Richmond, and his father also, probably a week or so later. Poe was taken in charge by John Allan, a merchant of Richmond. There is no evidence that he was formally adopted by Allan and his wife, but they treated him as a son and brought him up indulgently. Allan hoped that this "son" might become eminent in public life, and to that end undertook to give him a thorough education, which was not interrupted by the five years which the Allans and Poe spent in England (1815-1820). As early as 1824, however, trouble began to develop between Allan and his "son." The cause can only be guessed. There is abundant evidence that Poe was an apt student, and that he had already exhibited a cleverness which might have proved to Allan that his ambitions for the boy were not ill-founded. All that is definitely known, however, is contained in a letter in which Allan wrote that Poe did nothing for him "and seems quite miserable, sulky, and ill-tempered to all the family. How we have acted to produce this is beyond my conception;—why I have put up so long with his conduct is little less wonderful. The boy possesses not a spark of affection for us, not a particle of gratitude for all my care and kindness towards him." The truth seems to be that Allan was a man of the most moderate powers of understanding, by turns exacting and indulgent, and that under any circumstances he and his strange "son" must have fallen out with each other sooner or later. The trouble of 1824 did not lead to a break, and in 1826 Poe was sent to the University of Virginia, though—if his own account is to be believed—he was provided with insufficient funds for even his most necessary expenses. During this year he did well with his studies, but led a dissipated life and contracted gambling and other debts amounting to more than \$2,000. Allan indignantly refused to pay these debts, forbade Poe's return to the University, and then, apparently, reproached him bitterly for "eating the bread of idleness" in his home, though he suggested or provided nothing for the youth to do. In March, 1827, Poe left Richmond, managed somehow in the course of several months to reach Boston, and there enlisted in the United States army, where he remained for about two years, being stationed for a while at Charleston, South Carolina, and latterly at Fortress Monroe. Before he left Boston he published there his first book of verses, *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827).

In the spring of 1829 Poe succeeded, with the grudging help of Allan, in procuring his discharge from the army by the purchase of a substitute and in getting the promise of a cadetship at West Point. He was admitted in July, 1830. While waiting for admission he had spent much time in Baltimore, and there had published (1829) a second book of poems. He did not long remain at West Point, but brought about his dismissal in the spring of 1831. For several years he had been vainly attempting to renew Allan's confidence in him, and it is supposed that Allan's second marriage in October, 1830, helped him to conclude that he had no prospect of ever getting further help from that source. At the same time he was already sick of West Point's austerities, though his academic work was excellent, and he apparently persuaded himself that if his estrangement from Allan was now permanent his only motive for remaining there had disappeared. How definite his aims now were cannot be known, though it is evident that his hopes were centered on a literary career. In the spring of 1831 he published a third volume of poems, and during the next four years he wrote a number of his prose tales and tried to write a play, *Politian*, while he lived, apparently, in Baltimore in great poverty. In the summer of 1835 he secured a post in Richmond on the staff of *The Southern Literary Messenger*, was soon made editor, and wrote for the periodical tales, poems, and many book reviews which quickly and greatly increased its circulation. On the strength of his success he married (1836) Virginia Clemm, a first cousin and at this time a girl of thirteen. But in the fall of 1836 he was unable to work for a couple of weeks because of excessive drinking, and at the end of the year he was dismissed from his post. There followed a period of uncertain wandering, to New York, back to Richmond, to New York again—where *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* was published (1838)—and finally to Philadelphia, where he remained until 1844. He was there connected for brief periods with several periodicals, in which he published many critical papers and some of the best of his tales, and in addition he published a piece of hack-work, *The Conchologist's First Book; or, A System of Testaceous Malacology* (1839), *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (2 vols., 1840), and *Prose Romances* (a projected series of which only the first number appeared, containing *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* and *The Man that was*

Used Up, 1843). But, despite these exertions, Poe was unable to establish himself, or to earn sufficient money for even moderately comfortable living, while at the same time his drinking increased, making it more and more difficult for him to obtain or hold positions.

With the notion, apparently, of making a new start, Poe and his wife, now an invalid, and his mother-in-law, removed to New York in the spring of 1844. In January, 1845, he published *The Raven* in the *New York Evening Mirror*, and caused thereby a great sensation which soon made his name known everywhere. He took advantage of his sudden success to publish in the same year a new volume of tales and a new edition of his poems. He also managed in this year to become editor, and then proprietor, of *The Broadway Journal*, but was able to keep the paper only a few months. During 1846 he was ill for a considerable time, then published a series of critical essays, dealing with contemporaries, which made him more than one enemy, and finally involved himself in a mild scandal arising from his friendship with a poetess. In 1847 his wife died. In the following year he published *Eureka*, and, in addition, was twice in love, and would have married had he not broken a pledge to abstain from drinking. Early in 1849, despite a gravely impaired mental and physical condition which for a couple of years had been on the increase, he managed to write several of his best-known poems. Then, in the summer, he went to Richmond, renewed his acquaintance with a woman whom he had loved in his youth (she had then thrown him over and married another, but was now a widow), and became engaged to her. Before the marriage he went North, fell to drinking in Baltimore, and as a result died suddenly there, on 7 October, 1849.

Poe's was a tragically defeated life. It was his ill fortune not only to have no proper upbringing, but also to be thrown, without support or resource, spiritual or material, into an alien civilization which had as yet, save perhaps in New England, no proper place for artists. It is a question, however, if, under any happier conditions, his life would have been less tragic or his literary achievement markedly different in quality. He was a great and splendid genius as a technician—that is, as a master of rhythm and melody and economical construction. He had, also, a remarkable power of ratiocination. And, learning much from Coleridge and Shelley, he produced a small group of poems hardly surpassed in English literature for sheer musical quality. Likewise in prose he produced a group of tales which delight the ingenious; and another, larger group skillfully constructed to evoke sensations of awe, terror, and the like. But, with all their mastery of technique for a few carefully chosen ends, Poe's tales and poems are remarkably lacking in human content, in human interest—so much so that their author has very curiously been regarded as a man working out of time and place, with no relation to his age or environment. That is a notion which cannot stand examination, but which, nevertheless, expresses the truth that Poe carries us into a non-human world of ghostly fancy. He was, indeed, really without character or moral integrity, and so was not interested in the drama of human existence. Hence he was quite ready to take up Coleridge's contention that art must first of all give pleasure, and to derive from that the conclusion that art has no concern with truth. But this was to fall into the sink of sensationalism—to play tricks, so to say, with words, in the evocation of sensations to be enjoyed for their own sake.

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM¹

TAKE this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow:
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less gone?
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

10

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is all that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

20

¹ First published in 1827. Poe carefully revised his poems when he reprinted them in new editions, and practically always improved them. This poem was reprinted in 1829, 1831, and 1849, and so many changes were made in it that not a single line of the original version remains unaltered in the final one printed

above. In Poe's earliest verse he was a follower of Byron, and this piece was originally entitled *Imitation*, probably in acknowledgment of indebtedness to Byron. It reflects Poe's estrangement from Allan, and his slowly dying hope of receiving further help from him, or of becoming his heir.

SONNET—TO SCIENCE¹

SCIENCE! true daughter of Old Time thou art!
 Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.
 Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
 Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
 How should he love thee? or how deem thee
 wise,
 Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
 To seek for treasure in the jeweled skies,
 Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
 Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car,
 And driven the Hamadryad from the wood? 10
 To seek a shelter in some happier star?
 Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
 The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
 The summer dream beneath the tamarind
 tree?

ROMANCE²

ROMANCE, who loves to nod and sing,
 With drowsy head and folded wing,
 Among the green leaves as they shake
 Far down within some shadowy lake,
 To me a painted paroquet
 Hath been—a most familiar bird—
 Taught me my alphabet to say—
 To lisp my very earliest word
 While in the wild wood I did lie,
 A child—with a most knowing eye. 10

Of late, eternal Condor years
 So shake the very Heaven on high
 With tumult as they thunder by,
 I have no time for idle cares
 Through gazing on the unquiet sky.
 And when an hour with calmer wings
 Its down upon my spirit flings—
 That little time with lyre and rhyme
 To while away—forbidden things!
 My heart would feel to be a crime 20
 Unless it trembled with the strings.

¹ First published in 1829. Probably inspired by Keats's *Lamia* (particularly ll. 229–238). But the sonnet expresses Poe's own conviction that poetry is opposed to science, because poetry's object is to give pleasure, not to state truth. Poetry evokes indefinite sensations through the use of imagery, "to which end music is an *essential*, since the comprehension of sweet sound is our most indefinite conception. Music, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry." (*Letter to B*—.)

² First published in 1829.

TO ———³

THE bowers whereat, in dreams, I see
 The wantonest singing birds,
 Are lips—and all thy melody
 Of lip-begotten words.

Thine eyes, in Heaven of heart enshrined,
 Then desolately fall,
 O God! on my funereal mind
 Like starlight on a pall.

Thy heart—*thy* heart!—I wake and sigh,
 And sleep to dream till day 10
 Of the truth that gold can never buy—
 Of the baubles that it may.

TO ———⁴

I HEED not that my earthly lot
 Hath—little of earth in it—
 That years of love have been forgot
 In the hatred of a minute:—
 I mourn not that the desolate
 Are happier, sweet, than I,
 But that *you* sorrow for *my* fate
 Who am a passer-by.

TO HELEN⁵

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
 Like those Nicéan⁶ barks of yore,
 That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
 The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
 To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
 Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
 Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
 To the glory that was Greece
 And the grandeur that was Rome. 10

³ First published in 1829. The poem is thought to refer to Miss Royster, of Richmond, whom Poe loved in his youth. She jilted him while he was at the University of Virginia, and became engaged to a Mr. Shelton, whom she married.

⁴ First published in 1829.

⁵ First published in 1831. Poe declared that this poem was inspired by his love for Mrs. Jane Stith Stanard of Richmond, who had treated him kindly when he was a boy. He said she was "the first purely ideal love of my soul." She died in 1824. Poe gave at least tacit agreement to the statement that the poem was written when he was only 14 years old, but the statement is not generally credited.

⁶ Probably (as suggested by W. M. Rossetti) Poe's mis-spelling of Nyseian (*Paradise Lost*, IV, 275).

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
 How statue-like I see thee stand,
 The agate lamp within thy hand!
 Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
 Are Holy Land!

ISRAFEL¹

IN Heaven a spirit doth dwell
 "Whose heart-strings are a lute";
 None sing so wildly well
 As the angel Israfel,
 And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
 Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
 Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
 In her highest noon,
 The enamored moon
 Blushes with love,
 While, to listen, the red levin
 (With the rapid Pleiads, even,
 Which were seven)
 Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
 And the other listening things)
 That Israfeli's fire
 Is owing to that lyre
 By which he sits and sings—
 The trembling living wire
 Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
 Where deep thoughts are a duty,
 Where Love's a grown-up God,
 Where the Houri glances are
 Imbued with all the beauty
 Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
 Israfeli, who despisest
 An unimpassioned song;
 To thee the laurels belong,
 Best bard, because the wisest!
 Merrily live, and long!

¹ First published in 1831. Poe prefaced the poem with the following: "And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—*Koran*." This really comes, not from the *Koran*, but from Sale's *Preliminary Discourse* on it, and, in addition, Sale's words have been much changed, a whole phrase being interpolated by Poe. Editors have called attention to probable debts in the poem to Byron, Coleridge, Waller, and Shelley.

The ecstasies above
 With thy burning measures suit—
 Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
 With the fervor of thy lute—
 Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
 Is a world of sweets and sour;
 Our flowers are merely—flowers,
 And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
 Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
 Where Israfel
 Hath dwelt, and he where I,
 He might not sing so wildly well
 A mortal melody,
 While a bolder note than this might swell 50
 From my lyre within the sky.

THE CITY IN THE SEA²

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
 In a strange city lying alone
 Far down within the dim West,
 Where the good and the bad and the worst
 and the best
 Have gone to their eternal rest.
 There shrines and palaces and towers
 (Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
 Resemble nothing that is ours.
 Around, by lifting winds forgot,
 Resignedly beneath the sky 10
 The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
 On the long night-time of that town;
 But light from out the lurid sea
 Streams up the turrets silently—
 Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
 Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—
 Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
 Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
 Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers— 20
 Up many and many a marvelous shrine
 Whose wreathèd friezes intertwine
 The viol, the violet, and the vine.

² First published in 1831. Attention has been called to debts in the poem to Byron, Shelley, and the Bible (Isaiah and Revelation).

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melanchololy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves 30
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye—
Not the gayly-jeweled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea—
No heavings hint that winds have been 40
On seas less hideously serene.

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide—
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven.
The waves have now a redder glow—
The hours are breathing faint and low— 50
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

THE SLEEPER¹

At midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave; 10
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin molders into rest;

Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All Beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
Irene, with her Destinies!

Oh, lady bright! can it be right—
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs, from the tree-top, 20
Laughingly through the lattice drop—
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully—so fearfully—
Above the closed and fringed lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!
Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear? 30
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy, 40
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the pale sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold—
Some vault that oft hath flung its black 50
And wingèd panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls,
Of her grand family funerals—

Some sepulcher remote, alone, 10
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone—
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within. 60

¹ First published in 1831. Poe thought this poem superior "in the higher qualities of poetry" to *The Raven*.

THE RAVEN¹

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
 Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
 While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
 As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
 "'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
 Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;
 And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
 Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
 From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
 IO
 For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
 Nameless *here* for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
 Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
 So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
 "'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
 Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
 This it is and nothing more."

¹ First published in 1845. Probably begun not earlier than 1842; completed in the latter half of 1844. Poe probably was indebted to the second part of *Lady Geraldine's Courtship*, by Mrs. E. B. Browning, for the suggestion of his stanza, and also for the suggestion of his phrasing in more than one place in the poem. He was also indebted to Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge* for the suggestion of the raven. Poe's own account of the composition of *The Raven* is contained in his essay, *The Philosophy of Composition*. There has been much discussion as to whether or not Poe's account can be accepted, some critics regarding it as a hoax. Probably, however, the account should be regarded as on the whole veracious. The best statement of the probabilities in the case is to be found in *A Note on Poe's Method*, by P. E. More (*Studies in Philology*, XX, 302).

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
 "Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
 20
 But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
 And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
 That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door;—
 Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
 Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
 But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
 And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
 This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word "Lenore!"
 30
 Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
 Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
 "Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
 Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
 Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
 'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
 In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
 Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
 But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
 40
 Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—
 Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
 By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
 "Though thy crest be shorn and shaven,
 thou," I said, "art sure no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering
from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the
Night's Plutonian shore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marveled this ungainly fowl to hear
discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little
relevancy bore; 50
For we cannot help agreeing that no living
human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above
his chamber door,
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above
his chamber door—
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid
bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one
word he did outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered—not a
feather then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered, "Other
friends have flown before—
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my
Hopes have flown before."
Then the bird said, "Nevermore." 60

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so
aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its
only stock and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom
unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his
songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy
burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling my sad fancy
into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front
of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook
myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this omi-
nous bird of yore— 70
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt,
and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no
syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into
my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head
at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-
light gloated o'er,
But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-
light gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, per-
fumed from an unseen censer
Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled
on the tufted floor. 80
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee
—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy
memories of Lenore;
Quaff, oh, quaff this kind nepenthe, and for-
get this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet
still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest
tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert
land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me
truly, I implore—
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—
tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore." 90

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet
still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by
that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within
the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the
angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the
angels name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or
fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting—
"Get thee back into the tempest and the
Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie
thy soul hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the
 bust above my door! 100
 Take thy beak from out my heart, and take
 thy form from off my door!"
 Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting,
still is sitting
 On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my
 chamber door;
 And his eyes have all the seeming of a
 demon's that is dreaming,
 And the lamp-light o'er him streaming
 throws his shadow on the floor;
 And my soul from out that shadow that lies
 floating on the floor
 Shall be lifted—nevermore!

ULALUME¹

THE skies they were ashen and sober;
 The leaves they were crispèd and sere—
 The leaves they were withering and sere:
 It was night, in the lonesome October
 Of my most immemorial year:
 It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
 In the misty mid region of Weir—
 It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
 In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic, 10
 Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
 Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
 These were days when my heart was volcanic
 As the scoriac rivers that roll—
 As the lavas that restlessly roll
 Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
 In the ultimate climes of the pole—
 That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
 In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober, 20
 But our thoughts they were palsied and
 sere—
 Our memories were treacherous and sere;
 For we knew not the month was October,
 And we marked not the night of the year
 (Ah, night of all nights in the year!)

¹ First published in 1847. Killis Campbell (whose excellent edition of Poe's poems is indispensable to the serious student), after noting the wide differences of opinion which have existed concerning the meaning of this poem, concludes that "the central reference is to the poet's wife, and that the poem is a reflection of the grief occasioned either by her death or by the anticipation of her death (or both)."

We noted not the dim lake of Auber
 (Though once we had journeyed down
 here)—
 We remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
 Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent 30
 And star-dials pointed to morn—
 As the star-dials hinted of morn—
 At the end of our path a liquescent
 And nebulous luster was born,
 Out of which a miraculous crescent
 Arose with a duplicate horn—
 Astarte's bediamonded crescent
 Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said: "She is warmer than Dian;
 She rolls through an ether of sighs— 40
 She revels in a region of sighs:
 She has seen that the tears are not dry on
 These cheeks, where the worm never dies
 And has come past the stars of the Lion,
 To point us the path to the skies—
 To the Lethean peace of the skies—
 Come up, in despite of the Lion,
 To shine on us with her bright eyes—
 Come up through the lair of the Lion,
 With love in her luminous eyes." 50

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
 Said: "Sadly this star I mistrust—
 Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
 Ah, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
 Ah, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
 In terror she spoke, letting sink her
 Wings till they trailed in the dust—
 In agony sobbed, letting sink her
 Plumes till they trailed in the dust—
 Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust. 60

I replied: "This is nothing but dreaming:
 Let us on by this tremulous light!
 Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
 Its Sibyllic splendor is beaming
 With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—
 See! it flickers up the sky through the
 night!
 Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
 And be sure it will lead us aright—
 We surely may trust to a gleaming,
 That cannot but guide us aright, 70
 Since it flickers up to Heaven through the
 night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
 And tempted her out of her gloom—
 And conquered her scruples and gloom;
 And we passed to the end of the vista,
 But were stopped by the door of a tomb—
 By the door of a legended tomb;
 And I said: "What is written, sweet sister,
 On the door of this legended tomb?"
 She replied: "Ulalume—Ulalume!— 80
 'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
 As the leaves that were crispèd and sere—
 As the leaves that were withering and sere;
 And I cried: "It was surely October
 On *this* very night of last year
 That I journeyed—I journeyed down
 here—
 That I brought a dread burden down
 here—
 On this night of all nights in the year,
 Ah, what demon hath tempted me here? 90
 Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber—
 This misty mid region of Weir—
 Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
 This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

Said we, then—the two, then: "Ah, can it
 Have been that the woodlandish ghouls—
 The pitiful, the merciful ghouls—
 To bar up our way and to ban it
 From the secret that lies in these wolds—
 From the thing that lies hidden in these
 wolds— 100
 Have drawn up the specter of a planet
 From the limbo of lunary souls—
 This sinfully scintillant planet
 From the Hell of the planetary souls?"

THE BELLS¹

I

HEAR the sledges with the bells—
 Silver bells!
 What a world of merriment their melody
 foretells!
 How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
 In the icy air of night!

¹ First published in 1849. The first draft of this poem, consisting then only of 17 lines, was written in the summer of 1848 while Poe was visiting Mrs. M. L. Shew, in New York. Mrs. Shew asserted that she suggested the subject to Poe, and also contributed two lines to the poem.

While the stars, that oversprinkle
 All the heavens, seem to twinkle
 With a crystalline delight;
 Keeping time, time, time,
 In a sort of Runic rhyme, 10
 To the tintinnabulation that so musically
 wells
 From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells—
 From the jingling and the tinkling of the
 bells.

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells—
 Golden bells!
 What a world of happiness their harmony
 foretells!
 Through the balmy air of night
 How they ring out their delight!—
 From the molten-golden notes, 20
 And all in tune,
 What a liquid ditty floats
 To the turtle-dove that listens, while she
 gloats
 On the moon!
 Oh, from out the sounding cells,
 What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
 How it swells!
 How it dwells
 On the Future! how it tells
 Of the rapture that impels 30
 To the swinging and the ringing
 Of the bells, bells, bells—
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells—
 To the rhyming and the chiming of the
 bells!

III

Hear the loud alarum bells,
 Brazen bells!
 What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency
 tells!
 In the startled ear of night
 How they scream out their affright! 40
 Too much horrified to speak,
 They can only shriek, shriek,
 Out of tune,
 In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of
 the fire,
 In a mad expostulation with the deaf and
 frantic fire,
 Leaping higher, higher, higher,
 With a desperate desire,

And a resolute endeavor
 Now—now to sit, or never,
 By the side of the pale-faced moon. 50
 Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
 What a tale their terror tells
 Of Despair!
 How they clang, and clash, and roar!
 What a horror they outpour
 On the bosom of the palpitating air!
 Yet the ear, it fully knows,
 By the twanging
 And the clanging,
 How the danger ebbs and flows; 60
 Yet the ear distinctly tells,
 In the jangling
 And the wrangling,
 How the danger sinks and swells,
 By the sinking or the swelling in the anger
 of the bells—
 Of the bells,—
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells—
 In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV

Hear the tolling of the bells— 70
 Iron bells!
 What a world of solemn thought their
 monody compels!
 In the silence of the night,
 How we shiver with affright
 At the melancholy menace of their tone!
 For every sound that floats
 From the rust within their throats
 Is a groan.
 And the people—ah, the people—
 They that dwell up in the steeple, 80
 All alone,
 And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
 In that muffled monotone,
 Feel a glory in so rolling
 On the human heart a stone—
 They are neither man nor woman—
 They are neither brute nor human—
 They are Ghouls:—
 And their king it is who tolls:—
 And he rolls, rolls, rolls, 90
 Rolls
 A pæan from the bells!
 And his merry bosom swells
 With the pæan of the bells!
 And he dances, and he yells;

Keeping time, time, time,
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the pæan of the bells—
 Of the bells:
 Keeping time, time, time, 100
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the throbbing of the bells—
 Of the bells, bells, bells—
 To the sobbing of the bells;
 Keeping time, time, time,
 As he knells, knells, knells,
 In a happy Runic rhyme,
 To the rolling of the bells—
 Of the bells, bells, bells:—
 To the tolling of the bells— 110
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells—
 To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

ELDORADO¹

GAYLY bedight,
 A gallant knight,
 In sunshine and in shadow,
 Had journeyed long,
 Singing a song,
 In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
 This knight so bold—
 And o'er his heart a shadow
 Fell as he found 10
 No spot of ground
 That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
 Failed him at length,
 He met a pilgrim shadow—
 "Shadow," said he,
 "Where can it be—
 This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
 Of the Moon, 20
 Down the Valley of the Shadow,
 Ride, boldly ride,"
 The shade replied,—
 "If you seek for Eldorado!"

¹ First published in 1849.

FOR ANNIE¹

THANK Heaven! the crisis,
The danger, is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length—
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart:—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst:—
I have drank of a water
That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

¹ First published in 1849. The person named in the title was Mrs. Annie Richmond, of Lowell, Massachusetts. Poe met her in the fall of 1848. When he sent a copy to her he wrote that he considered it "much the best" poem he had ever written.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy
And narrow my bed;
For a man never slept
In a different bed—
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
Regretting, its roses—
Its old agitations
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odor,
Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
To keep me from harm—
To the queen of the angels
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
Now, in my bed
(Knowing her love),
That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
Now, in my bed
(With her love at my breast),
That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead:—

But my heart it is brighter
 Than all of the many
 Stars in the sky,
 For it sparkles with Annie—
 It glows with the light
 Of the love of my Annie— 100
 With the thought of the light
 Of the eyes of my Annie.

ANNABEL LEE¹

It was many and many a year ago,
 In a kingdom by the sea,
 That a maiden there lived whom you may
 know
 By the name of Annabel Lee;—
 And this maiden she lived with no other
 thought
 Than to love and be loved by me.

She was a child and *I* was a child,
 In this kingdom by the sea,
 But we loved with a love that was more than
 love—
 I and my Annabel Lee— 10
 With a love that the wingèd seraphs of
 Heaven
 Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
 In this kingdom by the sea,
 A wind blew out of a cloud by night
 Chilling my Annabel Lee;
 So that her highborn kinsmen came
 And bore her away from me,
 To shut her up in a sepulcher
 In this kingdom by the sea. 20

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
 Went envying her and me:—
 Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
 In this kingdom by the sea)
 That the wind came out of the cloud, chilling
 And killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the
 love
 Of those who were older than we—
 Of many far wiser than we—

¹ First published in 1849. There are several contemporary reports to the effect that this is the last poem which Poe wrote. Though other claims have been made, it is practically certain that this poem was written in memory of Virginia Clemm, Poe's wife.

And neither the angels in heaven above 30
 Nor the demons down under the sea
 Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:—

For the moon never beams without bringing
 me dreams
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
 And the stars never rise but I feel the bright
 eyes
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
 And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the
 side
 Of my darling, my darling, my life and my
 bride,
 In her sepulcher there by the sea, 40
 In her tomb by the side of the sea.

THE ASSIGNATION²

Stay for me there! I will not fail
 To meet thee in that hollow vale.

HENRY KING, BISHOP OF
 CHICHESTER: *The Exequy*.

ILL-FATED and mysterious man!—bewil-
 dered in the brilliancy of thine own imagina-
 tion, and fallen in the flames of thine own
 youth! Again in fancy I behold thee! Once
 more thy form hath risen before me!—not—
 oh, not as thou art—in the cold valley and
 shadow—but as thou *shouldst be*—squan-
 dering away a life of magnificent meditation
 in that city of dim visions, thine own Venice
 —which is a star-beloved Elysium of the sea,
 and the wide windows of whose Palladian
 palaces look down with a deep and bitter
 meaning upon the secrets of her silent waters.
 Yes! I repeat it—as thou *shouldst be*.
 There are surely other worlds than this—
 other thoughts than the thoughts of the mul-
 titude—other speculations than the specu-
 lations of the sophist. Who then shall call
 thy conduct into question? who blame thee
 for thy visionary hours, or denounce those
 occupations as a wasting away of life, which
 were but the overflowings of thine everlast-
 ing energies?

It was at Venice, beneath the covered
 archway there called the *Ponte di Sospiri*,
 that I met for the third or fourth time the
 person of whom I speak. It is with a con-

² First published in *Godey's Lady's Book*, January, 1834. Poe carefully revised his tales upon their re-publication, as he did his poems.

fused recollection that I bring to mind the circumstances of that meeting. Yet I remember—ah! how should I forget?—the deep midnight, the Bridge of Sighs, the beauty of woman, and the Genius of Romance that stalked up and down the narrow canal.

It was a night of unusual bloom. The great clock of the Piazza had sounded the fifth hour of the Italian evening. The square of the Campanile lay silent and deserted, and the lights in the old Ducal Palace were dying fast away. I was returning home from the Piazzetta, by way of the Grand Canal. But as my gondola arrived opposite the mouth of the canal San Marco, a female voice from its recesses broke suddenly upon the night, in one wild, hysterical, and long-continued shriek. Startled at the sound, I sprang upon my feet; while the gondolier, letting slip his single oar, lost it in the pitchy darkness beyond a chance of recovery, and we were consequently left to the guidance of the current which here sets from the greater into the smaller channel. Like some huge and sable-feathered condor, we were slowly drifting down towards the Bridge of Sighs, when a thousand flambeaux flashing from the windows, and down the staircases of the Ducal Palace, turned all at once that deep gloom into a livid and preternatural day.

A child, slipping from the arms of its own mother, had fallen from an upper window of the lofty structure into the deep and dim canal. The quiet waters had closed placidly over their victim; and, although my own gondola was the only one in sight, many a stout swimmer, already in the stream, was seeking in vain upon the surface the treasure which was to be found, alas! only within the abyss. Upon the broad black marble flagstones at the entrance of the palace, and a few steps above the water, stood a figure which none who then saw can have ever since forgotten. It was the Marchesa Aphrodite—the adoration of all Venice—the gayest of the gay—the most lovely where all were beautiful—but still the young wife of the old and intriguing Mentoni, and the mother of that fair child, her first and only one, who now, deep beneath the murky water, was thinking in bitterness of heart upon her sweet caresses, and exhausting its little life in struggles to call upon her name.

She stood alone. Her small, bare and

silvery feet gleamed in the black mirror of marble beneath her. Her hair, not as yet more than half loosened for the night from its ball-room array, clustered, amid a shower of diamonds, round and round her classical head, in curls like those of the young hyacinth. A snowy-white and gauze-like drape seemed to be nearly the sole covering to her delicate form; but the midsummer and midnight air was hot, sullen, and still, and no motion in the statue-like form itself stirred even the folds of that raiment of very vapor which hung around it as the heavy marble hangs around the Niobe. Yet, strange to say, her large lustrous eyes were not turned downwards upon that grave wherein her brightest hope lay buried—but riveted in a widely different direction! The prison of the Old Republic is, I think, the stateliest building in all Venice—but how could that lady gaze so fixedly upon it, when beneath her lay stifling her only child? Yon dark, gloomy niche, too, yawns right opposite her chamber window—what, then, *could* there be in its shadows, in its architecture, in its ivy-wreathed and solemn cornices, that the Marchesa di Mentoni had not wondered at a thousand times before? Nonsense!—Who does not remember that, at such a time as this, the eye, like a shattered mirror, multiplies the images of its sorrow, and sees in innumerable far-off places the woe which is close at hand?

Many steps above the Marchesa, and within the arch of the water-gate, stood, in full dress, the satyr-like figure of Mentoni himself. He was occasionally occupied in thrumming a guitar, and seemed *ennuyé* to the very death as at intervals he gave directions for the recovery of his child. Stupefied and aghast, I had myself no power to move from the upright position I had assumed upon first hearing the shriek, and must have presented to the eyes of the agitated group a spectral and ominous appearance, as with pale countenance and rigid limbs I floated down among them in that funereal gondola.

All efforts proved in vain. Many of the most energetic in the search were relaxing their exertions, and yielding to a gloomy sorrow. There seemed but little hope for the child (how much less then for the mother!); but now, from the interior of that dark niche which has been already mentioned as form-

ing a part of the Old Republican prison, and as fronting the lattice of the Marchesa, a figure muffled in a cloak stepped out within reach of the light, and, pausing a moment upon the verge of the giddy descent, plunged headlong into the canal. As in an instant afterwards he stood, with the still living and breathing child within his grasp, upon the marble flagstones by the side of the Marchesa, his cloak, heavy with the drenching water, became unfastened, and, falling in folds about his feet, discovered to the wonder-stricken spectators the graceful person of a very young man, with the sound of whose name the greater part of Europe was then ringing.

No word spoke the deliverer. But the Marchesa! She will now receive her child—she will press it to her heart—she will cling to its little form, and smother it with her caresses. Alas! *another's* arms have taken it from the stranger—*another's* arms have taken it away and borne it afar off, unnoticed, into the palace! And the Marchesa! Her lip—her beautiful lip trembles; tears are gathering in her eyes—those eyes which, like Pliny's acanthus, are "soft and almost liquid." Yes, tears are gathering in those eyes—and see! the entire woman thrills throughout the soul, and the statue has started into life! The pallor of the marble countenance, the swelling of the marble bosom, the very purity of the marble feet, we behold suddenly flushed over with a tide of ungovernable crimson; and a slight shudder quivers about her delicate frame, as a gentle air at Napoli about the rich silver lilies in the grass.

Why *should* that lady blush? To this demand there is no answer—except that, having left, in the eager haste and terror of a mother's heart, the privacy of her own boudoir, she has neglected to enthrall her tiny feet in their slippers, and utterly forgotten to throw over her Venetian shoulders that drapery which is their due. What other possible reason could there have been for her so blushing?—for the glance of those wild appealing eyes? for the unusual tumult of that throbbing bosom? for the convulsive pressure of that trembling hand—that hand which fell, as Mentoni turned into the palace, accidentally upon the hand of the stranger? What reason could there have been for the

low—the singularly low tone of those unmeaning words which the lady uttered hurriedly in bidding him adieu? "Thou hast conquered," she said, or the murmurs of the water deceived me; "thou hast conquered—one hour after sunrise—we shall meet—so let it be!"

The tumult had subsided, the lights had died away within the palace, and the stranger, whom I now recognized, stood alone upon the flags. He shook with inconceivable agitation, and his eye glanced around in search of a gondola. I could not do less than offer him the service of my own; and he accepted the civility. Having obtained an oar at the water-gate, we proceeded together to his residence, while he rapidly recovered his self-possession, and spoke of our former slight acquaintance in terms of great apparent cordiality.

There are some subjects upon which I take pleasure in being minute. The person of the stranger—let me call him by this title, who to all the world was still a stranger—the person of the stranger is one of these subjects. In height he might have been below rather than above the medium size; although there were moments of intense passion when his frame actually *expanded* and belied the assertion. The light, almost slender, symmetry of his figure promised more of that ready activity which he evinced at the Bridge of Sighs, than of that Herculean strength which he has been known to wield without an effort, upon occasions of more dangerous emergency. With the mouth and chin of a deity—singular, wild, full, liquid eyes, whose shadows varied from pure hazel to intense and brilliant jet—and a profusion of curling, black hair, from which a forehead of unusual breadth gleamed forth at intervals all light and ivory—his were features than which I have seen none more classically regular, except, perhaps, the marble ones of the Emperor Commodus. Yet his countenance was, nevertheless, one of those which all men have seen at some period of their lives, and have never afterwards seen again. It had no peculiar—it had no settled predominant expression to be fastened upon the memory; a countenance seen and instantly forgotten, but forgotten with a vague and never-ceasing desire of recalling it to mind.

Not that the spirit of each rapid passion failed, at any time, to throw its own distinct image upon the mirror of that face; but that the mirror, mirror-like, retained no vestige of the passion, when the passion had departed.

Upon leaving him on the night of our adventure, he solicited me, in what I thought an urgent manner, to call upon him *very* early the next morning. Shortly after sunrise I found myself accordingly at his Palazzo, one of those huge structures of gloomy, yet fantastic pomp, which tower above the waters of the Grand Canal in the vicinity of the Rialto. I was shown up a broad, winding staircase of mosaics, into an apartment whose unparalleled splendor burst through the opening door with an actual glare, making me blind and dizzy with luxuriousness.

I knew my acquaintance to be wealthy. Report had spoken of his possessions in terms which I had even ventured to call terms of ridiculous exaggeration. But as I gazed about me, I could not bring myself to believe that the wealth of any subject in Europe could have supplied the princely magnificence which burned and blazed around.

Although, as I say, the sun had arisen, yet the room was still brilliantly lighted up. I judged from this circumstance, as well as from an air of exhaustion in the countenance of my friend, that he had not retired to bed during the whole of the preceding night. In the architecture and embellishments of the chamber, the evident design had been to dazzle and astound. Little attention had been paid to the *decora*. of what is technically called *keeping*, or to the proprieties of nationality. The eye wandered from object to object, and rested upon none—neither the grotesques of the Greek painters, nor the sculptures of the best Italian days, nor the huge carvings of untutored Egypt. Rich draperies in every part of the room trembled to the vibration of low, melancholy music, whose origin was not to be discovered. The senses were oppressed by mingled and conflicting perfumes, reeking up from strange convolute censers, together with multitudinous flaring and flickering tongues of emerald and violet fire. The rays of the newly risen sun poured in upon the whole, through windows formed each of a single pane of crimson-tinted glass. Glancing to and fro in a thousand reflections, from cur-

tains which rolled from their cornices like cataracts of molten silver, the beams of natural glory mingled at length fitfully with the artificial light, and lay weltering in subdued masses upon a carpet of rich, liquid-looking cloth of Chili gold.

“Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!”—laughed the proprietor, motioning me to a seat as I entered the room, and throwing himself back at full length upon an ottoman. “I see,” said he, perceiving that I could not immediately reconcile myself to the *bien-séance* of so singular a welcome—“I see you are astonished at my apartment—at my statues—my pictures—my originality of conception in architecture and upholstery—absolutely drunk, eh, with my magnificence? But pardon me, my dear sir” (here his tone of voice dropped to the very spirit of cordiality), “pardon me for my uncharitable laughter. You appeared so *utterly* astonished. Besides, some things are so completely ludicrous that a man *must* laugh, or die. To die laughing must be the most glorious of all glorious deaths! Sir Thomas More—a very fine man was Sir Thomas More—Sir Thomas More died laughing, you remember. Also in the *Absurdities* of Ravisius Textor there is a long list of characters who came to the same magnificent end. Do you know, however,” continued he musingly, “that at Sparta—which is now Palæochori—at Sparta, I say, to the west of the citadel, among a chaos of scarcely visible ruins, is a kind of *socle* upon which are still legible the letters ΛΑΣΜ. They are undoubtedly part of ΓΕΛΑΣΜΑ. Now at Sparta were a thousand temples and shrines to a thousand different divinities. How exceedingly strange that the altar of Laughter should have survived all the others! But in the present instance,” he resumed, with a singular alteration of voice and manner, “I have no right to be merry at your expense. You might well have been amazed. Europe cannot produce anything so fine as this, my little regal cabinet. My other apartments are by no means of the same order—mere *ultras* of fashionable insipidity. This is better than fashion, is it not? Yet this has but to be seen to become the rage—that is, with those who could afford it at the cost of their entire patrimony. I have guarded, however, against any such profanation. With one exception you are the only human

being, besides myself and my valet, who has been admitted within the mysteries of these imperial precincts, since they have been bedizened as you see!"

I bowed in acknowledgment: for the overpowering sense of splendor and perfume and music, together with the unexpected eccentricity of his address and manner, prevented me from expressing, in words, my appreciation of what I might have construed into a compliment.

"Here," he resumed, arising and leaning on my arm as he sauntered around the apartment,—“here are paintings from the Greeks to Cimabue, and from Cimabue to the present hour. Many are chosen, as you see, with little deference to the opinions of Virtù. They are all, however, fitting tapestry for a chamber such as this. Here, too, are some *chefs d'œuvre* of the unknown great; and here, unfinished designs by men, celebrated in their day, whose very names the perspicacity of the academies has left to silence and to me. What think you,” said he, turning abruptly as he spoke—“what think you of this Madonna della Pietà?”

“It is Guido’s own!” I said, with all the enthusiasm of my nature, for I had been poring intently over its surpassing loveliness. “It is Guido’s own!—how *could* you have obtained it?—she is undoubtedly in painting what the Venus is in sculpture.”

“Ha!” said he, thoughtfully, “the Venus—the beautiful Venus?—the Venus of the Medici?—she of the diminutive head and the gilded hair? Part of the left arm,” (here his voice dropped so as to be heard with difficulty) “and all the right, are restorations; and in the coquetry of that right arm lies, I think, the quintessence of all affectation. Give *me* the Canova! The Apollo, too, is a copy—there can be no doubt of it—blind fool that I am, who cannot behold the boasted inspiration of the Apollo! I cannot help—pity me!—I cannot help preferring the Antinous. Was it not Socrates who said that the statuary found his statue in the block of marble? Then Michel Angelo was by no means original in his couplet—

*Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto
Chè un marmo solo in se non circonscriva.*”¹

¹ The best artist has no conception which a block of marble by itself does not contain.

It has been or should be remarked that, in the manner of the true gentleman, we are always aware of a difference from the bearing of the vulgar, without being at once precisely able to determine in what such difference consists. Allowing the remark to have applied in its full force to the outward demeanor of my acquaintance, I felt it, on that eventful morning, still more fully applicable to his moral temperament and character. Nor can I better define that peculiarity of spirit which seemed to place him so essentially apart from all other human beings, than by calling it a *habit* of intense and continual thought, pervading even his most trivial actions, intruding upon his moments of dalliance, and interweaving itself with his very flashes of merriment—like adders which writhe from out the eyes of the grinning masks in the cornices around the temples of Persepolis.

I could not help, however, repeatedly observing, through the mingled tone of levity and solemnity with which he rapidly descanted upon matters of little importance, a certain air of trepidation—a degree of nervous *unction* in action and in speech—an unquiet excitability of manner which appeared to me at all times unaccountable, and upon some occasions even filled me with alarm. Frequently, too, pausing in the middle of a sentence whose commencement he had apparently forgotten, he seemed to be listening in the deepest attention, as if either in momentary expectation of a visitor, or to sounds which must have had existence in his imagination alone.

It was during one of these reveries or pauses of apparent abstraction, that, in turning over a page of the poet and scholar Politian’s beautiful tragedy, the *Orfeo* (the first native Italian tragedy); which lay near me upon an ottoman, I discovered a passage underlined in pencil. It was a passage towards the end of the third act—a passage of the most heart-stirring excitement—a passage which, although tainted with impurity, no man shall read without a thrill of novel emotion, no woman without a sigh. The whole page was blotted with fresh tears; and upon the opposite interleaf were the following English lines, written in a hand so very different from the peculiar characters of my acquaint-

ance that I had some difficulty in recognizing it as his own:

Thou wast all that to me, love,
For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast! .
A voice from out the Future cries, 10
"On! On!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
"No more—no more—no more"
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar! 20

Now all my hours are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy gray eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what Italian streams.

Alas! for that accursèd time
They bore thee o'er the billow,
From Love to titled age and crime
And an unholy pillow: 30
From me, and from our misty clime
Where weeps the silver willow.

That these lines were written in English, a language with which I had not believed their author acquainted, afforded me little matter for surprise. I was too well aware of the extent of his acquirements, and of the singular pleasure he took in concealing them from observation, to be astonished at any similar discovery; but the place of date, I must confess, occasioned me no little amazement. It had been originally written *London*, and afterwards carefully overscored—not, however, so effectually as to conceal the word from a scrutinizing eye. I say, this occasioned me no little amazement; for I well remember that, in a former conversation

with my friend, I particularly inquired if he had at any time met in London the Marchesa di Mentoni (who for some years previous to her marriage had resided in that city), when his answer, if I mistake not, gave me to understand that he had never visited the metropolis of Great Britain. I might as well here mention that I have more than once heard (without, of course, giving credit to a report involving so many improbabilities), that the person of whom I speak was not only by birth, but in education, an *Englishman*.

"There is one painting," said he, without being aware of my notice of the tragedy—"there is still one painting which you have not seen." And throwing aside a drapery, he discovered a full-length portrait of the Marchesa Aphrodite.

Human art could have done no more in the delineation of her superhuman beauty. The same ethereal figure which stood before me the preceding night, upon the steps of the Ducal Palace, stood before me once again. But in the expression of the countenance, which was beaming all over with smiles, there still lurked (incomprehensible anomaly!) that fitful stain of melancholy which will ever be found inseparable from the perfection of the beautiful. Her right arm lay folded over her bosom. With her left she pointed downward to a curiously fashioned vase. One small, fairy foot, alone visible, barely touched the earth; and, scarcely discernible in the brilliant atmosphere which seemed to encircle and enshrine her loveliness, floated a pair of the most delicately imagined wings. My glance fell from the painting to the figure of my friend, and the vigorous words of Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois* quivered instinctively upon my lips:

I am up;
Here like a Roman statue I will stand
Till death hath made me marble!

"Come," he said at length, turning towards a table of richly enameled and massive silver, upon which were a few goblets fantastically stained, together with two large Etruscan vases, fashioned in the same extraordinary model as that in the foreground of the portrait, and filled with what I supposed to be Johannisberger. "Come," he said abruptly, "let us drink! It is early,

but let us drink. It is *indeed* early," he continued musingly, as a cherub with a heavy golden hammer made the apartment ring with the first hour after sunrise—"it is *indeed* early, but what matters it? let us drink! Let us pour out an offering to yon solemn sun which these gaudy lamps and censers are so eager to subdue!" And, having made me pledge him in a bumper, he swallowed in rapid succession several goblets of the wine.

"To dream," he continued, resuming the tone of his desultory conversation, as he held up to the rich light of a censer one of the magnificent vases—"to dream has been the business of my life. I have therefore framed for myself, as you see, a bower of dreams. In the heart of Venice could I have erected a better? You behold around you, it is true, a medley of architectural embellishments. The chastity of Ionia is offended by antediluvian devices, and the sphinxes of Egypt are outstretched upon carpets of gold. Yet the effect is incongruous to the timid alone. Proprieties of place, and especially of time, are the bugbears which terrify mankind from the contemplation of the magnificent. Once I was myself a decorator; but that sublimation of folly has palled upon my soul. All this is now the fitter for my purpose. Like these arabesque censers, my spirit is writhing in fire, and the delirium of this scene is fashioning me for the wilder visions of that land of real dreams whither I am now rapidly departing." He here paused abruptly, bent his head to his bosom, and seemed to listen to a sound which I could not hear. At length, erecting his frame, he looked upwards, and ejaculated the lines of the Bishop of Chester:

*Stay for me there! I will not fail
To meet thee in that hollow vale.*

In the next instant, confessing the power of the wine, he threw himself at full length upon an ottoman.

A quick step was now heard upon the staircase, and a loud knock at the door rapidly succeeded. I was hastening to anticipate a second disturbance, when a page of Mentoni's household burst into the room, and faltered out, in a voice choking with emotion, the incoherent words, "My mistress!—my mistress!—Poisoned!—poisoned! Oh, beautiful—oh, beautiful Aphrodite!"

Bewildered, I flew to the ottoman, and endeavored to arouse the sleeper to a sense of the startling intelligence. But his limbs were rigid—his lips were livid—his lately beaming eyes were riveted in *death*. I staggered back towards the table—my hand fell upon a cracked and blackened goblet—and a consciousness of the entire and terrible truth flashed suddenly over my soul.

LIGEIA¹

And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield himself to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will.—JOSEPH GLANVILL.

I CANNOT, for my soul, remember how, when, or even precisely where, I first became acquainted with the lady Ligeia. Long years have since elapsed, and my memory is feeble through much suffering. Or, perhaps, I cannot *now* bring these points to mind, because, in truth, the character of my beloved, her rare learning, her singular yet placid cast of beauty, and the thrilling and enthralling eloquence of her low musical language, made their way into my heart by paces so steadily and stealthily progressive that they have been unnoticed and unknown. Yet I believe that I met her first and most frequently in some large, old, decaying city near the Rhine. Of her family I have surely heard her speak. That it is of a remotely ancient date cannot be doubted. Ligeia! Ligeia! Buried in studies of a nature more than all else adapted to deaden impressions of the outward world, it is by that sweet word alone—by Ligeia—that I bring before mine eyes in fancy the

¹ First published in *The American Museum*, September, 1838. According to Woodberry, Poe regarded this "as his finest tale." In it "he incarnated the motions of the breeze and the musical voices of nature in the form of a woman: but the Lady Ligeia has still no human quality; her aspirations, her thoughts and capabilities, are those of a spirit; the very beam and glitter and silence of her ineffable eyes belong to the visionary world. She is, in fact, . . . the air-woven divinity in which he believed. . . . In revealing through *Ligeia* the awful might of the soul in the victory of its will over death and in the eternity of its love, Poe worked in the very element of his reverie, in the liberty of a world as he would have had it." (G. E. Woodberry's *Life of Poe*, I, 226-227.)

image of her who is no more. And now, while I write, a recollection flashes upon me that I have *never known* the paternal name of her who was my friend and my betrothed, and who became the partner of my studies, and finally the wife of my bosom. Was it a playful charge on the part of my Ligeia? or was it a test of my strength of affection, that I should institute no inquiries upon this point? or was it rather a caprice of my own—a wildly romantic offering on the shrine of the most passionate devotion? I but indistinctly recall the fact itself—what wonder that I have utterly forgotten the circumstances which originated or attended it? And, indeed, if ever that spirit which is entitled *Romance*—if ever she, the wan and the misty-winged Ashtophet of idolatrous Egypt, presided, as they tell, over marriages ill-omened, then most surely she presided over mine.

There is one dear topic, however, on which my memory fails me not. It is the *person* of Ligeia. In stature she was tall, somewhat slender, and, in her latter days, even emaciated. I would in vain attempt to portray the majesty, the quiet ease, of her demeanor, or the incomprehensible lightness and elasticity of her footfall. She came and departed as a shadow. I was never made aware of her entrance into my closed study, save by the dear music of her low sweet voice, as she placed her marble hand upon my shoulder. In beauty of face no maiden ever equaled her. It was the radiance of an opium-dream—an airy and spirit-lifting vision more wildly divine than the fantasies which hovered about the slumbering souls of the daughters of Delos. Yet her features were not of that regular mold which we have been falsely taught to worship in the classical labors of the heathen. "There is no exquisite beauty," says Bacon, Lord Verulam, speaking truly of all the forms and genera of beauty, "without some *strangeness* in the proportion." Yet, although I saw that the features of Ligeia were not of a classic regularity—although I perceived that her loveliness was indeed "exquisite," and felt that there was much of "strangeness" pervading it, yet I have tried in vain to detect the irregularity and to trace home my own perception of "the strange." I examined the contour of the lofty and pale forehead: it was faultless—how cold indeed that word when

applied to a majesty so divine!—the skin rivaling the purest ivory, the commanding extent and repose, the gentle prominence of the regions above the temples; and then the raven-black, the glossy, the luxuriant, and naturally-curling tresses, setting forth the full force of the Homeric epithet, "hyacinthine"! I looked at the delicate outlines of the nose—and nowhere but in the graceful medallions of the Hebrews had I beheld a similar perfection. There were the same luxurious smoothness of surface, the same scarcely perceptible tendency to the aquiline, the same harmoniously curved nostrils speaking the free spirit. I regarded the sweet mouth. Here was indeed the triumph of all things heavenly—the magnificent turn of the short upper lip—the soft, voluptuous slumber of the under—the dimples which sported, and the color which spoke—the teeth glancing back, with a brilliancy almost startling, every ray of the holy light which fell upon them in her serene and placid, yet most exultingly radiant of all smiles. I scrutinized the formation of the chin: and here, too, I found the gentleness of breadth, the softness and the majesty, the fullness and the spirituality, of the Greek—the contour which the god Apollo revealed but in a dream to Cleomenes, the son of the Athenian. And then I peered into the large eyes of Ligeia.

For eyes we have no models in the remotely antique. It might have been, too, that in these eyes of my beloved lay the secret to which Lord Verulam alludes. They were, I must believe, far larger than the ordinary eyes of our own race. They were even fuller than the fullest of the gazelle eyes of the tribe of the valley of Nourjahad. Yet it was only at intervals—in moments of intense excitement—that this peculiarity became more than slightly noticeable in Ligeia. And at such moments was her beauty—in my heated fancy thus it appeared perhaps—the beauty of beings either above or apart from the earth, the beauty of the fabulous Houri of the Turk. The hue of the orbs was the most brilliant of black, and, far over them, hung jetty lashes of great length. The brows, slightly irregular in outline, had the same tint. The "strangeness," however, which I found in the eyes, was of a nature distinct from the formation, or the color, or the brilliancy of the features, and must, after

all, be referred to the *expression*. Ah, word of no meaning! behind whose vast latitude of mere sound we intrench our ignorance of so much of the spiritual. The expression of the eyes of Ligeia! How for long hours have I pondered upon it! How have I, through the whole of a midsummer night, struggled to fathom it! What was it—that something more profound than the well of Democritus—which lay far within the pupils of my beloved? What *was* it? I was possessed with a passion to discover. Those eyes! those large, those shining, those divine orbs! they became to me twin stars of Leda, and I to them devoutest of astrologers.

There is no point, among the many incomprehensible anomalies of the science of mind, more thrillingly exciting than the fact—never, I believe, noticed in the schools—that in our endeavors to recall to memory something long forgotten, we often find ourselves *upon the very verge* of remembrance, without being able, in the end, to remember. And thus how frequently, in my intense scrutiny of Ligeia's eyes, have I felt approaching the full knowledge of their expression—felt it approaching, yet not quite be mine, and so at length entirely depart! And (strange, oh, strangest mystery of all!) I found, in the commonest objects of the universe, a circle of analogies to that expression. I mean to say that, subsequently to the period when Ligeia's beauty passed into my spirit, there dwelling as in a shrine, I derived, from many existences in the material world, a sentiment such as I felt always aroused within me by her large and luminous orbs. Yet not the more could I define that sentiment, or analyze, or even steadily view it. I recognized it, let me repeat, sometimes in the survey of a rapidly growing vine—in the contemplation of a moth, a butterfly, a chrysalis, a stream of running water. I have felt it in the ocean; in the falling of a meteor. I have felt it in the glances of unusually aged people. And there are one or two stars in heaven (one especially, a star of the sixth magnitude, double and changeable, to be found near the large star in Lyra), in a telescopic scrutiny of which I have been made aware of the feeling. I have been filled with it by certain sounds from stringed instruments,

and not unfrequently by passages from books. Among innumerable other instances, I well remember something in a volume of Joseph Glanvill, which (perhaps merely from its quaintness—who shall say?) never failed to inspire me with the sentiment: "And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

Length of years and subsequent reflection have enabled me to trace, indeed, some remote connection between this passage in the English moralist and a portion of the character of Ligeia. An *intensity* in thought, action, or speech, was possibly, in her, a result, or at least an index, of that gigantic volition which, during our long intercourse, failed to give other and more immediate evidence of its existence. Of all the women whom I have ever known, she, the outwardly calm, the ever-placid Ligeia, was the most violently a prey to the tumultuous vultures of stern passion. And of such passion I could form no estimate, save by the miraculous expansion of those eyes which at once so delighted and appalled me—by the almost magical melody, modulation, distinctness, and placidity of her very low voice—and by the fierce energy (rendered doubly effective by contrast with her manner of utterance) of the wild words which she habitually uttered.

I have spoken of the learning of Ligeia: it was immense—such as I have never known in woman. In the classical tongues was she deeply proficient, and as far as my own acquaintance extended in regard to the modern dialects of Europe, I have never known her at fault. Indeed upon any theme of the most admired, because simply the most abstruse of the boasted erudition of the academy, have I *ever* found Ligeia at fault? How singularly, how thrillingly, this one point in the nature of my wife has forced itself, at this late period only, upon my attention! I said her knowledge was such as I have never known in woman—but where breathes the man who has traversed, and successfully, *all* the wide areas of moral, physical, and mathematical science? I saw

not then what I now clearly perceive, that the acquisitions of Ligeia were gigantic, were astounding; yet I was sufficiently aware of her infinite supremacy to resign myself, with a childlike confidence, to her guidance through the chaotic world of metaphysical investigation at which I was most busily occupied during the earlier years of our marriage. With how vast a triumph, with how vivid a delight, with how much of all that is ethereal in hope, did I *feel*, as she bent over me in studies but little sought—but less known—that delicious vista by slow degrees expanding before me, down whose long, gorgeous, and all untrodden path, I might at length pass onward to the goal of a wisdom too divinely precious not to be forbidden!

How poignant, then, must have been the grief with which, after some years, I beheld my well-grounded expectations take wings to themselves and fly away! Without Ligeia I was but as a child groping benighted. Her presence, her readings alone, rendered vividly luminous the many mysteries of the transcendentalism in which we were immersed. Wanting the radiant luster of her eyes, letters, lambent and golden, grew duller than Saturnian lead. And now those eyes shone less and less frequently upon the pages over which I pored. Ligeia grew ill. The wild eyes blazed with a too—too glorious effulgence; the pale fingers became of the transparent waxen hue of the grave; and the blue veins upon the lofty forehead swelled and sank impetuously with the tides of the most gentle emotion. I saw that she must die—and I struggled desperately in spirit with the grim Azrael. And the struggles of the passionate wife were, to my astonishment, even more energetic than my own. There had been much in her stern nature to impress me with the belief that, to her, death would have come without its terrors; but not so. Words are impotent to convey any just idea of the fierceness of resistance with which she wrestled with the Shadow. I groaned in anguish at the pitiable spectacle. I would have soothed—I would have reasoned; but, in the intensity of her wild desire for life—for life—but for life—solace and reason were alike the uttermost of folly. Yet not until the last instance, amid the most convulsive writhings of her fierce spirit, was

shaken the external placidity of her demeanor. Her voice grew more gentle—grew more low—yet I would not wish to dwell upon the wild meaning of the quietly uttered words. My brain reeled as I harkened, entranced, to a melody more than mortal—to assumptions and aspirations which mortality had never before known.

That she loved me I should not have doubted; and I might have been easily aware that, in a bosom such as hers, love would have reigned no ordinary passion. But in death only was I fully impressed with the strength of her affection. For long hours, detaining my hand, would she pour out before me the overflowing of a heart whose more than passionate devotion amounted to idolatry. How had I deserved to be so blessed by such confessions? How had I deserved to be so cursed with the removal of my beloved in the hour of her making them? But upon this subject I cannot bear to dilate. Let me say only, that in Ligeia's more than womanly abandonment to a love, alas! all unmerited, all unworthily bestowed, I at length recognized the principle of her longing, with so wildly earnest a desire, for the life which was now fleeing so rapidly away. It is this wild longing, it is this eager vehemence of desire for life—but for life, that I have no power to portray, no utterance capable of expressing.

At high noon of the night in which she departed, beckoning me peremptorily to her side, she bade me repeat certain verses composed by herself not many days before. I obeyed her. They were these:

Lo! 'tis a gala night

Within the lonesome latter years!

An angel throng, bewinged, bedight

In veils, and drowned in tears,

Sit in a theater, to see

A play of hopes and fears,

While the orchestra breathes fitfully

The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of Godon high,

Mutter and mumble low,

And hither and thither fly—

Mere puppets they, who come and go

At bidding of vast formless things

That shift the scenery to and fro,

Flapping from out their condor wings

Invisible Woe!

That motley drama—oh, be sure
 It shall not be forgot!
 With its Phantom chased for evermore,
 By a crowd that seize it not, 20
 Through a circle that ever returneth in
 To the self-same spot,
 And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
 And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout
 A crawling shape intrude!
 A blood-red thing that writhes from out
 The scenic solitude!
 It writhes—it writhes! with mortal pangs
 The mimes become its food, 30
 And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
 In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
 And over each quivering form
 The curtain, a funeral pall,
 Comes down with the rush of a storm,
 While the angels, all pallid and wan,
 Uprising, unveiling, affirm
 That the play is the tragedy, “Man,”
 And its hero, the Conqueror Worm. 40

“O God!” half shrieked Ligeia, leaping to her feet and extending her arms aloft with a spasmodic movement, as I made an end of these lines—“O God! O Divine Father! shall these things be undeviatingly so? shall this Conqueror be not once conquered? Are we not part and parcel in Thee? Who—who knoweth the mysteries of the will with its vigor? ‘Man doth not yield him to the angels, *nor unto death utterly* save only through the weakness of his feeble will.’”

And now, as if exhausted with emotion, she suffered her white arms to fall, and returned solemnly to her bed of death. And as she breathed her last sighs, there came mingled with them a low murmur from her lips. I bent to them my ear, and distinguished, again, the concluding words of the passage in Glanvill: “*Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will.*”

She died: and I, crushed into the very dust with sorrow, could no longer endure the lonely desolation of my dwelling in the dim and decaying city by the Rhine. I had no lack of what the world calls wealth. Ligeia had brought me far more, very far

more, than ordinarily falls to the lot of mortals. After a few months, therefore, of weary and aimless wandering, I purchased, and put in some repair, an abbey, which I shall not name, in one of the wildest and least frequented portions of fair England. The gloomy and dreary grandeur of the building, the almost savage aspect of the domain, the many melancholy and time-honored memories connected with both, had much in unison with the feelings of utter abandonment which had driven me into that remote and unsocial region of the country. Yet although the external abbey, with its verdant decay hanging about it, suffered but little alteration, I gave way with a child-like perversity, and perchance with a faint hope of alleviating my sorrows, to a display of more than regal magnificence within. For such follies, even in childhood, I had imbibed a taste, and now they came back to me as if in the dotage of grief. Alas, I feel how much even of incipient madness might have been discovered in the gorgeous and fantastic draperies, in the solemn carvings of Egypt, in the wild cornices and furniture, in the Bedlam patterns of the carpets of tufted gold! I had become a bounden slave in the trammels of opium, and my labors and my orders had taken a coloring from my dreams. But these absurdities I must not pause to detail. Let me speak only of that one chamber, ever accursed, whither, in a moment of mental alienation, I led from the altar as my bride—as the successor of the unforgotten Ligeia—the fair-haired and blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion, of Tremaine.

There is no individual portion of the architecture and decoration of that bridal chamber which is not now visibly before me. Where were the souls of the haughty family of the bride, when, through thirst of gold, they permitted to pass the threshold of an apartment so bedecked, a maiden and a daughter so beloved? I have said that I minutely remember the details of the chamber—yet I am sadly forgetful on topics of deep moment; and here there was no system, no keeping, in the fantastic display, to take hold upon the memory. The room lay in a high turret of the castellated abbey, was pentagonal in shape, and of capacious size. Occupying the whole southern face

of the pentagon was the sole window—an immense sheet of unbroken glass from Venice—a single pane, and tinted of a leaden hue, so that the rays of either the sun or moon, passing through it, fell with a ghastly luster on the objects within. Over the upper portion of this huge window extended the trellis-work of an aged vine, which clambered up the massy walls of the turret. The ceiling, of gloomy-looking oak, was excessively lofty, vaulted, and elaborately fretted with the wildest and most grotesque specimens of a semi-Gothic, semi-Druidical device. From out the most central recess of this melancholy vaulting depended, by a single chain of gold with long links, a huge censer of the same metal, Saracenic in pattern, and with many perforations so contrived that there writhed in and out of them, as if endued with a serpent vitality, a continual succession of parti-colored fires.

Some few ottomans and golden candelabra, of Eastern figure, were in various stations about; and there was the couch, too—the bridal couch—of an Indian model, and low, and sculptured of solid ebony, with a pall-like canopy above. In each of the angles of the chamber stood on end a gigantic sarcophagus of black granite, from the tombs of the kings over against Luxor, with their aged lids full of immemorial sculpture. But in the draping of the apartment lay, alas! the chief fantasy of all. The lofty walls, gigantic in height, even unproportionably so, were hung from summit to foot, in vast folds, with a heavy and massive-looking tapestry—tapestry of a material which was found alike as a carpet on the floor, as a covering for the ottomans and the ebony bed, as a canopy for the bed, and as the gorgeous volutes of the curtains which partially shaded the window. The material was the richest cloth of gold. It was spotted all over, at irregular intervals, with arabesque figures, about a foot in diameter, and wrought upon the cloth in patterns of the most jetty black. But these figures partook of the true character of the arabesque only when regarded from a single point of view. By a contrivance now common, and indeed traceable to a very remote period of antiquity, they were made changeable in aspect. To one entering the room,

they bore the appearance of simple monstrosities; but upon a farther advance, this appearance gradually departed; and, step by step, as the visitor moved his station in the chamber, he saw himself surrounded by an endless succession of the ghastly forms which belong to the superstition of the Norman, or arise in the guilty slumbers of the monk. The phantasmagoric effect was vastly heightened by the artificial introduction of a strong continual current of wind behind the draperies, giving a hideous and uneasy animation to the whole.

In halls such as these, in a bridal chamber such as this, I passed, with the Lady of Tremaine, the unhallowed hours of the first month of our marriage—passed them with but little disquietude. That my wife dreaded the fierce moodiness of my temper—that she shunned me, and loved me but little—I could not help perceiving; but it gave me rather pleasure than otherwise. I loathed her with a hatred belonging more to demon than to man. My memory flew back (oh, with what intensity of regret!) to Ligeia, the beloved, the august, the beautiful, the entombed. I reveled in recollections of her purity, of her wisdom, of her lofty, her ethereal nature, of her passionate, her idolatrous love. Now, then, did my spirit fully and freely burn with more than all the fires of her own. In the excitement of my opium dreams (for I was habitually fettered in the shackles of the drug), I would call aloud upon her name, during the silence of the night, or among the sheltered recesses of the glens by day, as if, through the wild eagerness, the solemn passion, the consuming ardor of my longing for the departed, I could restore her to the pathway she had abandoned—ah, *could* it be forever?—upon the earth.

About the commencement of the second month of the marriage, the Lady Rowena was attacked with sudden illness, from which her recovery was slow. The fever which consumed her, rendered her nights uneasy; and in her perturbed state of half-slumber, she spoke of sounds, and of motions, in and about the chamber of the turret, which I concluded had no origin save in the distemper of her fancy, or perhaps in the phantasmagoric influences of the chamber itself. She became at length convalescent—finally, well. Yet

but a brief period elapsed, ere a second more violent disorder again threw her upon a bed of suffering; and from this attack her frame, at all times feeble, never altogether recovered. Her illnesses were, after this epoch, of alarming character, and of more alarming recurrence, defying alike the knowledge and the great exertions of her physicians. With the increase of the chronic disease, which had thus apparently taken too sure hold upon her constitution to be eradicated by human means, I could not fail to observe a similar increase in the nervous irritation of her temperament, and in her excitability by trivial causes of fear. She spoke again, and now more frequently and pertinaciously, of the sounds—of the slight sounds—and of the unusual motions among the tapestries, to which she had formerly alluded.

One night, near the closing in of September, she pressed this distressing subject with more than usual emphasis upon my attention. She had just awakened from an unquiet slumber, and I had been watching, with feelings half of anxiety, half of vague terror, the workings of her emaciated countenance. I sat by the side of her ebony bed, upon one of the ottomans of India. She partly arose, and spoke, in an earnest low whisper, of sounds which she *then* heard, but which I could not hear—of motions which she *then* saw, but which I could not perceive. The wind was rushing hurriedly behind the tapestries, and I wished to show her (what, let me confess it, I could not *all* believe) that those almost inarticulate breathings, and those very gentle variations of the figures upon the wall, were but the natural effects of that customary rushing of the wind. But a deadly pallor, overspreading her face, had proved to me that my exertions to reassure her would be fruitless. She appeared to be fainting, and no attendants were within call. I remembered where was deposited a decanter of light wine which had been ordered by her physicians, and hastened across the chamber to procure it. But, as I stepped beneath the light of the censer, two circumstances of a startling nature attracted my attention. I had felt that some palpable although invisible object had passed lightly by my person; and I saw that there lay upon the golden carpet, in the very middle of the rich luster thrown from the censer, a shadow

—a faint, indefinite shadow of angelic aspect—such as might be fancied for the shadow of a shade. But I was wild with the excitement of an immoderate dose of opium, and heeded these things but little, nor spoke of them to Rowena. Having found the wine, I recrossed the chamber, and poured out a gobletful, which I held to the lips of the fainting lady. She had now partially recovered, however, and took the vessel herself, while I sank upon an ottoman near me, with my eyes fastened upon her person. It was then that I became distinctly aware of a gentle footfall upon the carpet, and near the couch; and in a second thereafter, as Rowena was in the act of raising the wine to her lips, I saw, or may have dreamed that I saw, fall within the goblet, as if from some invisible spring in the atmosphere of the room, three or four large drops of a brilliant and ruby-colored fluid. If this I saw—not so Rowena. She swallowed the wine unhesitatingly, and I forbore to speak to her of a circumstance which must after all, I considered, have been but the suggestion of a vivid imagination, rendered morbidly active by the terror of the lady, by the opium, and by the hour.

Yet I cannot conceal it from my own perception that, immediately subsequent to the fall of the ruby-drops, a rapid change for the worse took place in the disorder of my wife; so that, on the third subsequent night, the hands of her menials prepared her for the tomb, and on the fourth, I sat alone, with her shrouded body, in that fantastic chamber which had received her as my bride. Wild visions, opium-engendered, flitted shadow-like before me. I gazed with unquiet eye upon the sarcophagi in the angles of the room, upon the varying figures of the drapery, and upon the writhing of the parti-colored fires in the censer overhead. My eyes then fell, as I called to mind the circumstances of a former night, to the spot beneath the glare of the censer where I had seen the faint traces of the shadow. It was there, however, no longer; and breathing with greater freedom, I turned my glances to the pallid and rigid figure upon the bed. Then rushed upon me a thousand memories of Ligeia—and then came back upon my heart, with the turbulent violence of a flood, the whole of that unutterable woe with which I had regarded *her* thus enshrouded. The night waned; and still,

with a bosom full of bitter thoughts of the one only and supremely beloved, I remained gazing upon the body of Rowena.

It might have been midnight, or perhaps earlier, or later, for I had taken no note of time, when a sob, low, gentle, but very distinct, startled me from my reverie. I *felt* that it came from the bed of ebony—the bed of death. I listened in an agony of superstitious terror—but there was no repetition of the sound. I strained my vision to detect any motion in the corpse—but there was not the slightest preceptible. Yet I could not have been deceived. I *had* heard the noise, however faint, and my soul was awakened within me. I resolutely and perseveringly kept my attention riveted upon the body. Many minutes elapsed before any circumstance occurred tending to throw light upon the mystery. At length it became evident that a slight, a very feeble, and barely noticeable tinge of color had flushed up within the cheeks, and along the sunken small veins of the eyelids. Through a species of unutterable horror and awe, for which the language of mortality has no sufficiently energetic expression, I felt my heart cease to beat, my limbs grow rigid where I sat. Yet a sense of duty finally operated to restore my self-possession. I could no longer doubt that we had been precipitate in our preparations—that Rowena still lived. It was necessary that some immediate exertion be made; yet the turret was altogether apart from the portion of the abbey tenanted by the servants—there were none within call—I had no means of summoning them to my aid without leaving the room for many minutes—and this I could not venture to do. I therefore struggled alone in my endeavors to call back the spirit still hovering. In a short period it was certain, however, that a relapse had taken place; the color disappeared from both eyelid and cheek, leaving a wanness even more than that of marble; the lips became doubly shriveled and pinched up in the ghastly expression of death; a repulsive clamminess and coldness overspread rapidly the surface of the body; and all the usual rigorous stiffness immediately supervened. I fell back with a shudder upon the couch from which I had been so startlingly aroused, and again gave myself up to passionate waking visions of Ligeia.

An hour thus elapsed, when (could it be possible?) I was a second time aware of some vague sound issuing from the region of the bed. I listened—in extremity of horror. The sound came again—it was a sigh. Rushing to the corpse, I saw—distinctly saw—a tremor upon the lips. In a minute afterwards they relaxed, disclosing a bright line of the pearly teeth. Amazement now struggled in my bosom with the profound awe which had hitherto reigned there alone. I felt that my vision grew dim, that my reason wandered; and it was only by a violent effort that I at length succeeded in nerving myself to the task which duty thus once more had pointed out. There was now a partial glow upon the forehead and upon the cheek and throat; a perceptible warmth pervaded the whole frame; there was even a slight pulsation at the heart. The lady *lived*; and with redoubled ardor I betook myself to the task of restoration. I chafed and bathed the temples and the hands, and used every exertion which experience, and no little medical reading, could suggest. But in vain. Suddenly, the color fled, the pulsation ceased, the lips resumed the expression of the dead, and, in an instant afterward, the whole body took upon itself the icy chilliness, the livid hue, the intense rigidity, the sunken outline, and all the loathsome peculiarities of that which has been, for many days, a tenant of the tomb.

And again I sunk into visions of Ligeia—and again (what marvel that I shudder while I write?), *again* there reached my ears a low sob from the region of the ebony bed. But why shall I minutely detail the unspeakable horrors of that night? Why shall I pause to relate how, time after time, until near the period of the gray dawn, this hideous drama of revivification was repeated; how each terrific relapse was only into a sterner and apparently more irredeemable death; how each agony wore the aspect of a struggle with some invisible foe; and how each struggle was succeeded by I know not what of wild change in the personal appearance of the corpse? Let me hurry to a conclusion.

The greater part of the fearful night had worn away, and she who had been dead, once again stirred—and now more vigorously than hitherto, although arousing from a dissolution more appalling in its utter help-

lessness than any. I had long ceased to struggle or to move, and remained sitting rigidly upon the ottoman, a helpless prey to a whirl of violent emotions, of which extreme awe was perhaps the least terrible, the least consuming. The corpse, I repeat, stirred, and now more vigorously than before. The hues of life flushed up with unwonted energy into the countenance—the limbs relaxed—and, save that the eyelids were yet pressed heavily together, and that the bandages and draperies of the grave still imparted their charnel character to the figure, I might have dreamed that Rowena had indeed shaken off, utterly, the fetters of Death. But if this idea was not, even then, altogether adopted, I could at least doubt no longer, when, arising from the bed, tottering, with feeble steps, with closed eyes, and with the manner of one bewildered in a dream, the thing that was enshrouded advanced bodily and palpably into the middle of the apartment.

I trembled not—I stirred not—for a crowd of unutterable fancies connected with the air, the stature, the demeanor of the figure, rushing hurriedly through my brain, had paralyzed—had chilled me into stone. I stirred not—but gazed upon the apparition. There was a mad disorder in my thoughts—a tumult unappeasable. Could it, indeed, be the *living* Rowena who confronted me? Could it indeed be Rowena *at all*—the fair-haired, the blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion of Tremaine? Why, *why* should I doubt it? The bandage lay heavily about the mouth—but then might it not be the mouth of the breathing Lady of Tremaine? And the cheeks—there were the roses as in her noon of life—yes, these might indeed be the fair cheeks of the living Lady of Tremaine. And the chin, with its dimples, as in health, might it not be hers? but *had she then grown taller since her malady?* What inexpressible madness seized me with that thought? One bound, and I had reached her feet! Shrinking from my touch, she let fall from her head the ghastly cerements which had confined it, and there streamed forth, into the rushing atmosphere of the chamber, huge masses of long and disheveled hair; *it was blacker than the raven wings of the midnight!* And now slowly opened the eyes of the figure which stood before me. “Here then, at least,” I shrieked aloud, “can I never

—can I never be mistaken—these are the full, and the black, and the wild eyes—of my lost love—of the Lady—of the LADY LIGEIA.”

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER¹

*Son cœur est un luth suspendu;
Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.*

BÉRANGER.

DURING the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eye-like windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveler upon opium: the bitter lapse into everyday life, the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart, an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it—I paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting

¹ First published in *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, September, 1839. The lines from Béranger may be translated: “His heart is a suspended lute; as soon as it is touched it resounds.”

us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful impression; and acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which in its wildly importunate nature had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness, of a mental disorder which oppressed him, and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said—it was the apparent *heart* that went with his request—which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

Although as boys we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested of late in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth at no period

any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other—it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had, at length, so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the “House of Usher”—an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment, that of looking down within the tarn, had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy—a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity: an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn: a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of

ages had been great. Minute fungi over-spread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old wood-work which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceilings, the somber tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy—while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this—I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases, I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast

a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality—of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé* man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance, convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion, an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely molded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity; these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous luster of the eye, above all things startled and even

awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence, an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation—that leaden, self-balanced, and perfectly modulated guttural utterance—which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered, at some length, into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy—a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me: although, perhaps, the terms and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. “I shall perish,” said he, “I *must* perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in them-

selves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect—in terror. In this unnerved—in this pitiable condition, I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together, in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR.”

I learned, moreover, at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth—in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion, had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit—an effect which the physique of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the morale of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin—to the severe and long-continued illness, indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution, of a tenderly beloved sister—his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. “Her decease,” he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, “would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers.” While he spoke the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread, and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother; but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wan-

ness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but, on the closing-in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain—that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself; and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered idealism threw a sulphureous luster over all. His long improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly because I shuddered knowing not why;—from these paintings (vivid as their images now

are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least, in the circumstances then surrounding me, there arose, out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent and no torch, or other artificial source of light was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his impromptus could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes, as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rhymed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it, as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first

time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled *The Haunted Palace*, ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:

I

In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!

II

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago),
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingèd odor went away.

III

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tunèd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting,
Porphyrogene,
In state his glory well befitting
The ruler of the realm was seen.

IV

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

V

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

VI

And travelers, now, within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought, wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention not so much on account of its novelty, (for other men¹ have thought thus), as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But in his disordered fancy the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of in-organization. I lack words to express the full extent, or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones—in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around—above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the sentience—was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent, yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had molded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him—what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books—the books which, for years, had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this char-

¹ Watson, Dr. Percival, Spallanzani, and especially the Bishop of Landaff.—See *Chemical Essays*, vol. V. (Poe's note.)

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acter of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the *Ververt* and *Chartreuse* of Gresset; the *Belphegor* of Machiavelli; the *Heaven and Hell* of Swedenborg; the *Subterranean Voyage of Nicholas Klimm* by Holberg; the *Chiromancy* of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indaginé, and of De la Chambre; the *Journey into the Blue Distance* of Tieck; and the *City of the Sun* of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorum* by the Dominican Eymeric de Gironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Ægipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic—the manual of a forgotten church—the *Vigiliæ Mortuorum Secundum Chorom Ecclesiæ Maguntinæ*.

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence on the hypochondriac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight (previously to its final interment), in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural, precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of ad-

mission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep, and in later days as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been, also, similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead—for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and, having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue—but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed,

when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much, if not all, of what I felt was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room—of the dark and tattered draperies which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and at length there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, harkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped with a gentle touch at my

door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes—an evidently restrained hysteria in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

“And you have not seen it?” he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence—“you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall.” Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity; for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the life-like velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this; yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars, nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

“You must not—you shall not behold this!” said I, shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. “These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon—or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement; the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen;—and so we will pass away this terrible night together.”

The antique volume which I had taken up was the *Mad Trist* of Sir Launcelot Canning;

but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild overstrained air of vivacity with which he harkened, or apparently harkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the Trist, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:

"And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal, on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and malicious turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand; and now, pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarumed and reverberated throughout the forest."

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me)—it appeared to me that from some very remote portion of the mansion there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had

arrested my attention; for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:

"But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the malicious hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten:—

Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin;
Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win.

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement; for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but

partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast—yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea—for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:

“And now the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound.”

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips, than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic and clangorous, yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

“Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it—yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet

I dared not—I *dared* not speak! And now—to-night—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit’s door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!”—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—“*Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!*”

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell, the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and, in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing

asunder—there was a long, tumultuous, shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the “*House of Usher*.”

THE MASK OF THE RED DEATH¹

THE “Red Death” had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body, and especially upon the face, of the victim were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow-men. And the whole seizure, progress, and termination of the disease were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the Prince’s own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers, and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the meantime it was folly to grieve, or to think. The Prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the “Red Death.”

It was towards the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the

Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven—an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding-doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different, as might have been expected from the Prince’s love of the bizarre. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange—the fifth with white—the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood-color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire, that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black

¹ First published in *Graham’s Magazine*, May, 1842.

chamber the effect of the fire-light that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and, when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to harken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion; and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that flies), there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the Prince were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the *decora* of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric luster. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be *sure* that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the movable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great *fête*; and it was

his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm—much of what has been since seen in *Hernani*.¹ There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments. There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the bizarre, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these—the dreams—writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff-frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away—they have endured but an instant—and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away; and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes; and the blackness of the sable drapery appalls; and, to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches *their* ears who indulge in the more remote gayeties of the other apartments.

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that more of

¹ Tragedy by Victor Hugo,

thought crept, with more of time, into the meditations of the thoughtful among those who reveled. And thus too it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had out-Heroded Herod, and gone beyond the bounds of even the Prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed. The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revelers around. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in *blood*—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its rôle, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment, with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of

the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly—for the Prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

It was in the blue room where stood the Prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at the moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumption of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the Prince's person; and, while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centers of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revelers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer,

whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave ceremonies and corpse-like mask, which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revelers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

THE PURLOINED LETTER¹

Nil sapientiæ odiosius acumine nimio.

SENECA.

AT PARIS, just after dark one gusty evening in the autumn of 18—, I was enjoying the twofold luxury of meditation and a meerschäum, in company with my friend C. Auguste Dupin, in his little back library, or book-closet, *au troisième*,² No. 33 Rue Dunôt, Faubourg St. Germain. For one hour at least we had maintained a profound silence; while each, to any casual observer, might have seemed intently and exclusively occupied with the curling eddies of smoke that oppressed the atmosphere of the chamber. For myself, however, I was mentally discussing certain topics which had formed matter for conversation between us at an earlier period of the evening; I mean the affair of the Rue Morgue, and the mystery attending the murder of Marie Rogêt.³ I looked upon it, therefore, as something of a coincidence, when the door of our apartment was thrown open and admitted our old acquaintance, Monsieur G—, the Prefect of the Parisian police.

¹ First published in *The Gift* (an annual), 1845. The motto may be translated: "Nothing is more hateful to wisdom than excessive keenness of discernment."

² On the third story.

³ Poe, of course, had written tales concerning these affairs, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (published 1841) and *The Mystery of Marie Rogêt* (published in three parts, 1842–1843). Dupin is described in the former, and the Prefect of police (mentioned in the following sentence) in the latter.

We gave him a hearty welcome; for there was nearly half as much of the entertaining as of the contemptible about the man, and we had not seen him for several years. We had been sitting in the dark, and Dupin now arose for the purpose of lighting a lamp, but sat down again, without doing so, upon G—'s saying that he had called to consult us, or rather to ask the opinion of my friend, about some official business which had occasioned a great deal of trouble.

"If it is any point requiring reflection," observed Dupin, as he forbore to enkindle the wick, "we shall examine it to better purpose in the dark."

"That is another of your odd notions," said the Prefect, who had a fashion of calling everything "odd" that was beyond his comprehension, and thus lived amid an absolute legion of "oddities."

"Very true," said Dupin, as he supplied his visitor with a pipe, and rolled towards him a comfortable chair.

"And what is the difficulty now?" I asked. "Nothing more in the assassination way, I hope?"

"Oh, no; nothing of that nature. The fact is, the business is *very* simple indeed, and I make no doubt that we can manage it sufficiently well ourselves; but then I thought Dupin would like to hear the details of it, because it is so excessively *odd*."

"Simple and odd," said Dupin.

"Why, yes; and not exactly that, either. The fact is, we have all been a good deal puzzled because the affair *is* so simple, and yet baffles us altogether."

"Perhaps it is the very simplicity of the thing which puts you at fault," said my friend.

"What nonsense you *do* talk!" replied the Prefect, laughing heartily.

"Perhaps the mystery is a little *too* plain," said Dupin.

"Oh, good heavens! who ever heard of such an idea?"

"A little *too* self-evident."

"Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—ho! ho! ho!" roared our visitor, profoundly amused. "O Dupin, you will be the death of me yet!"

"And what after all *is* the matter on hand?" I asked.

"Why, I will tell you," replied the Prefect, as he gave a long, steady, and contemplative

puff, and settled himself in his chair. "I will tell you in a few words; but, before I begin, let me caution you that this is an affair demanding the greatest secrecy, and that I should most probably lose the position I now hold were it known that I confided it to any one."

"Proceed," said I.

"Or not," said Dupin.

"Well, then; I have received personal information from a very high quarter that a certain document of the last importance has been purloined from the royal apartments. The individual who purloined it is known; this beyond a doubt; he was seen to take it. It is known, also, that it still remains in his possession."

"How is this known?" asked Dupin.

"It is clearly inferred," replied the Prefect, "from the nature of the document, and from the non-appearance of certain results which would at once arise from its passing *out* of the robber's possession; that is to say, from his employing it as he must design in the end to employ it."

"Be a little more explicit," I said.

"Well, I may venture so far as to say that the paper gives its holder a certain power in a certain quarter where such power is immensely valuable." The Prefect was fond of the cant of diplomacy.

"Still I do not quite understand," said Dupin.

"No? well; the disclosure of the document to a third person, who shall be nameless, would bring in question the honor of a personage of most exalted station; and this fact gives the holder of the document an ascendancy over the illustrious personage whose honor and peace are so jeopardized."

"But this ascendancy," I interposed, "would depend upon the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber. Who would dare?"

"The thief," said G——, "is the Minister D——, who dares all things, those unbecoming as well as those becoming a man. The method of the theft was not less ingenious than bold. The document in question—a letter, to be frank—had been received by the personage robbed while alone in the royal boudoir. During its perusal she was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the other exalted personage from whom especially it

was her wish to conceal it. After a hurried and vain endeavor to thrust it in a drawer, she was forced to place it, open as it was, upon a table. The address, however, was uppermost, and, the contents thus unexposed, the letter escaped notice. At this juncture enters the Minister D——. His lynx eye immediately perceives the paper, recognizes the handwriting of the address, observes the confusion of the personage addressed, and fathoms her secret. After some business transactions, hurried through in his ordinary manner, he produces a letter somewhat similar to the one in question, opens it, pretends to read it, and then places it in close juxtaposition to the other. Again he converses, for some fifteen minutes, upon the public affairs. At length, in taking leave, he takes also from the table the letter to which he had no claim. Its rightful owner saw, but of course dared not call attention to the act, in the presence of the third personage, who stood at her elbow. The Minister decamped, leaving his own letter—one of no importance—upon the table."

"Here, then," said Dupin to me, "you have precisely what you demand to make the ascendancy complete,—the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber."

"Yes," replied the Prefect; "and the power thus attained has, for some months past, been wielded, for political purposes, to a very dangerous extent. The personage robbed is more thoroughly convinced, every day, of the necessity of reclaiming her letter. But this, of course, cannot be done openly. In fine, driven to despair, she has committed the matter to me."

"Than whom," said Dupin, amid a perfect whirlwind of smoke, "no more sagacious agent could, I suppose, be desired, or even imagined."

"You flatter me," replied the Prefect; "but it is possible that some such opinion may have been entertained."

"It is clear," said I, "as you observe, that the letter is still in possession of the Minister; since it is this possession, and not any employment of the letter, which bestows the power. With the employment the power departs."

"True," said G——; "and upon this conviction I proceeded. My first care was to make thorough search of the Minister's Hotel;

and here my chief embarrassment lay in the necessity of searching without his knowledge. Beyond all things, I have been warned of the danger which would result from giving him reason to suspect our design."

"But," said I, "you are quite *au fait* in these investigations. The Parisian police have done this thing often before."

"Oh, yes; and for this reason I did not despair. The habits of the Minister gave me, too, a great advantage. He is frequently absent from home all night. His servants are by no means numerous. They sleep at a distance from their master's apartment, and, being chiefly Neapolitans, are readily made drunk. I have keys, as you know, with which I can open any chamber or cabinet in Paris. For three months a night has not passed, during the greater part of which I have not been engaged, personally, in ransacking the D—— Hotel. My honor is interested, and, to mention a great secret, the reward is enormous. So I did not abandon the search until I had become fully satisfied that the thief is a more astute man than myself. I fancy that I have investigated every nook and corner of the premises in which it is possible that the paper can be concealed."

"But is it not possible," I suggested, "that although the letter may be in possession of the Minister, as it unquestionably is, he may have concealed it elsewhere than upon his own premises?"

"This is barely possible," said Dupin. "The present peculiar condition of affairs at court, and especially of those intrigues in which D—— is known to be involved, would render the instant availability of the document—its susceptibility of being produced at a moment's notice—a point of nearly equal importance with its possession."

"Its susceptibility of being produced?" said I.

"That is to say, of being *destroyed*," said Dupin.

"True," I observed; "the paper is clearly then upon the premises. As for its being upon the person of the Minister, we may consider that as out of the question."

"Entirely," said the Prefect. "He has been twice waylaid, as if by footpads, and his person rigorously searched under my own inspection."

"You might have spared yourself this

trouble," said Dupin. "D——, I presume, is not altogether a fool, and, if not, must have anticipated these waylayings as a matter of course."

"Not *altogether* a fool," said G——; "but then he's a poet, which I take to be only one remove from a fool."

"True," said Dupin, after a long and thoughtful whiff from his meerschaum, "although I have been guilty of certain doggerel myself."

"Suppose you detail," said I, "the particulars of your search."

"Why, the fact is, we took our time and we searched *everywhere*. I have had long experience in these affairs. I took the entire building, room by room, devoting the nights of a whole week to each. We examined, first, the furniture of each apartment. We opened every possible drawer; and I presume you know that, to a properly trained police agent, such a thing as a *secret* drawer is impossible. Any man is a dolt who permits a 'secret' drawer to escape him in a search of this kind. The thing is *so* plain. There is a certain amount of bulk—of space—to be accounted for in every cabinet. Then we have accurate rules. The fiftieth part of a line could not escape us. After the cabinets we took the chairs. The cushions we probed with the fine long needles you have seen me employ. From the tables we removed the tops."

"Why so?"

"Sometimes the top of a table, or other similarly arranged piece of furniture, is removed by the person wishing to conceal an article; then the leg is excavated, the article deposited within the cavity, and the top replaced. The bottoms and tops of bed-posts are employed in the same way."

"But could not the cavity be detected by sounding?" I asked.

"By no means, if, when the article is deposited, a sufficient wadding of cotton be placed around it. Besides, in our case we were obliged to proceed without noise."

"But you could not have removed—you could not have taken to pieces *all* articles of furniture in which it would have been possible to make a deposit in the manner you mention. A letter may be compressed into a thin spiral roll, not differing much in shape or bulk from a large knitting-needle, and in this form it might be inserted into the rung

of a chair, for example. You did not take to pieces all the chairs!"

"Certainly not; but we did better—we examined the rungs of every chair in the Hotel and, indeed, the jointings of every description of furniture, by the aid of a most powerful microscope. Had there been any traces of recent disturbance we should not have failed to detect it instantly. A single grain of gimlet-dust, for example, would have been as obvious as an apple. Any disorder in the gluing—any unusual gaping in the joints—would have sufficed to insure detection."

"I presume you looked to the mirrors, between the boards and the plates, and you probed the beds and the bed-clothes, as well as the curtains and carpets?"

"That, of course; and when we had absolutely completed every particle of the furniture in this way, then we examined the house itself. We divided its entire surface into compartments, which we numbered, so that none might be missed; then we scrutinized each individual square inch throughout the premises, including the two houses immediately adjoining, with the microscope, as before."

"The two houses adjoining!" I exclaimed; "you must have had a great deal of trouble."

"We had; but the reward offered is prodigious."

"You include the *grounds* about the houses?"

"All the grounds are paved with brick. They gave us comparatively little trouble. We examined the moss between the bricks, and found it undisturbed."

"You looked among D——'s papers, of course, and into the books of the library?"

"Certainly; we opened every package and parcel; we not only opened every book, but we turned over every leaf in each volume, not contenting ourselves with a mere shake, according to the fashion of some of our police officers. We also measured the thickness of every book-cover, with the most accurate admeasurement, and applied to each the most jealous scrutiny of the microscope. Had any of the bindings been recently meddled with, it would have been utterly impossible that the fact should have escaped observation. Some five or six volumes, just from the hands

of the binder, we carefully probed, longitudinally, with the needles."

"You explored the floors beneath the carpets?"

"Beyond doubt. We removed every carpet, and examined the boards with the microscope."

"And the paper on the walls?"

"Yes."

"You looked into the cellars?"

"We did."

"Then," I said, "you have been making a miscalculation, and the letter is *not* upon the premises, as you suppose."

"I fear you are right there," said the Prefect. "And now, Dupin, what would you advise me to do?"

"To make a thorough re-search of the premises."

"That is absolutely needless," replied G——. "I am not more sure that I breathe than I am that the letter is not at the Hotel."

"I have no better advice to give you," said Dupin. "You have, of course, an accurate description of the letter?"

"Oh, yes." And here the Prefect, producing a memorandum-book, proceeded to read aloud a minute account of the internal, and especially of the external appearance of the missing document. Soon after finishing the perusal of this description, he took his departure, more entirely depressed in spirits than I had ever known the good gentleman before.

In about a month afterward he paid us another visit, and found us occupied very nearly as before. He took a pipe and a chair and entered into some ordinary conversation. At length I said:—

"Well, but, G——, what of the purloined letter? I presume you have at last made up your mind that there is no such thing as overreaching the Minister?"

"Confound him, say I—yes; I made the reëxamination, however, as Dupin suggested—but it was all labor lost, as I knew it would be."

"How much was the reward offered, did you say?" asked Dupin.

"Why, a very great deal—a *very* liberal reward—I don't like to say how much, precisely; but one thing I *will* say, that I wouldn't mind giving my individual check for fifty thousand francs to any one who

could obtain me that letter. The fact is, it is becoming of more and more importance every day; and the reward has been lately doubled. If it were trebled, however, I could do no more than I have done."

"Why, yes," said Dupin drawlingly, between the whiffs of his meerschaum, "I really—think, G——, you have not exerted yourself—to the utmost in this matter. You might—do a little more, I think, eh?"

"How? in what way?"

"Why (puff, puff), you might (puff, puff) employ counsel in the matter, eh (puff, puff, puff)? Do you remember the story they tell of Abernethy?"¹

"No; hang Abernethy!"

"To be sure! hang him and welcome. But, once upon a time, a certain rich miser conceived the design of sponging upon this Abernethy for a medical opinion. Getting up, for this purpose, an ordinary conversation in a private company, he insinuated his case to the physician, as that of an imaginary individual.

"'We will suppose,' said the miser, 'that his symptoms are such and such; now, doctor, what would *you* have directed him to take?'

"'Take!' said Abernethy, 'why, take *advice*, to be sure.'"

"But," said the Prefect, a little discomposed, "*I* am *perfectly* willing to take advice, and to pay for it. I would *really* give fifty thousand francs to any one who would aid me in the matter."

"In that case," replied Dupin, opening a drawer and producing a check-book, "you may as well fill me up a check for the amount mentioned. When you have signed it, I will hand you the letter."

I was astounded. The Prefect appeared absolutely thunderstricken. For some minutes he remained speechless and motionless, looking incredulously at my friend with open mouth, and eyes that seemed starting from their sockets; then, apparently recovering himself in some measure, he seized a pen, and after several pauses and vacant stares, finally filled up and signed a check for fifty thousand francs, and handed it across the table to Dupin. The latter examined it carefully and deposited it in his pocketbook; then,

unlocking an *escritoire*, took thence a letter and gave it to the Prefect. This functionary grasped it in a perfect agony of joy, opened it with a trembling hand, cast a rapid glance at its contents, and then, scrambling and struggling to the door, rushed at length unceremoniously from the room and from the house, without having uttered a syllable since Dupin had requested him to fill up the check.

When he had gone, my friend entered into some explanations.

"The Parisian police," he said, "are exceedingly able in their way. They are persevering, ingenious, cunning, and thoroughly versed in the knowledge which their duties seem chiefly to demand. Thus, when G—— detailed to us his mode of searching the premises at the Hotel D——, I felt entire confidence in his having made a satisfactory investigation—so far as his labors extended."

"So far as his labors extended?" said I.

"Yes," said Dupin. "The measures adopted were not only the best of their kind, but carried out to absolute perfection. Had the letter been deposited within the range of their search, these fellows would, beyond a question, have found it."

I merely laughed—but he seemed quite serious in all that he said.

"The measures, then," he continued, "were good in their kind, and well executed; their defect lay in their being inapplicable to the case, and to the man. A certain set of highly ingenious resources are, with the Prefect, a sort of Procrustean bed, to which he forcibly adapts his designs. But he perpetually errs by being too deep or too shallow, for the matter in hand; and many a schoolboy is a better reasoner than he. I knew one about eight years of age, whose success at guessing in the game of 'even and odd' attracted universal admiration. This game is simple, and is played with marbles. One player holds in his hand a number of these toys, and demands of another whether that number is even or odd. If the guess is right, the guesser wins one; if wrong, he loses one. The boy to whom I allude won all the marbles of the school. Of course he had some principle of guessing; and this lay in mere observation and admeasurement of the astuteness of his opponents. For example, an arrant simpleton is his opponent, and,

¹ A famous English surgeon (1764–1831).

holding up his closed hand asks, 'Are they even or odd?' Our schoolboy replies, 'Odd,' and loses; but upon the second trial he wins, for he then says to himself, 'The simpleton had them even upon the first trial, and his amount of cunning is just sufficient to make him have them odd upon the second; I will therefore guess odd'; he guesses odd, and wins. Now, with a simpleton a degree above the first he would have reasoned thus: 'This fellow finds that in the first instance I guessed odd, and in the second he will propose to himself, upon the first impulse, a simple variation from even to odd, as did the first simpleton; but then a second thought will suggest that this is too simple a variation, and finally he will decide upon putting it even as before. I will therefore guess even'; he guesses even, and wins. Now this mode of reasoning in the schoolboy, whom his fellows termed 'lucky'—what, in its last analysis, is it?"

"It is merely," I said, "an identification of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent."

"It is," said Dupin; "and, upon inquiring of the boy by what means he effected the *thorough* identification in which his success consisted, I received answer as follows: 'When I wish to find out how wise, or how stupid, or how good, or how wicked is any one, or what are his thoughts at the moment, I fashion the expression of my face, as accurately as possible, in accordance with the expression of his, and then wait to see what thoughts or sentiments arise in my mind or heart, as if to match or correspond with the expression.' This response of the schoolboy lies at the bottom of all the spurious profundity which has been attributed to Rochefoucauld, to La Bruyère, to Machiavelli, and to Campanella."

"And the identification," I said, "of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent, depends, if I understand you aright, upon the accuracy with which the opponent's intellect is admeasured."

"For its practical value it depends upon this," replied Dupin, "and the Prefect and his cohort fail so frequently, first, by default of this identification, and secondly, by ill-admeasurement, or rather through non-admeasurement, of the intellect with which they are engaged. They consider only their *own* ideas of ingenuity; and, in searching for anything

hidden, advert only to the modes in which *they* would have hidden it. They are right in this much,—that their own ingenuity is a faithful representative of that of *the mass*; but when the cunning of the individual felon is diverse in character from their own, the felon foils them, of course. This always happens when it is above their own, and very usually when it is below. They have no variation of principle in their investigations; at best, when urged by some unusual emergency, by some extraordinary reward, they extend or exaggerate their old modes of *practice*, without touching their principles. What, for example, in this case of D—, has been done to vary the principle of action? What is all this boring, and probing, and sounding, and scrutinizing with the microscope, and dividing the surface of the building into registered square inches—what is it all but an exaggeration of *the application* of the one principle or set of principles of search, which are based upon the one set of notions regarding human ingenuity, to which the Prefect, in the long routine of his duty, has been accustomed? Do you not see he has taken it for granted that *all* men proceed to conceal a letter—not exactly in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair leg—but, at least, in *some* out-of-the-way hole or corner suggested by the same tenor of thought which would urge a man to secrete a letter in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair leg? And do you not see, also, that such *recherchés* nooks for concealment are adapted only for ordinary occasions and would be adopted only by ordinary intellects? for, in all cases of concealment, a disposal of the article concealed—a disposal of it in this *recherché* manner—is, in the very first instance, presumable and presumed; and thus its discovery depends, not at all upon the acumen, but altogether upon the mere care, patience, and determination of the seekers; and where the case is of importance—or, what amounts to the same thing in the policial eyes, when the reward is of magnitude—the qualities in question have *never* been known to fail. You will now understand what I meant in suggesting that, had the purloined letter been hidden anywhere within the limits of the Prefect's examination—in other words, had the principle of its concealment been comprehended within the principles of the Prefect—its discovery would

have been a matter altogether beyond question. This functionary, however, has been thoroughly mystified; and the remote source of his defeat lies in the supposition that the Minister is a fool because he has acquired renown as a poet. All fools are poets; this the Prefect *feels*; and he is merely guilty of a *non distributio medii*¹ in thence inferring that all poets are fools."

"But is this really the poet?" I asked. "There are two brothers, I know; and both have attained reputation in letters. The Minister, I believe, has written learnedly on the Differential Calculus. He is a mathematician and no poet."

"You are mistaken; I know him well; he is both. As poet *and* mathematician he would reason well; as mere mathematician he could not have reasoned at all, and thus would have been at the mercy of the Prefect."

"You surprise me," I said, "by these opinions, which have been contradicted by the voice of the world. You do not mean to set at naught the well-digested idea of centuries. The mathematical reason has long been regarded as *the reason par excellence*."

"*Il y a à parier*," replied Dupin, quoting from Chamfort, "*que toute idée publique, toute convention reçue, est une sottise, car elle a convenu au plus grand nombre*."² The mathematicians, I grant you, have done their best to promulgate the popular error to which you allude, and which is none the less an error for its promulgation as truth. With an art worthy a better cause, for example, they have insinuated the term 'analysis' into application to algebra. The French are the originators of this particular deception; but if a term is of any importance—if words derive any value from applicability—then 'analysis' conveys 'algebra' about as much as, in Latin, '*ambitus*' implies 'ambition,' '*religio*,' 'religion,' or '*homines honesti*,' a set of *honorable* men."

"You have a quarrel on hand, I see," said I, "with some of the algebraists of Paris; but proceed."

"I dispute the availability, and thus the

value, of that reason which is cultivated in any special form other than the abstractly logical. I dispute, in particular, the reason educated by mathematical study. The mathematics are the science of form and quantity; mathematical reasoning is merely logic applied to observation upon form and quantity. The great error lies in supposing that even the truths of what is called *pure* algebra are abstract or general truths. And this error is so egregious that I am confounded at the universality with which it has been received. Mathematical axioms are *not* axioms of general truth. What is true of *relation*—of form and quantity—is often grossly false in regard to morals, for example. In this latter science it is very usually *untrue* that the aggregated parts are equal to the whole. In chemistry, also, the axiom fails. In the consideration of motive it fails; for two motives, each of a given value, have not, necessarily, a value, when united, equal to the sum of their values apart. There are numerous other mathematical truths which are only truths within the limits of *relation*. But the mathematician argues, from his *finite truths*, through habit, as if they were of an absolutely general applicability—as the world indeed imagines them to be. Bryant, in his very learned *Mythology*, mentions an analogous source of error, when he says that 'although the Pagan fables are not believed, yet we forget ourselves continually, and make inferences from them as existing realities.' With the algebraists, however, who are Pagans themselves, the 'Pagan fables' *are* believed and the inferences are made, not so much through lapse of memory, as through an unaccountable addling of the brains. In short, I never yet encountered the mere mathematician who could be trusted out of equal roots, or one who did not clandestinely hold it as a point of his faith that $x^2 + px$ was absolutely and unconditionally equal to q . Say to one of these gentlemen, by way of experiment, if you please, that you believe occasions may occur where $x^2 + px$ is *not* altogether equal to q , and, having made him understand what you mean, get out of his reach as speedily as convenient, for, beyond doubt, he will endeavor to knock you down.

"I mean to say," continued Dupin, while I merely laughed at his last observations,

¹ Undistributed middle—logical fallacy.

² It is safe to wager that every commonly received idea, every accepted convention, is a piece of stupidity, because it has suited the majority. (Chamfort, 1741–1794, was a writer of maxims.)

"that if the Minister had been no more than a mathematician the Prefect would have been under no necessity of giving me this check. I knew him, however, as both mathematician and poet, and my measures were adapted to his capacity with reference to the circumstances by which he was surrounded. I knew him as a courtier, too, and as a bold *intriguant*. Such a man, I considered, could not fail to be aware of the ordinary policial modes of action. He could not have failed to anticipate—and events have proved that he did not fail to anticipate—the waylayings to which he was subjected. He must have foreseen, I reflected, the secret investigations of his premises. His frequent absences from home at night, which were hailed by the Prefect as certain aids to his success, I regarded only as ruses, to afford opportunity for thorough search to the police, and thus the sooner to impress them with the conviction to which G——, in fact, did finally arrive,—the conviction that the letter was not upon the premises. I felt, also, that the whole train of thought, which I was at some pains in detailing to you just now, concerning the invariable principle of policial action in searches for articles concealed—I felt that this whole train of thought would necessarily pass through the mind of the Minister. It would imperatively lead him to despise all the ordinary *nooks* of concealment. *He* could not, I reflected, be so weak as not to see that the most intricate and remote recess of his Hotel would be as open as his commonest closets to the eyes, to the probes, to the gimlets, and to the microscopes of the Prefect. I saw, in fine, that he would be driven, as a matter of course, to *simplicity*, if not deliberately induced to it as a matter of choice. You will remember, perhaps, how desperately the Prefect laughed when I suggested, upon our first interview, that it was just possible this mystery troubled him so much on account of its being so *very* self-evident."

"Yes," said I, "I remember his merriment well. I really thought he would have fallen into convulsions."

"The material world," continued Dupin, "abounds with very strict analogies to the immaterial; and thus some color of truth has been given to the rhetorical dogma, that metaphor, or simile, may be made to

strengthen an argument, as well as to embellish a description. The principle of the *vis inertia*,¹ for example, seems to be identical in physics and metaphysics. It is not more true in the former, that a large body is with more difficulty set in motion than a smaller one, and that its subsequent momentum is commensurate with this difficulty, than it is, in the latter, that intellects of the vaster capacity, while more forcible, more constant, and more eventful in their movements than those of inferior grade, are yet the less readily moved, and more embarrassed and full of hesitation in the first few steps of their progress. Again: have you ever noticed which of the street signs over the shop-doors are the most attractive of attention?"

"I have never given the matter a thought," I said.

"There is a game of puzzles," he resumed, "which is played upon a mat. One party playing requires another to find a given word, the name of town, river, state, or empire,—any word, in short, upon the motley and perplexed surface of the chart. A novice in the game generally seeks to embarrass his opponents by giving them the most minutely lettered names; but the adept selects such words as stretch, in large characters, from one end of the chart to the other. These, like the over-largely lettered signs and placards of the street, escape observation by dint of being excessively obvious; and here the physical oversight is precisely analogous with the moral inapprehension by which the intellect suffers to pass unnoticed those considerations which are too obtrusively and too palpably self-evident. But this is a point, it appears, somewhat above or beneath the understanding of the Prefect. He never once thought it probable, or possible, that the Minister had deposited the letter immediately beneath the nose of the whole world, by way of best preventing any portion of that world from perceiving it.

"But the more I reflected upon the daring, dashing, and discriminating ingenuity of D——; upon the fact that the document must always have been *at hand*, if he intended to use it to good purpose; and upon the decisive evidence, obtained by the Prefect, that it was not hidden within the limits

¹ Force of inertia.

of that dignitary's ordinary search—the more satisfied I became that, to conceal this letter, the Minister had resorted to the comprehensive and sagacious expedient of not attempting to conceal it at all.

“Full of these ideas, I prepared myself with a pair of green spectacles, and called one fine morning, quite by accident, at the Ministerial Hotel. I found D—— at home, yawning, lounging, and dawdling, as usual, and pretending to be in the last extremity of *ennui*. He is, perhaps, the most really energetic human being now alive—but that is only when nobody sees him.

“To be even with him, I complained of my weak eyes, and lamented the necessity of the spectacles, under cover of which I cautiously and thoroughly surveyed the apartment, while seemingly intent only upon the conversation of my host.

“I paid especial attention to a large writing-table near which he sat, and upon which lay confusedly some miscellaneous letters and other papers, with one or two musical instruments and a few books. Here, however, after a long and very deliberate scrutiny, I saw nothing to excite particular suspicion.

“At length my eyes, in going the circuit of the room, fell upon a trumpery fligree card-rack of pasteboard, that hung dangling, by a dirty blue ribbon, from a little brass knob just beneath the middle of the mantelpiece. In this rack, which had three or four compartments, were five or six visiting cards and a solitary letter. This last was much soiled and crumpled. It was torn nearly in two, across the middle—as if a design, in the first instance, to tear it entirely up as worthless had been altered, or stayed, in the second. It had a large black seal, bearing the D—— cipher *very* conspicuously, and was addressed, in a diminutive female hand, to D——, the Minister himself. It was thrust carelessly, and even, as it seemed, contemptuously, into one of the upper divisions of the rack.

“No sooner had I glanced at this letter than I concluded it to be that of which I was in search. To be sure, it was, to all appearance, radically different from the one of which the Prefect had read us so minute a description. Here the seal was large and black, with the D—— cipher; there it was

small and red, with the ducal arms of the S—— family. Here the address, to the Minister, was diminutive and feminine; there the superscription, to a certain royal personage, was markedly bold and decided; the size alone formed a point of correspondence. But, then, the *radicalness* of these differences, which was excessive; the dirt, the soiled and torn condition of the paper, so inconsistent with the *true* methodical habits of D——, and so suggestive of a design to delude the beholder into an idea of the worthlessness of the document; these things, together with the hyper-obtrusive situation of this document, full in the view of every visitor, and thus exactly in accordance with the conclusions to which I had previously arrived; these things, I say, were strongly corroborative of suspicion in one who came with the intention to suspect.

“I protracted my visit as long as possible, and, while I maintained a most animated discussion with the Minister, upon a topic which I knew well had never failed to interest and excite him, I kept my attention really riveted upon the letter. In this examination, I committed to memory its external appearance and arrangement in the rack; and also fell, at length, upon a discovery which set at rest whatever trivial doubt I might have entertained. In scrutinizing the edges of the paper, I observed them to be more *chafed* than seemed necessary. They presented the *broken* appearance which is manifested when a stiff paper, having been once folded and pressed with a folder, is refolded in a reversed direction, in the same creases or edges which had formed the original fold. This discovery was sufficient. It was clear to me that the letter had been turned, as a glove, inside out, re-directed, and re-sealed. I bade the minister good-morning, and took my departure at once, leaving a gold snuff-box upon the table.

“The next morning I called for the snuff-box, when we resumed, quite eagerly, the conversation of the preceding day. While thus engaged, however, a loud report, as if of a pistol, was heard immediately beneath the windows of the Hotel, and was succeeded by a series of fearful screams, and the shoutings of a mob. D—— rushed to a casement, threw it open, and looked out. In the meantime, I stepped to the card-rack, took the

letter, put it in my pocket, and replaced it by a *facsimile* (so far as regards externals) which I had carefully prepared at my lodgings—imitating the D—— cipher very readily by means of a seal formed of bread.

"The disturbance in the street had been occasioned by the frantic behavior of a man with a musket. He had fired it among a crowd of women and children. It proved, however, to have been without ball, and the fellow was suffered to go his way as a lunatic or a drunkard. When he had gone, D—— came from the window, whither I had followed him immediately upon securing the object in view. Soon afterwards I bade him farewell. The pretended lunatic was a man in my own pay."

"But what purpose had you," I asked, "in replacing the letter by a *facsimile*? Would it not have been better, at the first visit, to have seized it openly and departed?"

"D——," replied Dupin, "is a desperate man, and a man of nerve. His Hotel, too, is not without attendants devoted to his interest. Had I made the wild attempt you suggest, I might never have left the Ministerial presence alive. The good people of Paris might have heard of me no more. But I had an object apart from these considerations. You know my political prepossessions. In this matter I act as a partisan of the lady concerned. For eighteen months the Minister has had her in his power. She has now him in hers—since, being unaware that the letter is not in his possession, he will proceed with his exactions as if it was. Thus will he inevitably commit himself at once to his political destruction. His downfall, too, will not be more precipitate than awkward. It is all very well to talk about the *facilis descensus Averni*;¹ but in all kinds of climbing, as Catalani said of singing, it is far more easy to get up than to come down. In the present instance I have no sympathy—at least no pity—for him who descends. He is that *monstrum horrendum*,² an unprincipled man of genius. I confess, however, that I should like very well to know the precise character of his thoughts, when, being defied by her whom the Prefect terms 'a certain personage,' he is reduced to opening the letter which I left for him in the card-rack."

"How? Did you put anything particular in it?"

"Why, it did not seem altogether right to leave the interior blank—that would have been insulting. D——, at Vienna once, did me an evil turn, which I told him, quite good-humoredly, that I should remember. So, as I knew he would feel some curiosity in regard to the identity of the person who had outwitted him, I thought it a pity not to give him a clew. He is well acquainted with my MS., and I just copied into the middle of the blank sheet the words:—

—*Un dessein si funeste,
S'il n'est digne d'Atrée, est digne de Thyeste.*³

They are to be found in Crébillon's *Atrée*."

THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO⁴

THE thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could; but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitively settled; but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good-will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point, this Fortunato, although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity, to practice imposture upon the British and Austrian millionaires. In painting and gemmary Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack;

³ So baleful a design, if it is not worthy of Atreus, is worthy of Thyestes.

⁴ First published in *Godey's Lady's Book*, November, 1846.

¹ Easy descent to Avernus (hell).

² Frightful monster.

but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially: I was skillful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk one evening, during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him: "My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking to-day! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

"As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchesi. If any one has a critical turn, it is he. He will tell me—"

"Luchesi cannot tell Amontillado from sherry."

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come, let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good-nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchesi—"

"I have no engagement; come."

"My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are incrustated with niter."

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have

been imposed upon. And as for Luchesi, he cannot distinguish sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a *roquelaure*¹ closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honor of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaux, and, giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe?" said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white webwork which gleams from these cavern walls."

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Niter?" he asked at length.

"Niter," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi—"

"Enough," he said; "the cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

¹ Cloak reaching about to the knees.

"True—true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily; but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damp."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mold.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are imbedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"*Nemo me impune lacessit.*"¹

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through walls of piled bones, with casks and punch-ions intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The niter!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough—"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grâve. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upward with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement—a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said; "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said.

"It is this," I answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my *roquelaure*.

"You jest!" he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amon-tillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak, and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amon-tillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and, descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavored to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amon-tillado. As for Luchesi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and, finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each

¹ No one injures me with impunity.

other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key, I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the niter. Indeed it is *very* damp. Once more let me *implore* you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low, moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was *not* the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might harken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labors and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and, holding the flambeaux over the masonwork, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated, I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him

who clamored. I re-echoed, I aided, I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamor grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said:

"Ha! ha! ha!—he! he!—a very good joke indeed, an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo—he! he! he!—over our wine—he! he! he!"

"The Amontillado!" I said.

"He! he! he!—he! he! he!—yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo,—the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."

"Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"*For the love of God, Montresor!*"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

But to these words I harkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud: "Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again.

"Fortunato!"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick—on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labor. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I re-erected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. *In pace requiescat!*¹

HAWTHORNE'S "TWICE-TOLD TALES"²

WE said a few hurried words about Mr. Hawthorne in our last number, with the design of speaking more fully in the present.

¹ May he rest in peace.

² First published in *Graham's Magazine*, May, 1842.

We are still, however, pressed for room, and must necessarily discuss his volumes more briefly and more at random than their high merits deserve.

The book professes to be a collection of *tales*, yet is, in two respects, misnamed. These pieces are now in their third republication, and, of course, are thrice-told. Moreover, they are by no means *all* tales either in the ordinary or in the legitimate understanding of the term. Many of them are pure essays; for example, "Sights from a Steeple," "Sunday at Home," "Little Annie's Ramble," "A Rill from the Town Pump," "The Toll-Gatherer's Day," "The Haunted Mind," "The Sister Years," "Snow-Flakes," "Night Sketches," and "Foot-Prints on the Sea-Shore." We mention these matters chiefly on account of their discrepancy with that marked precision and finish by which the body of the work is distinguished.

Of the essays just named, we must be content to speak in brief. They are each and all beautiful, without being characterized by the polish and adaptation so visible in the tales proper. A painter would at once note their leading or predominant feature, and style it *repose*. There is no attempt at effect. All is quiet, thoughtful, subdued. Yet this repose may exist simultaneously with high originality of thought; and Mr. Hawthorne has demonstrated the fact. At every turn we meet with novel combinations; yet these combinations never surpass the limits of the quiet. We are soothed as we read; and withal is a calm astonishment that ideas so apparently obvious have never occurred or been presented to us before. Herein our author differs materially from Lamb or Hunt or Hazlitt—who, with vivid originality of manner and expression, have less of the true novelty of thought than is generally supposed, and whose originality, at best, has an uneasy and meretricious quaintness, replete with startling effects unfounded in nature, and inducing trains of reflection which lead to no satisfactory result. The Essays of Hawthorne have much of the character of Irving, with more of originality, and less of finish; while, compared with the *Spectator*, they have a vast superiority at all points. The *Spectator*, Mr. Irving, and Mr. Hawthorne have in common that tranquil and subdued manner which we have chosen to

denominate *repose*; but, in the case of the two former, this repose is attained rather by the absence of novel combination, or of originality, than otherwise, and consists chiefly in the calm, quiet, unostentatious expression of commonplace thoughts, in an unambitious, unadulterated Saxon. In them, by strong effort, we are made to conceive the absence of all. In the essays before us the absence of effort is too obvious to be mistaken, and a strong undercurrent of *suggestion* runs continuously beneath the upper stream of the tranquil thesis. In short, these effusions of Mr. Hawthorne are the product of a truly imaginative intellect, restrained, and in some measure repressed, by fastidiousness of taste, by constitutional melancholy, and by indolence.

But it is of his tales that we desire principally to speak. The tale proper, in our opinion, affords unquestionably the fairest field for the exercise of the loftiest talent, which can be afforded by the wide domains of mere prose. Were we bidden to say how the highest genius could be most advantageously employed for the best display of its own powers, we should answer, without hesitation—in the composition of a rhymed poem, not to exceed in length what might be perused in an hour. Within this limit alone can the highest order of true poetry exist. We need only here say, upon this topic, that, in almost all classes of composition, the unity of effect or impression is a point of the greatest importance. It is clear, moreover, that this unity cannot be thoroughly preserved in productions whose perusal cannot be completed at one sitting. We may continue the reading of a prose composition, from the very nature of prose itself, much longer than we can persevere, to any good purpose, in the perusal of a poem. This latter, if truly fulfilling the demands of the poetic sentiment, induces an exaltation of the soul which cannot be long sustained. All high excitements are necessarily transient. Thus a long poem is a paradox. And, without unity of impression, the deepest effects cannot be brought about. Epics were the offspring of an imperfect sense of Art, and their reign is no more. A poem *too* brief may produce a vivid, but never an intense or enduring impression. Without a certain continuity of effort—without a certain duration or repetition of

purpose—the soul is never deeply moved. There must be the dropping of the water upon the rock. De Béranger has wrought brilliant things—pungent and spirit-stirring—but, like all immassive bodies, they lack *momentum*, and thus fail to satisfy the Poetic Sentiment. They sparkle and excite, but, from want of continuity, fail deeply to impress. Extreme brevity will degenerate into epigrammatism; but the sin of extreme length is even more unpardonable. *In medio tutissimus ibis*.¹

Were we called upon, however, to designate that class of composition which, next to such a poem as we have suggested, should best fulfill the demands of high genius—should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion—we should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale, as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. We allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from *totality*. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences—resulting from weariness or interruption.

A skillful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single *effect* to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one

pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed: and this is an end unattainable by the novel. Undue brevity is just as exceptionable here as in the poem; but undue length is yet more to be avoided.

We have said that the tale has a point of superiority even over the poem. In fact, while the *rhythm* of this latter is an essential aid in the development of the poem's highest idea—the idea of the Beautiful—the artificialities of this rhythm are an inseparable bar to the development of all points of thought or expression which have their basis in *Truth*. But Truth is often, and in very great degree, the aim of the tale. Some of the finest tales are tales of ratiocination. Thus the field of this species of composition, if not in so elevated a region on the mountain of Mind, is a table-land of far vaster extent than the domain of the mere poem. Its products are never so rich, but infinitely more numerous, and more appreciable by the mass of mankind. The writer of the prose tale, in short, may bring to his theme a vast variety of modes or inflections of thought and expression—the ratiocinative, for example, the sarcastic, or the humorous) which are not only antagonistical to the nature of the poem, but absolutely forbidden by one of its most peculiar and indispensable adjuncts; we allude, of course, to rhythm. It may be added here, *par parenthèse*, that the author who aims at the purely beautiful in a prose tale is laboring at a great disadvantage. For Beauty can be better treated in the poem. Not so with terror, or passion, or horror, or a multitude of such other points. And here it will be seen how full of prejudice are the usual animadversions against those *tales of effect*, many fine examples of which were found in the earlier numbers of *Blackwood*. The impressions produced were wrought in a legitimate sphere of action, and constituted a legitimate although sometimes an exaggerated interest. They were relished by every man of genius: although there were found many men of genius who condemned them without just ground. The true critic will but demand that the design intended be

¹ You will go most safely in the middle.

accomplished, to the fullest extent, by the means most advantageously applicable.

We have very few American tales of real merit—we may say, indeed, none, with the exception of *The Tales of a Traveler* of Washington Irving, and these *Twice-Told Tales* of Mr. Hawthorne. Some of the pieces of Mr. John Neal abound in vigor and originality; but, in general, his compositions of this class are excessively diffuse, extravagant, and indicative of an imperfect sentiment of Art. Articles at random are, now and then, met with in our periodicals which might be advantageously compared with the best effusions of the British Magazines; but, upon the whole, we are far behind our progenitors in this department of literature.

Of Mr. Hawthorne's tales we would say, emphatically, that they belong to the highest region of Art—an Art subservient to genius of a very lofty order. We had supposed, with good reason for so supposing, that he had been thrust into his present position by one of the impudent *cliques* which beset our literature, and whose pretensions it is our full purpose to expose at the earliest opportunity; but we have been most agreeably mistaken. We know of few compositions which the critic can more honestly commend than these *Twice-Told Tales*. As Americans, we feel proud of the book.

Mr. Hawthorne's distinctive trait is invention, creation, imagination, originality—a trait which, in the literature of fiction, is positively worth all the rest. But the nature of the originality, so far as regards its manifestation in letters, is but imperfectly understood. The inventive or original mind as frequently displays itself in novelty of *tone* as in novelty of matter. Mr. Hawthorne is original at *all* points.

It would be a matter of some difficulty to designate the best of these tales; we repeat that, without exception, they are beautiful. "Wakefield" is remarkable for the skill with which an old idea—a well-known incident—is worked up or discussed. A man of whims conceives the purpose of quitting his wife and residing *incognito*, for twenty years, in her immediate neighborhood. Something of this kind actually happened in London. The force of Mr. Hawthorne's tale lies in the analysis of the motives which must or might have impelled the husband to such folly, in

the first instance, with the possible causes of his perseverance. Upon this thesis a sketch of singular power has been constructed.

"The Wedding Knell" is full of the boldest imagination—an imagination fully controlled by taste. The most captious critic could find no flaw in this production.

"The Minister's Black Veil" is a masterly composition, of which the sole defect is that to the rabble its exquisite skill will be *caviare*. The *obvious* meaning of this article will be found to smother its insinuated one. The *moral* put into the mouth of the dying minister will be supposed to convey the *true* import of the narrative; and that a crime of dark dye (having reference to the "young lady") has been committed, is a point which only minds congenial with that of the author will perceive.

"Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe" is vividly original, and managed most dexterously.

"Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" is exceedingly well imagined, and executed with surpassing ability. The artist breathes in every line of it.

"The White Old Maid" is objectionable even more than the "Minister's Black Veil," on the score of its mysticism. Even with the thoughtful and analytic, there will be much trouble in penetrating its entire import.

"The Hollow of the Three Hills" we would quote in full had we space;—not as evincing higher talent than any of the other pieces, but as affording an excellent example of the author's peculiar ability. The subject is commonplace. A witch subjects the Distant and the Past to the view of a mourner. It has been the fashion to describe, in such cases, a mirror in which the images of the absent appear; or a cloud of smoke is made to arise, and thence the figures are gradually unfolded. Mr. Hawthorne has wonderfully heightened his effect by making the ear, in place of the eye, the medium by which the fantasy is conveyed. The head of the mourner is enveloped in the cloak of the witch, and within its magic folds there arise sounds which have an all-sufficient intelligence. Throughout this article also, the artist is conspicuous—not more in positive than in negative merits. Not only is all done that should be done, but (what perhaps is an

end with more difficulty attained) there is nothing done which should not be. Every word *tells*, and there is not a word which does *not* tell.

In "Howe's Masquerade" we observe something which resembles plagiarism—but which *may be* a very flattering coincidence of thought. We quote the passage in question:

"*With a dark flush of wrath upon his brow, they saw the General draw his sword and advance to meet the figure in the cloak before the latter had stepped one pace upon the floor. 'Villain, unmuffle yourself,' cried he. 'You pass no farther!' The figure, without blenching a hair's breadth from the sword which was pointed at his breast, made a solemn pause, and lowered the cape of the cloak from about his face, yet not sufficiently for the spectators to catch a glimpse of it. But Sir William Howe had evidently seen enough. The sternness of his countenance gave place to a look of wild amazement, if not horror, while he recoiled several steps from the figure, and let fall his sword upon the floor.*"

The idea here is, that the figure in the cloak is the phantom or reduplication of Sir William Howe; but in an article called "William Wilson," one of the *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, we have not only the same idea, but the same idea similarly presented in several respects. We quote two paragraphs, which our readers may compare with what has been already given. We have italicized, above, the immediate particulars of resemblance.

"The brief moment in which I averted my eyes had been sufficient to produce, apparently, a material change in the arrangement at the upper or farther end of the room. A large mirror, it appeared to me, now stood where none had been perceptible before: and as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, *advanced* with a feeble and tottering gait to meet me. Thus it appeared I say, but was not. It was Wilson, who then stood before me in the agonies of dissolution. Not a line in all the marked and singular lineaments of that face which was not even identically mine own. *His mask and cloak lay where he had thrown them, upon the floor.*"

Here it will be observed that, not only are the two general conceptions identical, but there are various *points* of similarity. In each case the figure seen is the wraith or duplication of the beholder. In each case the scene is a masquerade. In each case the figure is cloaked. In each, there is a quarrel—that is to say, angry words pass between the parties. In each the beholder is enraged. In each the cloak and sword fall upon the floor. The "villain, unmuffle yourself," of Mr. H. is precisely paralleled by a passage at page 56 of "William Wilson."

In the way of objection we have scarcely a word to say of these tales. There is, perhaps, a somewhat too general or prevalent *tone*—a tone of melancholy and mysticism. The subjects are insufficiently varied. There is not so much of *versatility* evinced as we might well be warranted in expecting from the high powers of Mr. Hawthorne. But beyond these trivial exceptions we have really none to make. The style is purity itself. Force abounds. High imagination gleams from every page. Mr. Hawthorne is a man of the truest genius. We only regret that the limits of our Magazine will not permit us to pay him that full tribute of commendation, which, under other circumstances, we should be so eager to pay.

THE POETIC PRINCIPLE¹

IN speaking of the Poetic Principle, I have no design to be either thorough or profound. While discussing very much at random the essentiality of what we call Poetry, my principal purpose will be to cite for consideration some few of those minor English or American poems which best suit my own taste, or which, upon my own fancy, have left the most definite impression. By "minor poems" I mean, of course, poems of little length. And here, in the beginning, permit me to say a few words in regard to a somewhat peculiar principle, which, whether rightfully or wrongfully, has always had its influence in my own critical estimate of the poem. I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase, "a long poem," is simply a flat contradiction in terms.

¹ First published in *The Home Journal*, 31 August, 1850.

I need scarcely observe that a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychal necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags—fails—a revulsion ensues—and then the poem is, in effect, and in fact, no longer such.

There are, no doubt, many who have found difficulty in reconciling the critical dictum that the *Paradise Lost* is to be devoutly admired throughout, with the absolute impossibility of maintaining for it, during perusal, the amount of enthusiasm which that critical dictum would demand. This great work, in fact, is to be regarded as poetical only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of Art, Unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. If, to preserve its Unity—its totality of effect or impression—we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression. After a passage of what we feel to be true poetry, there follows, inevitably, a passage of platitude which no critical pre-judgment can force us to admire; but if, upon completing the work, we read it again, omitting the first book—that is to say, commencing with the second—we shall be surprised at now finding that admirable which we before condemned—that damnable which we had previously so much admired. It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun, is a nullity—and this is precisely the fact.

In regard to the *Iliad*, we have, if not positive proof, at least very good reason, for believing it intended as a series of lyrics; but, granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based in an imperfect sense of Art. The modern epic is, of the supposititious ancient model, but an inconsiderate and blindfold imitation. But the day of these artistic anomalies is over. If, at any time, any very long poem *were* popular in reality—which I doubt—it is at least clear that no very long poem will ever be popular again.

That the extent of a poetical work is, *ceteris paribus*, the measure of its merit, seems undoubtedly, when we thus state it, a proposition sufficiently absurd—yet we are indebted for it to the Quarterly Reviews. Surely there can be nothing in mere *size*, abstractly considered—there can be nothing in mere *bulk*, so far as a volume is concerned, which has so continuously elicited admiration from these saturnine pamphlets! A mountain, to be sure, by the mere sentiment of physical magnitude which it conveys, *does* impress us with a sense of the sublime—but no man is impressed after *this* fashion by the material grandeur of even *The Columbiad*.¹ Even the Quarterlies have not instructed us to be so impressed by it. *As yet*, they have not *insisted* on our estimating Lamartine by the cubic foot, or Pollok² by the pound—but what else are we to *infer* from their continued prating about “sustained effort”? If, by “sustained effort,” any little gentleman has accomplished an epic, let us frankly commend him for the effort—if this indeed be a thing commendable—but let us forbear praising the epic on the effort’s account. It is to be hoped that common sense, in the time to come, will prefer deciding upon a work of art rather by the impression it makes, by the effect it produces, than by the time it took to impress the effect, or by the amount of “sustained effort” which had been found necessary in effecting the impression. The fact is, that perseverance is one thing and genius quite another—nor can all the Quarterlies in Christendom confound them. By and by, this proposition, with many which I have just been urging, will be received as self-evident. In the mean time, by being generally condemned as falsities, they will not be essentially damaged as truths.

On the other hand, it is clear that a poem may be improperly brief. Undue brevity degenerates into mere epigrammatism. A *very* short poem, while now and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produces a profound or enduring effect. There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax. De Béranger has wrought innumerable things, pungent and spirit-stirring; but in general they have been too imponderous to

¹ Joel Barlow’s epic poem.

² Scottish poet (1798–1827).

stamp themselves deeply into the public attention, and thus, as so many feathers of fancy, have been blown aloft only to be whistled down the wind.

A remarkable instance of the effect of undue brevity in depressing a poem—in keeping it out of the popular view—is afforded by the following exquisite little Serenade:

I arise from dreams of thee
 In the first sweet sleep of night,
 When the winds are breathing low,
 And the stars are shining bright;
 I arise from dreams of thee,
 And a spirit in my feet
 Has led me—who knows how?—
 To thy chamber-window, sweet!

The wandering airs, they faint
 On the dark, the silent stream—
 The champak odors fail
 Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
 The nightingale's complaint,
 It dies upon her heart,
 As I must die on thine,
 O, beloved as thou art!

O, lift me from the grass!
 I die, I faint, I fail!
 Let thy love in kisses rain
 On my lips and eyelids pale.
 My cheek is cold and white, alas!
 My heart beats loud and fast:
 Oh! press it close to thine again,
 Where it will break at last!

Very few perhaps are familiar with these lines—yet no less a poet than Shelley is their author. Their warm, yet delicate and ethereal imagination will be appreciated by all—but by none so thoroughly as by him who has himself arisen from sweet dreams of one beloved to bathe in the aromatic air of a southern midsummer night.

One of the finest poems by Willis, the very best in my opinion which he has ever written, has no doubt, through this same defect of undue brevity, been kept back from its proper position, not less in the critical than in the popular view.

The shadows lay along Broadway,
 'Twas near the twilight tide,
 And slowly there a lady fair
 Was walking in her pride.
 Along walked she; but, viewlessly,
 Walked spirits at her side.

Peace charmed the street beneath her feet
 And Honor charmed the air;
 And all astir looked kind on her,
 And called her good as fair,
 For all God ever gave to her
 She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
 From lovers warm and true,
 For her heart was cold to all but gold,
 And the rich came not to woo—
 But honored well are charms to sell
 If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair—
 A slight girl, lily pale;
 And she had unseen company
 To make the spirit quail:
 'Twixt Want and Scorn she walked forlorn,
 And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
 For this world's peace to pray;
 For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
 Her woman's heart gave way!—
 But the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven
 By man is cursed away!¹

In this composition we find it difficult to recognize the Willis who has written so many mere “verses of society.” The lines are not only richly ideal, but full of energy; while they breathe an earnestness, an evident sincerity of sentiment, for which we look in vain throughout all the other works of this author.

While the epic mania—while the idea that, to merit in poetry, prolixity is indispensable—has for some years past been gradually dying out of the public mind by mere dint of its own absurdity, we find it succeeded by a heresy too palpably false to be long tolerated, but one which, in the brief period it has already endured, may be said to have accomplished more in the corruption of our Poetical Literature than all its other enemies combined. I allude to the heresy of *The Didactic*. It has been assumed, tacitly and avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of all Poetry is Truth. Every poem, it is said, should inculcate a moral, and by this moral is the poetical merit of the work to be adjudged. We Americans especially have patronized this happy idea,

¹ The poem's title is *Unseen Spirits*. Nathaniel Parker Willis (1806–1867), poet, journalist, editor, a voluminous and hasty writer, is scarcely remembered now. He produced, indeed, hardly anything which still has more than antiquarian interest.

and we Bostonians very especially have developed it in full. We have taken it into our heads that to write a poem simply for the poem's sake, and to acknowledge such to have been our design, would be to confess ourselves radically wanting in the true Poetic dignity and force:—but the simple fact is, that would we but permit ourselves to look into our own souls, we should immediately there discover that under the sun there neither exists nor *can* exist any work more thoroughly dignified, more supremely noble than this very poem, this poem *per se*, this poem which is a poem and nothing more, this poem written solely for the poem's sake.

With as deep a reverence for the True as ever inspired the bosom of man, I would nevertheless limit, in some measure, its modes of inculcation. I would limit to enforce them. I would not enfeeble them by dissipation. The demands of Truth are severe. She has no sympathy with the myrtles. All *that* which is so indispensable in Song is precisely all *that* with which *she* has nothing whatever to do. It is but making her a flaunting paradox to wreath her in gems and flowers. In enforcing a truth, we need severity rather than efflorescence of language. We must be simple, precise, terse. We must be cool, calm, unimpassioned. In a word, we must be in that mood which, as nearly as possible, is the exact converse of the poetical. *He* must be blind indeed who does not perceive the radical and chasmal differences between the truthful and the poetical modes of inculcation. He must be theory-mad beyond redemption who, in spite of these differences, shall still persist in attempting to reconcile the obstinate oils and waters of Poetry and Truth.

Dividing the world of mind into its three most immediately obvious distinctions, we have the Pure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Sense. I place Taste in the middle because it is just this position which it occupies in the mind. It holds intimate relations with either extreme, but from the Moral Sense is separated by so faint a difference that Aristotle has not hesitated to place some of its operations among the virtues themselves. Nevertheless, we find the *offices* of the trio marked with a sufficient distinction. Just as the Intellect concerns itself with Truth, so Taste informs us of the Beautiful, while the

Moral Sense is regardful of Duty. Of this latter, while Conscience teaches the obligation, and Reason the expediency, Taste contents herself with displaying the charms, waging war upon Vice solely on the ground of her deformity, her disproportion, her animosity to the fitting, to the appropriate, to the harmonious, in a word, to Beauty.

An immortal instinct deep within the spirit of man is thus plainly a sense of the Beautiful. This it is which administers to his delight in the manifold forms, and sounds, and odors, and sentiments, amid which he exists. And just as the lily is repeated in the lake, or the eyes of Amaryllis in the mirror, so is the mere oral or written repetition of these forms, and sounds, and colors, and odors, and sentiments, a duplicate source of delight. But this mere repetition is not poetry. He who shall simply sing, with however glowing enthusiasm, or with however vivid a truth of description, of the sights, and sounds, and odors, and colors, and sentiments, which greet *him* in common with all mankind—he, I say, has yet failed to prove his divine title. There is still a something in the distance which he has been unable to attain. We have still a thirst unquenchable, to allay which he has not shown us the crystal springs. This thirst belongs to the immortality of Man. It is at once a consequence and an indication of his perennial existence. It is the desire of the moth for the star. It is no mere appreciation of the Beauty before us—but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above. Inspired by an ecstatic prescience of the glories beyond the grave, we struggle by multiform combinations among the things and thoughts of Time to attain a portion of that Loveliness whose very elements, perhaps, appertain to eternity alone. And thus when by Poetry—or when by Music, the most entrancing of the Poetic moods—we find ourselves melted into tears, we weep then—not as the Abbate Gravin¹ supposes—through excess of pleasure, but through a certain, petulant, impatient sorrow at our inability to grasp *now*, wholly, here on earth, at once and forever, those divine and rapturous joys, of which *through* the poem or *through* the music, we attain to but brief and indeterminate glimpses.

¹ Italian jurist, critic, and poet (1664-1718).

The struggle to apprehend the supernal Loveliness—this struggle, on the part of souls fittingly constituted—has given to the world all *that* which it (the world) has ever been enabled at once to understand and to *feel* as poetic.

The Poetic Sentiment, of course, may develop itself in various modes—in Painting, in Sculpture, in Architecture, in the Dance—very especially in Music—and very peculiarly, and with a wide field, in the composition of the Landscape Garden. Our present theme, however, has regard only to its manifestation in words. And here let me speak briefly on the topic of rhythm. Contenting myself with the certainty that Music, in its various modes of meter, rhythm, and rhyme, is of so vast a moment in Poetry as never to be wisely rejected—is so vitally important an adjunct that he is simply silly who declines its assistance—I will not now pause to maintain its absolute essentiality. It is in Music, perhaps, that the soul most nearly attains the great end for which, when inspired by the Poetic Sentiment, it struggles—the creation of supernal Beauty. It *may* be, indeed, that here this sublime end is, now and then, attained in *fact*. We are often made to feel, with a shivering delight, that from an earthly harp are stricken notes which *cannot* have been unfamiliar to the angels. And thus there can be little doubt that in the union of Poetry with Music in its popular sense, we shall find the widest field for the Poetic development. The old Bards and Minnesingers had advantages which we do not possess—and Thomas Moore, singing his own songs, was, in the most legitimate manner, perfecting them as poems.

To recapitulate, then:—I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with Duty or with Truth.

A few words, however, in explanation. *That* pleasure which is at once the most pure, the most elevating, and the most intense, is derived, I maintain, from the contemplation of the Beautiful. In the contemplation of Beauty we alone find it possible to attain that pleasurable elevation, or excitement, *of the soul*, which we recognize as the Poetic Senti-

ment, and which is so easily distinguished from Truth, which is the satisfaction of the Reason, or from Passion, which is the excitement of the heart. I make Beauty, therefore,—using the word as inclusive of the sublime,—I make Beauty the province of the poem, simply because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring as directly as possible from their causes:—no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation in question is at least *most readily* attainable in the poem. It by no means follows, however, that the incitements of Passion, or the precepts of Duty, or even the lessons of Truth, may not be introduced into a poem, and with advantage; for they may subserve incidentally, in various ways, the general purposes of the work:—but the true artist will always contrive to tone them down in proper subjection to that *Beauty* which is the atmosphere and the real essence of the poem.

I cannot better introduce the few poems which I shall present for your consideration, than by the citation of the Proëm to Mr. Longfellow's *Waif*:

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

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Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

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For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
 Whose songs gushed from his heart,
 As showers, from the clouds of summer,
 Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who through long days of labor,
 And nights devoid of ease, 30
 Still heard in his soul the music
 Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
 The restless pulse of care,
 And come like the benediction
 That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
 The poem of thy choice,
 And lend to the rhyme of the poet
 The beauty of thy voice. 40

And the night shall be filled with music,
 And the cares, that infest the day,
 Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
 And as silently steal away.

With no great range of imagination, these lines have been justly admired for their delicacy of expression. Some of the images are very effective. Nothing can be better than

The bards sublime
 Whose distant footsteps echo
 Down the corridors of Time.

The idea of the last quatrain is also very effective. The poem, on the whole, however, is chiefly to be admired for the graceful *insouciance* of its meter, so well in accordance with the character of the sentiments, and especially for the *ease* of the general manner. This "ease" or naturalness, in a literary style, it has long been the fashion to regard as ease in appearance alone—as a point of really difficult attainment. But not so: a natural manner is difficult only to him who should never meddle with it—to the unnatural. It is but the result of writing with the understanding, or with the instinct, that *the tone*, in composition, should always be that which the mass of mankind would adopt—and must perpetually vary, of course, with the occasion. The author who, after the fashion of the *North American Review*, should be upon *all* occasions merely "quiet," must necessarily upon *many* occasions be simply silly, or stupid; and has no more right to be considered "easy" or "natural" than

a Cockney exquisite, or than the sleeping Beauty in the wax-works.

Among the minor poems of Bryant, none has so much impressed me as the one which he entitles *June*. I quote only a portion of it:

There, through the long, long summer hours,
 The golden light should lie,
 And thick young herbs and groups of flowers
 Stand in their beauty by.
 The oriole should build and tell
 His love-tale, close beside my cell;
 The idle butterfly
 Should rest him there, and there be heard
 The housewife-bee and humming bird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon 10
 Come, from the village sent,
 Or songs of maids, beneath the moon,
 With fairy laughter blent?
 And what if, in the evening light,
 Betrothed lovers walk in sight
 Of my low monument?
 I would the lovely scene around
 Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know, I know I should not see 20
 The season's glorious show,
 Nor would its brightness shine for me,
 Nor its wild music flow;
 But if, around my place of sleep,
 The friends I love should come to weep,
 They might not haste to go.
 Soft airs, and song, and light and bloom
 Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their softened hearts should bear 30
 The thought of what has been,
 And speak of one who cannot share
 The gladness of the scene;
 Whose part, in all the pomp that fills
 The circuit of the summer hills,
 Is—that his grave is green;
 And deeply would their hearts rejoice
 To hear again his living voice.

The rhythmical flow here is even voluptuous—nothing could be more melodious. The poem has always affected me in a remarkable manner. The intense melancholy which seems to well up, perforce, to the surface of all the poet's cheerful sayings about his grave, we find thrilling us to the soul—while there is the truest poetic elevation in the thrill. The impression left is one of a pleasurable sadness. And if, in the remaining compositions which I shall introduce to

you, there be more or less of a similar tone always apparent, let me remind you that (how or why we know not) this certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the higher manifestations of true Beauty. It is, nevertheless,

A feeling of sadness and longing
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

The taint of which I speak is clearly perceptible even in a poem so full of brilliancy and spirit as the *Health* of Edward Coate Pinkney:

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements
And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burdened bee
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragranciness,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,—
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon—

Her health! and would on earth there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.¹

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It was the misfortune of Mr. Pinkney to have been born too far south. Had he been a New Englander, it is probable that he would have been ranked as the first of American lyrists, by that magnanimous cabal which has so long controlled the destinies of American Letters, in conducting the thing called the *North American Review*. The poem just cited is especially beautiful; but the poetic elevation which it induces, we must refer chiefly to our sympathy in the poet's enthusiasm. We pardon his hyperboles for the evident earnestness with which they are uttered.

It was by no means my design, however, to expatiate upon the *merits* of what I should read you. These will necessarily speak for themselves. Boccalini, in his *Advertisements from Parnassus*, tells us that Zoilus once presented Apollo a very caustic criticism upon a very admirable book:—whereupon the god asked him for the beauties of the work. He replied that he only busied himself about the errors. On hearing this, Apollo, handing him a sack of unwinnowed wheat, bade him pick out *all the chaff* for his reward.

Now this fable answers very well as a hit at the critics—but I am by no means sure that the god was in the right. I am by no means certain that the true limits of the critical duty are not grossly misunderstood. Excellence, in a poem especially, may be considered in the light of an axiom, which need only be properly *put*, to become self-evident. It is *not* excellence if it require to be demonstrated as such:—and thus to point out too particularly the merits of a work of Art, is to admit that they are *not* merits altogether.

Among the *Melodies* of Thomas Moore is one whose distinguished character as a poem proper seems to have been singularly left out of view. I allude to his lines beginning—"Come, rest in this bosom." The intense energy of their expression is not surpassed by anything in Byron. There are

¹ Pinkney (1802-1828) came of a Baltimore family. He was a poet of some promise, but lived long enough to publish only one slender volume (in 1825) of largely derivative verse.

two of the lines in which a sentiment is conveyed that embodies the *all in all* of the divine passion of love—a sentiment which, perhaps, has found its echo in more, and in more passionate, human hearts than any other single sentiment ever embodied in words:

Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer,
Though the herd have fled from thee, thy home is
still here;
Here still is the smile, that no cloud can o'ercast,
And a heart and a hand all thy own to the last.

Oh! what was love made for, if 'tis not the same
Through joy and through torment, through glory
and shame?
I know not, I ask not, if guilt's in that heart,
I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.

Thou hast called me thy Angel in moments of
bliss, 9
And thy Angel I'll be, 'mid the horrors of this,—
Through the furnace, unshrinking, thy steps to
pursue,
And shield thee, and save thee,—or perish there
too!

It has been the fashion of late days to deny Moore imagination, while granting him fancy—a distinction originating with Coleridge—than whom no man more fully comprehended the great powers of Moore. The fact is, that the fancy of this poet so far predominates over all his other faculties, and over the fancy of all other men, as to have induced, very naturally, the idea that he is fanciful *only*. But never was there a greater mistake. Never was a grosser wrong done the fame of a true poet. In the compass of the English language I can call to mind no poem more profoundly—more weirdly *imaginative*, in the best sense, than the lines commencing—"I would I were by that dim lake"—which are the composition of Thomas Moore. I regret that I am unable to remember them.

One of the noblest—and, speaking of fancy, one of the most singularly fanciful of modern poets, was Thomas Hood. His *Fair Ines* had always for me an inexpressible charm:

O saw ye not fair Ines?
She's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest:

She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night, 10
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivaled bright;
And blessed will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side,
And whispered thee so near! 20
Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners waved before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay, 30
And snowy plumes they wore;
It would have been a beauteous dream,
If it had been no more!

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,
To her you've loved so long. 40

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before,—
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blessed one lover's heart
Has broken many more!

The Haunted House, by the same author, is one of the truest poems ever written, one of the *truest*, one of the most unexceptionable, one of the most thoroughly artistic, both in its theme and in its execution. It is, moreover, powerfully ideal—imaginative. I regret that its length renders it unsuitable for the purposes of this Lecture. In place of

it, permit me to offer the universally appreciated *Bridge of Sighs*:

One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!
Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;—
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.
Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed:

Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurled—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it,—think of it,
Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly
Lift her with care
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!
Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently,—kindly,—
Smooth, and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.
Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest,—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!
Owning her weakness,
Her evil behavior,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Savior!

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The vigor of this poem is no less remarkable than its pathos. The versification, although carrying the fanciful to the very verge of the fantastic, is nevertheless admirably adapted to the wild insanity which is the thesis of the poem.

Among the minor poems of Lord Byron is one which has never received from the critics the praise which it undoubtedly deserves:

Though the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine, 10
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shivered,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is delivered
To pain—it shall not be its slave. 20
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not condemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slandered, thou never couldst shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me, 30
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one—
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'Twas folly not sooner to shun:
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee
I have found that whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*. 40

From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that which I most cherished,
Deserved to be dearest of all:

In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

Although the rhythm here is one of the most difficult, the versification could scarcely be improved. No nobler *theme* ever engaged the pen of poet. It is the soul-elevating idea that no man can consider himself entitled to complain of Fate while, in his adversity, he still retains the unwavering love of woman.

From Alfred Tennyson—although in perfect sincerity I regard him as the noblest poet that ever lived—I have left myself time to cite only a very brief specimen. I call him, and *think* him the noblest of poets—not because the impressions he produces are at all times the most profound—not because the poetical excitement which he induces is at all times the most intense—but because it is at all times the most ethereal—in other words, the most elevating and most pure. No poet is so little of the earth, earthy. What I am about to read is from his last long poem, *The Princess*:

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more. 10

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more. 20

Thus, although in a very cursory and imperfect manner, I have endeavored to convey to you my conception of the Poetic Principle. It has been my purpose to suggest that, while this Principle itself is strictly and simply the Human Aspiration for Supernal Beauty, the

manifestation of the Principle is always found in *an elevating excitement of the Soul*, quite independent of that passion which is the intoxication of the Heart, or of that truth which is the satisfaction of the Reason. For in regard to Passion, alas! its tendency is to degrade rather than to elevate the Soul. Love, on the contrary—Love—the true, the divine Eros—the Uranian as distinguished from the Dionæan Venus—is unquestionably the purest and truest of all poetical themes. And in regard to Truth—if, to be sure, through the attainment of a truth we are led to perceive a harmony where none was apparent before, we experience at once the true poetical effect—but this effect is referable to the harmony alone, and not in the least degree to the truth which merely served to render the harmony manifest.

We shall reach, however, more immediately a distinct conception of what the true Poetry is, by mere reference to a few of the simple elements which induce in the Poet himself the true poetical effect. He recognizes the ambrosia which nourishes his soul, in the bright orbs that shine in Heaven—in the volutes of the flower—in the clustering of low shrubberies—in the waving of the grain-fields—in the slanting of tall Eastern trees—in the blue distance of mountains—in the grouping of clouds—in the twinkling of half-hidden brooks—in the gleaming of silver rivers—in the repose of sequestered lakes—in the star-mirroring depths of lonely wells. He perceives it in the songs of birds—in the harp of Æolus—in the sighing of the night-wind—in the repining voice of the forest—in the surf that complains to the shore—in the fresh breath of the woods—in the scent of the violet—in the voluptuous perfume of the hyacinth—in the suggestive odor that comes to him at eventide

from far-distant, undiscovered islands, over dim oceans, illimitable and unexplored. He owns it in all noble thoughts—in all unworldly motives—in all holy impulses—in all chivalrous, generous, and self-sacrificing deeds. He feels it in the beauty of woman—in the grace of her step—in the luster of her eye—in the melody of her voice—in her soft laughter—in her sigh—in the harmony of the rustling of her robes. He deeply feels it in her winning endearments—in her burning enthusiasms—in her gentle charities—in her meek and devotional endurances—but above all—ah, far above all—he kneels to it, he worships it in the faith, in the purity, in the strength, in the altogether divine majesty—of her *love*.

Let me conclude by the recitation of yet another brief poem—one very different in character from any that I have before quoted. It is by Motherwell,¹ and is called *The Song of the Cavalier*. With our modern and altogether rational ideas of the absurdity and impiety of warfare, we are not precisely in that frame of mind best adapted to sympathize with the sentiments, and thus to appreciate the real excellence of the poem. To do this fully we must identify ourselves in fancy with the soul of the old cavalier.

Then mounte! then mounte, brave gallants, all,
 And don your helmes amaine:
 Deathe's couriers, Fame and Honor, call
 Us to the field againe.
 No shrewish teares shall fill our eye
 When the sword-hilt's in our hand,—
 Heart-whole we'll part, and no whit sighe
 For the fayrest of the land;
 Let piping swaine, and craven wight,
 Thus weepe and puling crye,
 Our business is like men to fight,
 And hero-like to die!

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¹ Scottish poet (1797-1835).

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807-1882)

Longfellow was born at Portland, Maine, on 27 February, 1807. After attending the Portland Academy, he went to Bowdoin College, was in the same class as Nathaniel Hawthorne, and was graduated in 1825. Upon his graduation he was offered the chair of modern languages at Bowdoin, with the understanding that he was to have the opportunity of study and travel in Europe to prepare himself for the post. He accepted the appointment and sailed for France in the spring of 1826, remaining abroad until the summer of 1829. His time was spent in France, Spain (where he met Irving), Italy, and Germany. In 1831 he married Miss Mary S. Potter, of Portland. In 1834 he was offered the Smith Professorship of modern languages at Harvard, in succession to George Ticknor, and was told that he might spend a year or more abroad in the study of German. He sailed for England in April, 1835, spending some months there and in the Scandinavian countries and Holland. In the latter country Longfellow's wife became ill and died. He proceeded to Heidelberg, where he was engaged in study for some seven or eight months, returning to America in the fall of 1836. Not many months after he took up his work at Harvard he began to live in Craigie House, then owned by Mrs. Andrew Craigie, and in this house he lived during the remainder of his life. In 1843 he married Miss Frances Elizabeth Appleton, of Boston, which increased his income as well as his happiness; and at this time Miss Appleton's father purchased Craigie House for Longfellow. He held his post at Harvard until 1854, with only one long vacation spent abroad. In 1861 Mrs. Longfellow was tragically burned to death, which darkened life for the poet, though in the course of time he regained his serenity. In 1868-1869 he was abroad for over a year, receiving many tokens of his distinction, and among them honorary degrees from both Cambridge University and Oxford. He died at his home in Cambridge on 24 March, 1882.

While he was yet a student at Bowdoin Longfellow cherished literary aspirations. In his senior year he wrote to his father: "I most eagerly aspire after future eminence in literature; my whole soul burns ardently for it, and every earthly thought centers in it." His father wished him to study the law. Fortunately active conflict was forestalled by the invitation which launched the poet upon his academic career. Such an opening, if not ideal for his purpose, was yet sufficiently better than the law. And indeed, while Longfellow was heartily tired of his professorship for some time before he finally resigned it, still, the two periods of study abroad which his acceptance of academic posts procured him were of inestimable importance for his literary work. It was through his acquaintance with European culture and his reading of romantic literature that he found himself. At first he worked as a man of letters, interpreting the culture of the Old World to the busy, unsophisticated inhabitants of the New. It was only gradually that he became primarily a poet. His success as a poet was nothing less than phenomenal, if it can be measured in terms of the number of readers both in England and in America whom he gained, and in terms of the love and veneration which that vast multitude of readers bestowed upon him. At the present time, while some of his lyrics and narratives continue—and rightly continue—to interest young readers, it may as well be said that Longfellow's intrinsic importance has diminished in our eyes, though his career and work remain significant from the historical point of view. Professor W. P. Trent has admirably and tactfully said that Longfellow's reputation "was amply deserved in the poet's day, and rested in the main on his gifts as a storyteller in verse, on his power to transplant to American literature some of the color and melody and romantic charm of the complex European literatures he had studied, and, more especially, on his skill in expressing in comparatively artless lyrics of sentiment and reflection homely and wholesome thoughts and feelings which he shared with his countrymen of all classes throughout a broad land the occupation of which proceeded apace during his own span of years. . . . His place is not with the few eminent poets of the world, or even of his century, as the admiration of the mass of his countrymen and the critical lucubrations of some of them might be held to imply; but it is, legitimately and permanently, in the forefront of the small band of important writers in verse and in prose who during the first century of the republic's existence laid firmly and upon more or less democratic lines the foundations of a native literature." (*Camb. Hist. Am. Lit.*, II.)

Some of Longfellow's more important volumes and their dates follow: *Outre-Mer, A Pilgrimage beyond the Sea* (prose, 1833-1834); *Hyperion, A Romance* (prose, 1839); *Voices of the Night* (the first volume of poems, 1839); *Ballads and Other Poems* (1842); *Poems on Slavery* (1842); *The Spanish Student* (a play lacking in dramatic interest, 1843); *The Poets and Poetry of Europe, with Introductions and Biographical Notices* (1845); *Evangeline* (1847); *The Golden Legend* (1851); *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855); *The Courtship of Miles Standish, and Other Poems* (1858); *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863); *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri* (metrical translation, 1865-1867); *The Divine Tragedy* (1871); *Michael Angelo* (1883).

THE SPIRIT OF POETRY¹

THERE is a quiet spirit in these woods,
That dwells where'er the gentle south-wind
blows;
Where, underneath the white-thorn, in the
glade,
The wild flowers bloom, or, kissing the soft
air,
The leaves above their sunny palms out-
spread.
With what a tender and impassioned voice
It fills the nice and delicate ear of thought,
When the fast-ushering star of morning
comes
O'er-riding the gray hills with golden scarf;
Or when the cowed and dusky-sandaed
Eve,
In mourning weeds, from out the western
gate,
Departs with silent pace! That spirit moves
In the green valley, where the silver brook,
From its full laver, pours the white cascade;
And, babbling low amid the tangled woods,
Slips down through moss-grown stones with
endless laughter.
And frequent, on the everlasting hills,
Its feet go forth, when it doth wrap itself
In all the dark embroidery of the storm,
And shouts the stern, strong wind. And here,
amid
The silent majesty of these deep woods,
Its presence shall uplift thy thoughts from
earth,
As to the sunshine and the pure, bright
air
Their tops the green trees lift. Hence gifted
bards
Have ever loved the calm and quiet shades.

For them there was an eloquent voice in all
The sylvan pomp of woods, the golden sun,
The flowers, the leaves, the river on its
way,
Blue skies, and silver clouds, and gentle
winds,
The swelling upland, where the sidelong sun
Aslant the wooded slope, at evening, goes,
Groves, through whose broken roof the sky
looks in,
Mountain, and shattered cliff, and sunny
vale,
The distant lake, fountains, and mighty
trees,
In many a lazy syllable, repeating
Their old poetic legends to the wind.

And this is the sweet spirit, that doth fill
The world; and, in these wayward days of
youth,
My busy fancy oft embodies it,
As a bright image of the light and beauty
That dwell in nature; of the heavenly forms
We worship in our dreams, and the soft
hues
That stain the wild bird's wing, and flush the
clouds
When the sun sets. Within her tender eye
The heaven of April, with its changing light,
And when it wears the blue of May, is
hung,
And on her lip the rich, red rose. Her hair
Is like the summer tresses of the trees,
When twilight makes them brown, and on
her cheek
Blushes the richness of an autumn sky,
With ever-shifting beauty. Then her breath,
It is so like the gentle air of Spring,
As, from the morning's dewy flowers, it
comes
Full of their fragrance, that it is a joy
To have it round us, and her silver voice
Is the rich music of a summer bird,
Heard in the still night, with its passionate
cadence.

¹ Written in the autumn of 1825 shortly after Longfellow's graduation from Bowdoin. Published in *Voices of the Night*, 1839, as were also the three following poems.

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A PSALM OF LIFE¹

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN
SAID TO THE PSALMIST

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

HYMN TO THE NIGHT²

'Ασπασίη, τρίλλιστος

I HEARD the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows
there,—
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this
prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most
fair,
The best-beloved Night!

FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS³

WHEN the hours of Day are numbered,
And the voices of the Night
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,
To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,
And, like phantoms grim and tall,
Shadows from the fitful firelight
Dance upon the parlor wall;

² One of the poems showing the influence of German romanticism on Longfellow. The motto (from the *Iliad*, VIII, 488) means, "Welcome, thrice-prayed for."

³ The reference in the fourth stanza is to Longfellow's friend and brother-in-law, G. W. Pierce. News of his death reached Longfellow soon after the death of his first wife, who is referred to in the sixth and succeeding stanzas.

¹ Published in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, 1838, before publication in *Voices of the Night*. Longfellow said of this poem that it was "a voice from his inmost heart, at a time when he was rallying from depression."

Then the forms of the departed
 Enter at the open door;
 The beloved, the true-hearted,
 Come to visit me once more;

10

He, the young and strong, who cherished
 Noble longings for the strife,
 By the roadside fell and perished,
 Weary with the march of life!

They, the holy ones and weakly,
 Who the cross of suffering bore,
 Folded their pale hands so meekly,
 Spake with us on earth no more!

20

And with them the Being Beauteous,
 Who unto my youth was given,
 More than all things else to love me,
 And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep
 Comes that messenger divine,
 Takes the vacant chair beside me,
 Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me
 With those deep and tender eyes,
 Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
 Looking downward from the skies.

30

Uttered not, yet comprehended,
 Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,
 Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,
 Breathing from her lips of air.

Oh, though oft depressed and lonely,
 All my fears are laid aside,
 If I but remember only
 Such as these have lived and died!

40

THE SLAVE'S DREAM¹

BESIDE the ungathered rice he lay,
 His sickle in his hand;
 His breast was bare, his matted hair
 Was buried in the sand.
 Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
 He saw his Native Land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
 The lordly Niger flowed;
 Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
 Once more a king he strode;
 And heard the tinkling caravans
 Descend the mountain road.

10

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
 Among her children stand;
 They clasped his neck, they kissed his
 cheeks,
 They held him by the hand!—
 A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
 And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
 Along the Niger's bank;
 His bridle-reins were golden chains,
 And, with a martial clank,
 At each leap he could feel his scabbard of
 steel
 Smiting his stallion's flank.

20

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
 The bright flamingoes flew;
 From morn till night he followed their
 flight,
 O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
 Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
 And the ocean rose to view.

30

At night he heard the lion roar,
 And the hyena scream,
 And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
 Beside some hidden stream;
 And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
 Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
 Shouted of liberty;
 And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,
 With a voice so wild and free,
 That he started in his sleep and smiled
 At their tempestuous glee.

40

He did not feel the driver's whip,
 Nor the burning heat of day;
 For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
 And his lifeless body lay
 A worn-out fetter, that the soul
 Had broken and thrown away!

¹ From *Poems on Slavery*, 1842. Written in that year while Longfellow was returning from Europe.

THE ARSENAL AT SPRINGFIELD¹

THIS is the Arsenal. From floor to ceiling,
Like a huge organ, rise the burnished arms;
But from their silent pipes no anthem pealing
Startles the villages with strange alarms.

Ah! what a sound will rise, how wild and dreary,
When the death-angel touches those swift keys!
What loud lament and dismal Miserere
Will mingle with their awful symphonies!

I hear even now the infinite fierce chorus,
The cries of agony, the endless groan, 10
Which, through the ages that have gone before us,
In long reverberations reach our own.

On helm and harness rings the Saxon hammer,
Through Cimbric forest roars the Norseman's song,
And loud, amid the universal clamor,
O'er distant deserts sounds the Tartar gong.

I hear the Florentine, who from his palace
Wheels out his battle-bell with dreadful din,
And Aztec priests upon their teocallis
Beat the wild war-drums made of serpent's skin; 20

The tumult of each sacked and burning village;
The shout that every prayer for mercy drowns;
The soldiers' revels in the midst of pillage;
The wail of famine in beleaguered towns;

The bursting shell, the gateway wrenched asunder,
The rattling musketry, the clashing blade;
And ever and anon, in tones of thunder,
The diapason of the cannonade.

¹ From *The Belfry of Bruges and Other Poems*, 1845. While on their wedding journey in the summer of 1843, Longfellow and his wife visited the arsenal at Springfield, and Mrs. Longfellow suggested the comparison with an organ and remarked what mournful music death would bring from those ranged pipes. She then urged her husband to write a peace poem, which he did some months afterwards.

Is it, O man, with such discordant noises,
With such accursed instruments as these,
Thou drownest Nature's sweet and kindly voices, 31
And jarrest the celestial harmonies?

Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals or forts:

The warrior's name would be a name abhorred!
And every nation, that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
Would wear for evermore the curse of Cain! 40

Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say,
"Peace!"

Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise.

NUREMBERG²

IN the valley of the Pegnitz, where across
broad meadow-lands
Rise the blue Franconian mountains, Nuremberg,
the ancient, stands.

Quaint old town of toil and traffic, quaint old town of art and song,
Memories haunt thy pointed gables, like the rooks that round them throng:

Memories of the Middle Ages, when the emperors, rough and bold,
Had their dwelling in thy castle, time-defying, centuries old;

² Also from *The Belfry of Bruges and Other Poems*.

And thy brave and thrifty burghers boasted,
 in their uncouth rhyme,
 That their great imperial city stretched its
 hand through every clime.

In the court-yard of the castle, bound with
 many an iron band,
 Stands the mighty linden planted by Queen
 Cunigunde's hand; 10

On the square the oriel window, where in old
 heroic days
 Sat the poet Melchior singing Kaiser Maxi-
 milian's praise.

Everywhere I see around me rise the won-
 drous world of Art:
 Fountains wrought with richest sculpture
 standing in the common mart;

And above cathedral doorways saints and
 bishops carved in stone,
 By a former age commissioned as apostles to
 our own.

In the church of sainted Sebald sleeps en-
 shrined his holy dust,
 And in bronze the Twelve Apostles guard
 from age to age their trust;

In the church of sainted Lawrence stands a
 pix of sculpture rare,
 Like the foamy sheaf of fountains, rising
 through the painted air. 20

Here, when Art was still religion, with a
 simple, reverent heart,
 Lived and labored Albrecht Dürer, the
 Evangelist of Art;

Hence in silence and in sorrow, toiling still
 with busy hand,
 Like an emigrant he wandered, seeking for
 the Better Land.

Emigravit is the inscription on the tombstone
 where he lies;
 Dead he is not, but departed,—for the
 artist never dies.

Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sun-
 shine seems more fair,
 That he once has trod its pavement, that he
 once has breathed its air!

Through these streets so broad and stately,
 these obscure and dismal lanes,
 Walked of yore the Mastersingers, chanting
 rude poetic strains. 30

From remote and sunless suburbs came they
 to the friendly guild,
 Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in
 spouts the swallows build.

As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he too
 the mystic rhyme,
 And the smith his iron measures hammered to
 the anvil's chime;

Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom
 makes the flowers of poesy bloom
 In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tissues
 of the loom.

Here Hans Sachs, the cobbler-poet, laureate
 of the gentle craft,
 Wisest of the Twelve Wise Masters, in huge
 folios sang and laughed.

But his house is now an ale-house, with a
 nicely sanded floor,
 And a garland in the window, and his face
 above the door; 40

Painted by some humble artist, as in Adam
 Puschman's song,
 As the old man gray and dove-like, with his
 great beard white and long.

And at night the swart mechanic comes to
 drown his cark and care,
 Quaffing ale from pewter tankards, in the
 master's antique chair.

Vanished is the ancient splendor, and before
 my dreamy eye
 Wave these mingled shapes and figures, like a
 faded tapestry.

Not thy Councils, not thy Kaisers, win for
 thee the world's regard;
 But thy painter, Albrecht Dürer, and Hans
 Sachs thy cobbler bard.

Thus, O Nuremberg, a wanderer from a
 region far away,
 As he paced thy streets and court-yards, sang
 in thought his careless lay: 50

Gathering from the pavement's crevice, as a
floweret of the soil,
The nobility of labor,—the long pedigree of
toil.

CHILDREN¹

COME to me, O ye children!
For I hear you at your play,
And the questions that perplexed me
Have vanished quite away.

Ye open the eastern windows,
That look towards the sun,
Where thoughts are singing swallows
And the brooks of morning run.

In your hearts are the birds and the sunshine,
In your thoughts the brooklet's flow, 10
But in mine is the wind of Autumn
And the first fall of the snow.

Ah! what would the world be to us
If the children were no more?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

What the leaves are to the forest,
With light and air for food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood,— 20

That to the world are children;
Through them it feels the glow
Of a brighter and sunnier climate
Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children!
And whisper in my ear
What the birds and the winds are singing
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books, 30
When compared with your caresses,
And the gladness of your looks?

Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said;
For ye are living poems,
And all the rest are dead.

THE WARDEN OF THE
CINQUE PORTS²

A MIST was driving down the British Channel,
The day was just begun,
And through the window-panes, on floor and
panel,
Streamed the red autumn sun.

It glanced on flowing flag and rippling
pennon,
And the white sails of ships;
And, from the frowning rampart, the black
cannon
Hailed it with feverish lips.

Sandwich and Romney, Hastings, Hithe, and
Dover
Were all alert that day, 10
To see the French war-steamers speeding
over,
When the fog cleared away.

Sullen and silent, and like couchant lions,
Their cannon, through the night,
Holding their breath, had watched, in grim
defiance,
The sea-coast opposite.

And now they roared at drum-beat from
their stations
On every citadel;
Each answering each, with morning saluta-
tions,
That all was well. 20

And down the coast, all taking up the burden,
Replied the distant forts,
As if to summon from his sleep the Warden
And Lord of the Cinque Ports.

Him shall no sunshine from the fields of
azure,
No drum-beat from the wall,
No morning gun from the black fort's em-
brasure,
Awaken with its call!

¹ From *The Courtship of Miles Standish and Other Poems*, 1858. Written in 1849.

² Also from *The Courtship of Miles Standish and Other Poems*. Written in 1852. The Warden was the Duke of Wellington, who died on 13 September of that year.

No more, surveying with an eye impartial
 The long line of the coast, 30
 Shall the gaunt figure of the old Field
 Marshal
 Be seen upon his post!

For in the night, unseen, a single warrior,
 In somber harness mailed,
 Dreaded of man, and surnamed the De-
 stroyer,
 The rampart wall had scaled.

He passed into the chamber of the sleeper,
 The dark and silent room,
 And as he entered, darker grew, and deeper,
 The silence and the gloom. 40

He did not pause to parley or dissemble,
 But smote the Warden hoar;
 Ah! what a blow! that made all England
 tremble
 And groan from shore to shore.

Meanwhile, without, the surly cannon
 waited,
 The sun rose bright o'erhead;
 Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated
 That a great man was dead.

CATAWBA WINE¹

THIS song of mine
 Is a Song of the Vine,
 To be sung by the glowing embers
 Of wayside inns,
 When the rain begins
 To darken the drear Novembers.

It is not a song
 Of the Scuppernong,
 From warm Carolinian valleys,
 Nor the Isabel 10
 And the Muscadell
 That bask in our garden alleys.

Nor the red Mustang,
 Whose clusters hang
 O'er the waves of the Colorado,
 And the fiery flood
 Of whose purple blood
 Has a dash of Spanish bravado.

¹ From *The Courtship of Miles Standish and Other Poems*. The poem was written upon Longfellow's receipt of a gift of Catawba wine from the vineyard of Nicholas Longworth, on the Ohio River, in 1854.

For richest and best
 Is the wine of the West, 20
 That grows by the Beautiful River;
 Whose sweet perfume
 Fills all the room
 With a benison on the giver.

And as hollow trees
 Are the haunts of bees,
 For ever going and coming;
 So this crystal hive
 Is all alive
 With a swarming and buzzing and humming.

Very good in its way 31
 Is the Verzenay,
 Or the Sillery soft and creamy;
 But Catawba wine
 Has a taste more divine,
 More dulcet, delicious, and dreamy.

There grows no vine
 By the haunted Rhine,
 By Danube or Guadalquivir,
 Nor on island or cape, 40
 That bears such a grape
 As grows by the Beautiful River.

Drugged is their juice
 For foreign use,
 When shipped o'er the reeling Atlantic,
 To rack our brains
 With the fever pains,
 That have driven the Old World frantic.

To the sewers and sinks
 With all such drinks, 50
 And after them tumble the mixer;
 For a poison malign
 Is such Borgia wine,
 Or at best but a Devil's Elixir.

While pure as a spring
 Is the wine I sing,
 And to praise it, one needs but name it;
 For Catawba wine
 Has need of no sign,
 No tavern-bush to proclaim it. 60

And this Song of the Vine,
 This greeting of mine,
 The winds and the birds shall deliver
 To the Queen of the West,
 In her garlands dressed,
 On the banks of the Beautiful River.

MY LOST YOUTH¹

OFTEN I think of the beautiful town
 That is seated by the sea;
 Often in thought go up and down
 The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
 And my youth comes back to me.
 And a verse of a Lapland song
 Is haunting my memory still:
 "A boy's will is the wind's will,
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts."

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees, 10
 And catch, in sudden gleams,
 The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
 And islands that were the Hesperides
 Of all my boyish dreams.
 And the burden of that old song,
 It murmurs and whispers still:
 "A boy's will is the wind's will,
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
 And the sea-tides tossing free; 20
 And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
 And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
 And the magic of the sea.
 And the voice of that wayward song
 Is singing and saying still:
 "A boy's will is the wind's will,
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts."

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,
 And the fort upon the hill;
 The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar, 30
 The drum-beat repeated o'er and o'er,
 And the bugle wild and shrill.
 And the music of that old song
 Throbs in my memory still:
 "A boy's will is the wind's will,
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts."

I remember the sea-fight far away,
 How it thundered o'er the tide!
 And the dead captains, as they lay

In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil
 bay 40
 Where they in battle died.
 And the sound of that mournful song
 Goes through me with a thrill:
 "A boy's will is the wind's will,
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts."

I can see the breezy dome of groves,
 The shadows of Deering's Woods;
 And the friendships old and the early loves
 Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves
 In quiet neighborhoods. 50
 And the verse of that sweet old song,
 It flutters and murmurs still:
 "A boy's will is the wind's will,
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
 Across the school-boy's brain;
 The song and the silence in the heart,
 That in part are prophecies, and in part
 Are longings wild and vain.
 And the voice of that fitful song 60
 Sings on, and is never still:
 "A boy's will is the wind's will,
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
 There are dreams that cannot die;
 There are thoughts that make the strong
 heart weak,
 And bring a pallor into the cheek,
 And a mist before the eye.
 And the words of that fatal song
 Come over me like a chill: 70
 "A boy's will is the wind's will,
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts."

Strange to me now are the forms I meet
 When I visit the dear old town;
 But the native air is pure and sweet,
 And the trees that o'ershadow each well-
 known street,
 As they balance up and down,
 Are singing the beautiful song,
 Are sighing and whispering still:
 "A boy's will is the wind's will, 80
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts."

¹From the same volume as the preceding poem. Written in 1855. As early as 1846 Longfellow meditated a poem concerning Portland, his native town. The sea-fight of the fifth stanza took place in 1813.

And Deering's Woods are fresh and fair,
 And with joy that is almost pain
 My heart goes back to wander there,
 And among the dreams of the days that were,
 I find my lost youth again.
 And the strange and beautiful song,
 The groves are repeating it still:
 "A boy's will is the wind's will,
 And the thoughts of youth are long, long
 thoughts." 90

WEARINESS¹

O LITTLE feet! that such long years
 Must wander on through hopes and fears,
 Must ache and bleed beneath your load;
 I, nearer to the wayside inn
 Where toil shall cease and rest begin,
 Am weary, thinking of your road!

O little hands! that, weak or strong,
 Have still to serve or rule so long,
 Have still so long to give or ask;
 I, who so much with book and pen 10
 Have toiled among my fellow-men,
 Am weary, thinking of your task.

O little hearts! that throb and beat
 With such impatient, feverish heat,
 Such limitless and strong desires;
 Mine, that so long has glowed and burned,
 With passions into ashes turned,
 Now covers and conceals its fires.

O little souls! as pure and white
 And crystalline as rays of light 20
 Direct from heaven, their source divine;
 Refracted through the mist of years,
 How red my setting sun appears,
 How lurid looks this soul of mine!

DIVINA COMMEDIA²

I

OFT have I seen at some cathedral door
 A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
 Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet
 Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
 Kneel to repeat his paternoster o'er;

¹ From *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, 1863. When the *Tales* now comprising "Part First" of this group were published in that year the volume contained also seven short poems, of which *Weariness* was the last.

² These sonnets were published in the three volumes of Longfellow's translation of the *Divine Comedy*, the

Far off the noises of the world retreat;
 The loud vociferations of the street
 Become an undistinguishable roar.
 So, as I enter here from day to day,
 And leave my burden at this minster gate, 10
 Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
 The tumult of the time disconsolate
 To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
 While the eternal ages watch and wait.

II

How strange the sculptures that adorn these
 towers!
 This crowd of statues, in whose folded sleeves
 Birds build their nests; while canopied with
 leaves
 Parvis and portal bloom like trellised bowers,
 And the vast minster seems a cross of flowers!
 But fiends and dragons on the gargoyled
 eaves 20
 Watch the dead Christ between the living
 thieves,
 And, underneath, the traitor Judas lowers!
 Ah! from what agonies of heart and brain,
 What exultations trampling on despair,
 What tenderness, what tears, what hate of
 wrong,
 What passionate outcry of a soul in pain,
 Uprose this poem of the earth and air,
 This medieval miracle of song!

III

I enter, and I see thee in the gloom
 Of the long aisles, O poet saturnine! 30
 And strive to make my steps keep pace with
 thine.
 The air is filled with some unknown perfume;
 The congregation of the dead make room
 For thee to pass; the votive tapers shine;
 Like rooks that haunt Ravenna's groves of
 pine
 The hovering echoes fly from tomb to tomb.
 From the confessionals I hear arise
 Rehearsals of forgotten tragedies,
 And lamentations from the crypts below;

first two being prefixed to the *Inferno* (1865), the second two to the *Purgatorio* (1866), and the last two to the *Paradiso* (1867). All were written while the work of translation was going forward. Some in recent years have been disposed to regard Longfellow's sonnets as his highest and most enduring achievement. See *The Centenary of Longfellow*, by P. E. More (*Shelburne Essays*, Fifth Series).

And then a voice celestial that begins 40
 With the pathetic words, "Although your
 sins
 As scarlet be," and ends with "as the snow."

IV

With snow-white veil and garments as of
 flame,
 She stands before thee, who so long ago
 Filled thy young heart with passion and the
 woe
 From which thy song and all its splendors
 came;
 And while with stern rebuke she speaks thy
 name,
 The ice about thy heart melts as the snow
 On mountain heights, and in swift overflow
 Comes gushing from thy lips in sobs of
 shame. 50
 Thou makest full confession; and a gleam,
 As of the dawn on some dark forest cast,
 Seems on thy lifted forehead to increase;
 Lethe and Eunoë—the remembered dream
 And the forgotten sorrow—bring at last
 That perfect pardon which is perfect peace.

V

I lift mine eyes, and all the windows blaze
 With forms of Saints and holy men who
 died,
 Here martyred and hereafter glorified;
 And the great Rose upon its leaves displays
 Christ's Triumph, and the angelic rounde-
 lays, 61
 With splendor upon splendor multiplied;
 And Beatrice again at Dante's side
 No more rebukes, but smiles her words of
 praise.
 And then the organ sounds, and unseen
 choirs
 Sing the old Latin hymns of peace and love
 And benedictions of the Holy Ghost;

And the melodious bells among the spires
 O'er all the house-tops and through heaven
 above
 Proclaim the elevation of the Host! 70

VI

O star of morning and of liberty!
 O bringer of the light, whose splendor shines
 Above the darkness of the Apennines,
 Forerunner of the day that is to be!
 The voices of the city and the sea,
 The voices of the mountains and the pines,
 Repeat thy song, till the familiar lines
 Are footpaths for the thought of Italy!
 Thy flame is blown abroad from all the
 heights,
 Through all the nations, and a sound is
 heard, 80
 As of a mighty wind, and men devout,
 Strangers of Rome, and the new proselytes,
 In their own language hear thy wondrous
 word,
 And many are amazed and many doubt.

GIOTTO'S TOWER¹

How many lives, made beautiful and sweet
 By self-devotion and by self-restraint,
 Whose pleasure is to run without complaint
 On unknown errands of the Paraclete,
 Wanting the reverence of unshodden feet,
 Fail of the nimbus which the artists paint
 Around the shining forehead of the saint,
 And are in their completeness incomplete!
 In the old Tuscan town stands Giotto's
 tower,
 The lily of Florence blossoming in stone,—10
 A vision, a delight, and a desire,—
 The builder's perfect and centennial flower,
 That in the night of ages bloomed alone,
 But wanting still the glory of the spire.

¹ From *Flower-de-Luce*, 1867; written in 1866.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807-1892)

Whittier was born in a farm-house near Haverhill, Massachusetts, on 17 December, 1807. The house had been built by a Puritan ancestor in the seventeenth century; it was Whittier's home until his thirtieth year; it provided the setting for *Snow-Bound*; and it still stands, converted now into a memorial of the poet. The character of Whittier's boyhood life can best be gathered from *Snow-Bound*, perhaps the one flawless poem which he wrote, and a faithful picture of that New England country life which is historically of fundamental importance in the development of America. It was a life meager enough, with its full share of physical work and, too, of hardship, with the slightest of opportunities for culture, but with large opportunities for the development of firm and sound—if somewhat narrow and harsh—character. Whittier's family belonged to the Society of Friends, and the household's small library, of about thirty volumes, consisted exclusively of Quaker literature and the Bible. The boy attended country schools, when any of those nearby were open, and, for the rest, read and re-read his father's few books. It is recorded also that when he was fourteen one of his teachers read to him some of the poems of Burns, which made a deep impression upon him in their revelation of what poetry could do in so transforming surrounding nature and the common and familiar aspects of human life as to give them beauty and an ideal significance. From Whittier's acquaintance with Burns, indeed, may be dated the first beginnings of his poetical life, and within a few years he was firmly fixed in the habit of scribbling verses. The first of these to be printed was sent by his sister, without Whittier's knowledge, to *The Free Press*, of Newburyport, and the youth was surprised when, in the summer of 1826, he discovered his poem in that paper. It was a paper recently established by William Lloyd Garrison, who became sufficiently interested in Whittier to search him out upon his father's farm, and who urged him to continue his education at an academy which had just been opened in Haverhill. There were both religious scruples and financial difficulties to be contended against, but Whittier managed to spend two terms at the academy, which completed his formal education. His acquaintance with Garrison was the beginning of a life-long friendship, and he was very soon enlisted heart and soul in the cause of abolition, which inspired much of his verse from this time until the slaves were emancipated. The example of Garrison, too, played a part in leading him into journalism, and in the earliest years of his manhood he cherished political ambitions. These, however, he unhesitatingly sacrificed as soon as it became evident that a political career was incompatible with a bold stand against slavery. From 1828 until 1840 Whittier held a number of editorial positions in various places, besides traveling much and working hard for the cause of abolition, but in the latter year his health, never strong, broke down so alarmingly as to force him into a less active life. In 1836, when the Haverhill farm had been sold, he had purchased a house in Amesbury, and he now made this his home for the remainder of his long life. From 1847 to 1860 he was associated with *The National Era*, a weekly in which *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was first published. After 1857 the periodical in which the greater number of his poems appeared was *The Atlantic Monthly*. He died while visiting in New Hampshire on 7 September, 1892.

Whittier was greater as a man than as a poet—so admirable and high-minded a man, indeed, that criticism would fain shirk the ungrateful task of passing judgment upon his literary performance. But it is true that very many of his poems were occasional in character and have not kept their interest, and that others made their initial appeal to a taste scarcely mature. Whittier once asserted that Longfellow's *Psalm of Life* took a higher rank in his estimation than "all the dreams of Shelley, and Keats, and Wordsworth," and thus he betrayed his own misfortune as a poet. He was too often careless of the niceties of expression, he tended to be diffuse, and he did not care to avoid didacticism. Some of his religious verse, not primarily or at all didactic, deserves to live, and may in the long run prove more grateful reading than perhaps at present would be generally granted. But the number of his poems which, like *Snow-Bound*, live securely from their intrinsic worth, is small, and their author can hardly be regarded as other than a minor figure in literature. "Whittier is probably," says a sympathetic writer, "no more than a poet of the third rank. His native endowment was rich, but it was supplemented by neither the technical training nor the discipline required for the development of the artist. . . . The organ voice and the lyric cry were not, except at rare moments, his to command. But no American who lived in the shadow of slavery and internecine strife, none who grew to manhood in the generation succeeding those epic days, would dream of measuring his love and veneration for Whittier by the scale of absolute art." (W. M. Paine, *Camb. Hist. Am. Lit.*, II.)

THE MORAL WARFARE¹

WHEN Freedom, on her natal day,
Within her war-rocked cradle lay,
An iron race around her stood,
Baptized her infant brow in blood;
And, through the storm which round her
swept,
Their constant ward and watching kept.

Then, where our quiet herds repose,
The roar of baleful battle rose,
And brethren of a common tongue
To mortal strife as tigers sprung,
And every gift on Freedom's shrine
Was man for beast, and blood for wine!

Our fathers to their graves have gone;
Their strife is past, their triumph won;
But sterner trials wait the race
Which rises in their honored place;
A moral warfare with the crime
And folly of an evil time.

So let it be. In God's own might
We gird us for the coming fight,
And, strong in Him whose cause is ours
In conflict with unholy powers,
We grasp the weapons He has given,—
The Light, and Truth, and Love of Heaven.

FORGIVENESS²

MY heart was heavy, for its trust had been
Abused, its kindness answered with foul
wrong;
So, turning gloomily from my fellow-men,
One summer Sabbath day I strolled among
The green mounds of the village burial-
place;
Where, pondering how all human love and
hate
Find one sad level; and how, soon or late,
Wronged and wrongdoer, each with meek-
ened face,
And cold hands folded over a still heart,
Pass the green threshold of our common
grave,

Whither all footsteps tend, whence none
depart,
Awed for myself, and pitying my race,
Our common sorrow, like a mighty wave,
Swept all my pride away, and trembling I
forgave!

PROEM³

I LOVE the old melodious lays
Which softly melt the ages through,
The songs of Spenser's golden days,
Arcadian Sidney's silvery phrase,
Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest
morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours
To breathe their marvelous notes I try;
I feel them, as the leaves and flowers
In silence feel the dewy showers,
And drink with glad, still lips the blessing of
the sky.

The rigor of a frozen clime,
The harshness of an untaught ear,
The jarring words of one whose rhyme
Beat often Labor's hurried time,
Or Duty's rugged march through storm and
strife, are here.

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,
No rounded art the lack supplies;
Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,
Or softer shades of Nature's face,
I view her common forms with unanointed
eyes.

Nor mine the seer-like power to show
The secrets of the heart and mind;
To drop the plummet-line below
Our common world of joy and woe,
A more intense despair or brighter hope to
find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense
Of human right and weal is shown;
A hate of tyranny intense,
And hearty in its vehemence,
As if my brother's pain and sorrow were my
own.

¹ Written in 1836. An anti-slavery poem.

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used by permission of, and by arrangement with,
Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

² Written probably in 1846.

³ Written in November, 1847, as an introduction
to the first collective edition of Whittier's poems,
1849 (so dated, though said to have been actually
published before the close of 1848).

O Freedom! if to me belong
 Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
 Nor Marvell's wit and graceful song,
 Still with a love as deep and strong
 As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on
 thy shrine!

THE WISH OF TO-DAY¹

I ASK not now for gold to gild
 With mocking shine a weary frame;
 The yearning of the mind is stilled,
 I ask not now for Fame.

A rose-cloud, dimly seen above,
 Melting in heaven's blue depths away;
 Oh, sweet, fond dream of human Love!
 For thee I may not pray.

But, bowed in lowliness of mind,
 I make my humble wishes known; 10
 I only ask a will resigned,
 O Father, to Thine own!

To-day, beneath Thy chastening eye
 I crave alone for peace and rest,
 Submissive in Thy hand to lie,
 And feel that it is best.

A marvel seems the Universe,
 A miracle our Life and Death;
 A mystery which I cannot pierce, 20
 Around, above, beneath.

In vain I task my aching brain,
 In vain the sage's thought I scan,
 I only feel how weak and vain,
 How poor and blind, is man.

And now my spirit sighs for home,
 And longs for light whereby to see,
 And, like a weary child, would come,
 O Father, unto Thee!

Though oft, like letters traced on sand, 30
 My weak resolves have passed away,
 In mercy lend Thy helping hand
 Unto my prayer to-day!

¹ Written in 1848.

ICHABOD²

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
 Which once he wore!
 The glory from his gray hairs gone
 Forevermore!

Revile him not, the Tempter hath
 A snare for all;
 And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
 Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage, 10
 When he who might
 Have lighted up and led his age,
 Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
 A bright soul driven,
 Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
 From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
 Insult him now,
 Nor brand with deeper shame his dim, 20
 Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
 From sea to lake,
 A long lament, as for the dead,
 In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught
 Save power remains;
 A fallen angel's pride of thought,
 Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes 30
 The soul has fled:
 When faith is lost, when honor dies,
 The man is dead!

Then, pay the reverence of old days
 To his dead fame;
 Walk backward, with averted gaze,
 And hide the shame!

² Written in 1850. Occasioned by "the surprise and grief and forecast of evil consequences" which Whittier felt when he read Daniel Webster's speech supporting the "compromise" and the Fugitive Slave Law. The meaning of the title may be learned from I Samuel, iv, 19-22.

FIRST-DAY THOUGHTS¹

IN calm and cool and silence, once again
 I find my old accustomed place among
 My brethren, where, perchance, no human
 tongue
 Shall utter words; where never hymn is
 sung,
 Nor deep-toned organ blown, nor censer
 swung,
 Nor dim light falling through the pictured
 pane!
 There, syllabled by silence, let me hear
 The still small voice which reached the
 prophet's ear;
 Read in my heart a still diviner law
 Than Israel's leader on his tables saw! 10
 There let me strive with each besetting sin,
 Recall my wandering fancies, and restrain
 The sore disquiet of a restless brain;
 And, as the path of duty is made plain,
 May grace be given that I may walk therein,
 Not like the hireling, for his selfish gain,
 With backward glances and reluctant tread,
 Making a merit of his coward dread,
 But, cheerful, in the light around me
 thrown,
 Walking as one to pleasant service led; 20
 Doing God's will as if it were my own,
 Yet trusting not in mine, but in His strength
 alone!

TRUST²

THE same old baffling questions! O my
 friend,
 I cannot answer them. In vain I send
 My soul into the dark, where never burn
 The lamps of science, nor the natural light
 Of Reason's sun and stars! I cannot learn
 Their great and solemn meanings, nor
 discern
 The awful secrets of the eyes which turn
 Evermore on us through the day and
 night
 With silent challenge and a dumb demand,
 Proffering the riddles of the dread unknown,
 Like the calm Sphinxes, with their eyes of
 stone, 11
 Questioning the centuries from their veils
 of sand!

I have no answer for myself or thee,
 Save that I learned beside my mother's knee;
 "All is of God that is, and is to be;
 And God is good." Let this suffice us
 still,
 Resting in childlike trust upon His will
 Who moves to His great ends unthwarted
 by the ill.

BURNS³ON RECEIVING A SPRIG OF HEATHER
IN BLOSSOM

No more these simple flowers belong
 To Scottish maid and lover;
 Sown in the common soil of song,
 They bloom the wide world over.

In smiles and tears, in sun and showers,
 The minstrel and the heather,
 The deathless singer and the flowers
 He sang of live together.

Wild heather-bells and Robert Burns!
 The moorland flower and peasant! 10
 How, at their mention, memory turns
 Her pages old and pleasant!

The gray sky wears again its gold
 And purple of adorning,
 And manhood's noonday shadows hold
 The dews of boyhood's morning.

The dews that washed the dust and soil
 From off the wings of pleasure,
 The sky, that flecked the ground of toil
 With golden threads of leisure. 20

I call to mind the summer day,
 The early harvest mowing,
 The sky with sun and clouds at play,
 And flowers with breezes blowing.

I hear the blackbird in the corn, •
 The locust in the haying;
 And, like the fabled hunter's horn,
 Old tunes my heart is playing.

How oft that day, with fond delay,
 I sought the maple's shadow, 30
 And sang with Burns the hours away,
 Forgetful of the meadow!

¹ Written in 1852.² Written in 1853.³ Written in 1854.

Bees hummed, birds twittered, overhead
 I heard the squirrels leaping,
 The good dog listened while I read,
 And wagged his tail in keeping.

I watched him while in sportive mood
 I read "The Twa Dogs'" story,
 And half believed he understood
 The poet's allegory.

40

Sweet day, sweet songs! The golden hours
 Grew brighter for that singing,
 From brook and bird and meadow flowers
 A dearer welcome bringing.

New light on home-seen Nature beamed,
 New glory over Woman;
 And daily life and duty seemed
 No longer poor and common.

I woke to find the simple truth
 Of fact and feeling better
 Than all the dreams that held my youth
 A still repining debtor:

50

That Nature gives her handmaid, Art,
 The themes of sweet discoursing;
 The tender idyls of the heart
 In every tongue rehearsing.

Why dream of lands of gold and pearl,
 Of loving knight and lady,
 When farmer boy and barefoot girl
 Were wandering there already?

60

I saw through all familiar things
 The romance underlying;
 The joys and griefs that plume the wings
 Of Fancy skyward flying.

I saw the same blithe day return,
 The same sweet fall of even,
 That rose on wooded Craigie-burn,
 And sank on crystal Devon.

I matched with Scotland's heathery hills
 The sweetbrier and the clover;
 With Ayr and Doon, my native rills,
 Their wood hymns chanting over.

70

O'er rank and pomp, as he had seen,
 I saw the Man uprising;

No longer common or unclean,
 The child of God's baptizing!

With clearer eyes I saw the worth
 Of life among the lowly;
 The Bible at his Cotter's hearth
 Had made my own more holy.

80

And if at times an evil strain,
 To lawless love appealing,
 Broke in upon the sweet refrain
 Of pure and healthful feeling,

It died upon the eye and ear,
 No inward answer gaining;
 No heart had I to see or hear
 The discord and the staining.

Let those who never erred forget
 His worth, in vain bewailings;
 Sweet Soul of Song! I own my debt
 Uncanceled by his failings!

90

Lament who will the ribald line
 Which tells his lapse from duty,
 How kissed the maddening lips of wine
 Or wanton ones of beauty;

But think, while falls that shade between
 The erring one and Heaven,
 That he who loved like Magdalen,
 Like her may be forgiven.

100

Not his the song whose thunderous chime
 Eternal echoes render;
 The mournful Tuscan's haunted rhyme,
 And Milton's starry splendor!

But who his human heart has laid
 To Nature's bosom nearer?
 Who sweetened toil like him, or paid
 To love a tribute dearer?

Through all his tuneful art, how strong
 The human feeling gushes!
 The very moonlight of his song
 Is warm with smiles and blushes!

110

Give lettered pomp to teeth of Time,
 So "Bonnie Doon" but tarry;
 Blot out the Epic's stately rhyme,
 But spare his "Highland Mary"!

MAUD MULLER¹

MAUD MULLER on a summer's day
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast,—10

A wish that she hardly dared to own,
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And asked a draught from the spring that
flowed
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled
up,
And filled for him her small tin cup, 20

And blushed as she gave it, looking down
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter
draught
From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

¹ Written in 1854. Whittier wrote: "The poem had no real foundation in fact, though a hint of it may have been found in recalling an incident, trivial in itself, of a journey on the picturesque Maine seaboard with my sister some years before it was written. We had stopped to rest our tired horse under the shade of an apple-tree, and refresh him with water from a little brook which rippled through the stone wall across the road. A very beautiful young girl in scantest summer attire was at work in the hay-field, and as we talked with her we noticed that she strove to hide her bare feet by raking hay over them, blushing as she did so, through the tan of her cheek and neck."

Then talked of the haying, and wondered
whether
The cloud in the west would bring foul
weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,
And her graceful ankles bare and brown; 30

And listened, while a pleased surprise
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!
That I the Judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,
And praise and toast me at his wine.

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat;
My brother should sail a painted boat. 40

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
And the baby should have a new toy each
day.

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the
poor,
And all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the
hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air
Show her wise and good as she is fair. 50

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,
Like her, a harvester of hay;

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,
And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters, proud and
cold,
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone. 60

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who loved for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise. 70

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed, with a secret
pain,
"Ah, that I were free again!

"Free as when I rode that day,
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door. 80

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein;

And, gazing down with timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face. 90

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinnet turned,
The tallow candle an astral burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been." 100

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,
For rich repiner and household drudge!

God pity them both! and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have
been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away! 110

THE BAREFOOT BOY¹

BLESSINGS on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy,—
I was once a barefoot boy! 10
Prince thou art,—the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye,—
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild-flower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;

¹ Written in 1855.

How the tortoise bears his shell,
 How the woodchuck digs his cell,
 And the ground-mole sinks his well;
 How the robin feeds her young, 30
 How the oriole's nest is hung;
 Where the whitest lilies blow,
 Where the freshest berries grow,
 Where the ground-nut trails its vine,
 Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
 Of the black wasp's cunning way,
 Mason of his walls of clay,
 And the architectural plans
 Of gray hornet artisans! 40
 For, eschewing books and tasks,
 Nature answers all he asks;
 Hand in hand with her he walks,
 Face to face with her he talks,
 Part and parcel of her joy,—
 Blessings on the barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's time of June,
 Crowding years in one brief moon,
 When all things I heard or saw,
 Me, their master, waited for. 50
 I was rich in flowers and trees,
 Humming-birds and honey-bees;
 For my sport the squirrel played,
 Plied the snouted mole his spade;
 For my taste the blackberry cone
 Purpled over hedge and stone;
 Laughed the brook for my delight
 Through the day and through the night,
 Whispering at the garden wall,
 Talked with me from fall to fall;
 Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond, 60
 Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
 Mine, on bending orchard trees,
 Apples of Hesperides!
 Still as my horizon grew,
 Larger grew my riches too;
 All the world I saw or knew
 Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
 Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

Oh for festal dainties spread,
 Like my bowl of milk and bread; 70
 Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
 On the door-stone, gray and rude!
 O'er me, like a regal tent,
 Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
 Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
 Looped in many a wind-swung fold;
 While for music came the play
 Of the pied frogs' orchestra;

And, to light the noisy choir,
 Lit the fly his lamp of fire. 80
 I was monarch: pomp and joy
 Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
 Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
 Though the flinty slopes be hard,
 Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
 Every morn shall lead thee through
 Fresh baptisms of the dew;
 Every evening from thy feet
 Shall the cool wind kiss the heat: 90
 All too soon these feet must hide
 In the prison cells of pride,
 Lose the freedom of the sod,
 Like a colt's for work be shod,
 Made to tread the mills of toil,
 Up and down in ceaseless moil:
 Happy if their track be found
 Never on forbidden ground;
 Happy if they sink not in
 Quick and treacherous sands of sin. 100
 Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
 Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE¹

Of all the rides since the birth of time,
 Told in story or sung in rhyme,—
 On Apuleius's Golden Ass,
 Or one-eyed Calender's horse of brass,
 Witch astride of a human back,
 Islam's prophet on Al-Borák,—
 The strangest ride that ever was sped
 Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!
 Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
 Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
 By the women of Marblehead! 11

Body of turkey, head of owl,
 Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,
 Feathered and ruffled in every part,
 Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
 Scores of women, old and young,
 Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,
 Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
 Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:

¹ Begun in 1828 when Whittier heard, from a school-fellow at the Haverhill Academy, "a fragment of rhyme" concerning Skipper Ireson; but not finished until 1857. It then was published in *The Atlantic Monthly*. In 1880 Whittier learned that researches indicated that the crew, and not the Skipper, were really responsible for the abandonment of the ship.

"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt 21
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns'
twang,

Over and over the Mænads sang: 30
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him!—He sailed away
From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay,—
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's-people on her deck!
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!" 40
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!

Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie forevermore.
Mother and sister, wife and maid,
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea,—
Looked for the coming that might not be! 50
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away—?

Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound, 60
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue. 70

Riding there in his sorry trim,
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Of voices shouting, far and near:

"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried,—
"What to me is this noisy ride?
What is the shame that clothes the skin 80
To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me,—I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said, "God has touched him! why should
we!" 90

Said an old wife mourning her only son,
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!"
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

TELLING THE BEES¹

HERE is the place; right over the hill
Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping-stones in the shallow
brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-
yard,
And the white horns tossing above the
wall.

¹ Written in 1858. A custom which early New Englanders brought with them from England is mentioned in the last stanza and gives its title to the poem. When a member of the family died the bees were informed, and their hives draped with black, which was supposed to keep them from seeking a new home. The scene described is in all particulars that of Whittier's birthplace and first home.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
 And down by the brink 10
 Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-
 o'errun,
 Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
 Heavy and slow;
 And the same rose blows, and the same sun
 glows,
 And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the
 breeze;
 And the June sun warm
 Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
 Setting, as then, over Fernside farm. 20

I mind me how with a lover's care
 From my Sunday coat
 I brushed off the burs, and smoothed my
 hair,
 And cooled at the brookside my brow and
 throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,—
 To love, a year;
 Down through the beeches I looked at last
 On the little red gate and the well-sweep
 near.

I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain
 Of light through the leaves, 30
 The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
 The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,—
 The house and the trees,
 The barn's brown gable, the vine by the
 door,—
 Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
 Forward and back,
 Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
 Draping each hive with a shred of black. 40

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
 Had the chill of snow;
 For I knew she was telling the bees of one
 Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
 For the dead to-day:
 Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
 The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,
 With his cane to his chin, 50
 The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
 Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
 In my ear sounds on:—
 "Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
 Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

LAUS DEO!¹

It is done!
 Clang of bell and roar of gun
 Send the tidings up and down.
 How the belfries rock and reel!
 How the great guns, peal on peal,
 Fling the joy from town to town!

Ring, O bells!
 Every stroke exulting tells
 Of the burial hour of crime.
 Loud and long, that all may hear, 10
 Ring for every listening ear
 Of Eternity and Time!

Let us kneel:
 God's own voice is in that peal,
 And this spot is holy ground.
 Lord, forgive us! What are we,
 That our eyes this glory see,
 That our ears have heard the sound!

For the Lord
 On the whirlwind is abroad; 20
 In the earthquake He has spoken;
 He has smitten with His thunder
 The iron walls asunder,
 And the gates of brass are broken!

Loud and long
 Lift the old exulting song;
 Sing with Miriam by the sea,
 He has cast the mighty down;
 Horse and rider sink and drown;
 "He hath triumphed gloriously!" 30

Did we dare,
 In our agony of prayer,
 Ask for more than He has done?
 When was ever His right hand
 Over any time or land
 Stretched as now beneath the sun?

¹ Written in 1865, upon the passage of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery, 31 January.

How they pale,
 Ancient myth and song and tale,
 In this wonder of our days,
 When the cruel rod of war
 Blossoms white with righteous law,
 And the wrath of man is praise!

40

Blotted out!
 All within and all about
 Shall a fresher life begin;
 Freer breathe the universe
 As it rolls its heavy curse
 On the dead and buried sin!

It is done!
 In the circuit of the sun
 Shall the sound thereof go forth.
 It shall bid the sad rejoice,
 It shall give the dumb a voice,
 It shall belt with joy the earth!

50

Ring and swing,
 Bells of joy! On morning's wing
 Send the song of praise abroad!
 With a sound of broken chains
 Tell the nations that He reigns,
 Who alone is Lord and God!

60

SNOW-BOUND¹

A WINTER IDYL

As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so Good Spirits, which be Angels of Light, are augmented not only by the Divine light of the Sun, but also by our common Wood Fire: and as the Celestial Fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of Wood doth the same.—COR. AGRIPPA, *Occult Philosophy*, Bk. I, chap. v.

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
 Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
 Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
 Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,
 And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
 The sled and traveler stopped, the courier's feet
 Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
 Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
 In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

EMERSON, *The Snow Storm*.

¹ Written in 1866. Whittier said that those referred to in the poem were his father, mother, brother, and two sisters, and a bachelor uncle and maiden aunt, and also the district school-teacher, who boarded with them. The "not unfear'd, half-welcome guest" was Harriet Livermore, a remarkable, eccentric woman who became a Second Adventist and went about the world announcing the Lord's imminent approach. When Whittier last heard of her she was wandering in Syria with a tribe of Arabs.

The sun that brief December day
 Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
 And, darkly circled, gave at noon
 A sadder light than waning moon.
 Slow tracing down the thickening sky
 Its mute and ominous prophecy,
 A portent seeming less than threat,
 It sank from sight before it set.
 A chill no coat, however stout,
 Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
 A hard, dull bitterness of cold,
 That checked, mid-vein, the circling race
 Of life-blood in the sharpened face,
 The coming of the snow-storm told.
 The wind blew east; we heard the roar
 Of Ocean on his wintry shore,
 And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
 Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

10

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores,—
 Brought in the wood from out of doors,
 Littered the stalls, and from the mows
 Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows:
 Heard the horse whinnying for his corn;
 And, sharply clashing horn on horn,
 Impatient down the stanchion rows
 The cattle shake their walnut bows;
 While, peering from his early perch
 Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,
 The cock his crested helmet bent
 And down his querulous challenge sent.

30

Unwarmed by any sunset light
 The gray day darkened into night,
 A night made hoary with the swarm
 And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
 As zigzag, wavering to and fro,
 Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow;
 And ere the early bedtime came
 The white drift piled the window-frame,
 And through the glass the clothes-line posts
 Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

40

So all night long the storm roared on:
 The morning broke without a sun;
 In tiny spherule traced with lines
 Of Nature's geometric signs,
 In starry flake, and pellicle,
 All day the hoary meteor fell;
 And, when the second morning shone,
 We looked upon a world unknown,
 On nothing we could call our own.
 Around the glistening wonder bent
 The blue walls of the firmament,

50

No cloud above, no earth below,—
 A universe of sky and snow!
 The old familiar sights of ours
 Took marvelous shapes; strange domes and
 towers
 Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
 Or garden-wall, or belt of wood;
 A smooth white mound the brush-pile
 showed,
 A fenceless drift what once was road;
 The bridle-post an old man sat 60
 With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
 The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
 And even the long sweep, high aloof,
 In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
 Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

A prompt, decisive man, no breath
 Our father wasted: "Boys, a path!"
 Well pleased (for when did farmer boy
 Count such a summons less than joy?),
 Our buskins on our feet we drew; 70
 With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,
 To guard our necks and ears from snow,
 We cut the solid whiteness through.
 And, where the drift was deepest, made
 A tunnel walled and overlaid
 With dazzling crystal: we had read
 Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,
 And to our own his name we gave,
 With many a wish the luck were ours
 To test his lamp's supernal powers. 80
 We reached the barn with merry din,
 And roused the prisoned brutes within.
 The old horse thrust his long head out,
 And grave with wonder gazed about;
 The cock his lusty greeting said,
 And forth his speckled harem led;
 The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,
 And mild reproach of hunger looked;
 The hornèd patriarch of the sheep,
 Like Egypt's Amun roused from sleep, 90
 Shook his sage head with gesture mute,
 And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore
 The loosening drift its breath before;
 Low circling round its southern zone,
 The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone.
 No church-bell lent its Christian tone
 To the savage air, no social smoke
 Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.
 A solitude made more intense 100
 By dreary-voicèd elements,

The shrieking of the mindless wind,
 The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,
 And on the glass the unmeaning beat
 Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.
 Beyond the circle of our hearth
 No welcome sound of toil or mirth
 Unbound the spell, and testified
 Of human life and thought outside.
 We minded that the sharpest ear 110
 The buried brooklet could not hear,
 The music of whose liquid lip
 Had been to us companionship,
 And, in our lonely life, had grown
 To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest
 Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
 The sun, a snow-blown traveler, sank
 From sight beneath the smothering bank,
 We piled, with care, our nightly stack 120
 Of wood against the chimney-back,—
 The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,
 And on its top the stout back-stick;
 The knotty forestick laid apart,
 And filled between with curious art
 The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
 We watched the first red blaze appear,
 Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
 On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
 Until the old, rude-furnished room 130
 Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;
 While radiant with a mimic flame
 Outside the sparkling drift became,
 And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree
 Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.
 The crane and pendent trammels showed,
 The Turks' heads on the andirons glowed;
 While childish fancy, prompt to tell
 The meaning of the miracle,
 Whispered the old rhyme: "*Under the tree,
 When fire outdoors burns merrily,* 141
There the witches are making tea."

The moon above the eastern wood
 Shone at its full; the hill-range stood
 Transfigured in the silver flood,
 Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,
 Dead white, save where some sharp ravine
 Took shadow, or the somber green
 Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black
 Against the whiteness at their back. 150
 For such a world and such a night
 Most fitting that unwarming light,
 Which only seemed where'er it fell
 To make the coldness visible.

Shut in from all the world without,
 We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
 Content to let the north-wind roar
 In baffled rage at pane and door,
 While the red logs before us beat
 The frost-line back with tropic heat; 160
 And ever, when a louder blast
 Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
 The merrier up its roaring draught
 The great throat of the chimney laughed;
 The house-dog on his paws outspread
 Laid to the fire his drowsy head,
 The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
 A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
 And, for the winter fireside meet,
 Between the andirons' straddling feet, 170
 The mug of cider simmered slow,
 The apples sputtered in a row,
 And, close at hand, the basket stood
 With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?
 What matter how the north-wind raved?
 Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
 Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.
 O Time and Change!—with hair as gray
 As was my sire's that winter day, 180
 How strange it seems, with so much gone
 Of life and love, to still live on!
 Ah, brother! only I and thou
 Are left of all that circle now,—
 The dear home faces whereupon
 That fitful firelight paled and shone.
 Henceforward, listen as we will,
 The voices of that hearth are still;
 Look where we may, the wide earth o'er
 Those lighted faces smile no more. 190
 We tread the paths their feet have worn,
 We sit beneath their orchard trees,
 We hear, like them, the hum of bees
 And rustle of the bladed corn;
 We turn the pages that they read,
 Their written words we linger o'er,
 But in the sun they cast no shade,
 No voice is heard, no sign is made,
 No step is on the conscious floor!
 Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust 200
 (Since He who knows our need is just),
 That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
 Alas for him who never sees
 The stars shine through his cypress-trees!
 Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
 Nor looks to see the breaking day
 Across the mournful marbles play!

Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
 The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
 That Life is ever lord of Death, 210
 And Love can never lose its own!

We sped the time with stories old,
 Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,
 Or stammered from our school-book lore
 "The Chief of Gambia's golden shore."
 How often since, when all the land
 Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,
 As if a far-blown trumpet stirred
 The languorous sin-sick air, I heard:
 "*Does not the voice of reason cry,* 220
 Claim the first right which Nature gave,
From the red scourge of bondage fly,
 Nor deign to live a burdened slave!"
 Our father rode again his ride
 On Memphremagog's wooded side;
 Sat down again to moose and samp
 In trapper's hut and Indian camp;
 Lived o'er the old idyllic ease
 Beneath St. François' hemlock-trees;
 Again for him the moonlight shone 230
 On Norman cap and bodiced zone;
 Again he heard the violin play
 Which led the village dance away,
 And mingled in its merry whirl
 The grandam and the laughing girl.
 Or, nearer home, our steps he led
 Where Salisbury's level marshes spread
 Mile-wide as flies the laden bee;
 Where merry mowers, hale and strong,
 Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along
 The low green prairies of the sea. 241
 We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,
 And round the rocky Isles of Shoals
 The hake-broil on the drift-wood coals;
 The chowder on the sand-beach made,
 Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,
 With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.
 We heard the tales of witchcraft old,
 And dream and sign and marvel told
 To sleepy listeners as they lay 250
 Stretched idly on the salted hay,
 Adrift along the winding shores,
 When favoring breezes deigned to blow
 The square sail of the gundelow
 And idle lay the useless oars.

Our mother, while she turned her wheel
 Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,
 Told how the Indian hordes came down
 At midnight on Cocheco town,

And how her own great-uncle bore 260
 His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.
 Recalling, in her fitting phrase,
 So rich and picturesque and free
 (The common unrhymed poetry
 Of simple life and country ways),
 The story of her early days,—
 She made us welcome to her home;
 Old hearths grew wide to give us room;
 We stole with her a frightened look
 At the gray wizard's conjuring-book, 270
 The fame whereof went far and wide
 Through all the simple country-side;¹
 We heard the hawks at twilight play,
 The boat-horn on Piscataqua,
 The loon's weird laughter far away;
 We fished her little trout-brook, knew
 What flowers in wood and meadow grew,
 What sunny hillsides autumn-brown
 She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,
 Saw where in sheltered cove and bay 280
 The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,
 And heard the wild-geese calling loud
 Beneath the gray November cloud.

Then, haply, with a look more grave,
 And soberer tone, some tale she gave
 From painful Sewel's ancient tome,
 Beloved in every Quaker home,
 Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,
 Or Chalkley's Journal, old and quaint,—
 Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint!— 290
 Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,
 And water-butt and bread-cask failed,
 And cruel, hungry eyes pursued
 His portly presence mad for food,
 With dark hints muttered under breath
 Of casting lots for life or death,
 Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,
 To be himself the sacrifice.
 Then, suddenly, as if to save
 The good man from his living grave, 300
 A ripple on the water grew,
 A school of porpoise flashed in view.
 "Take, eat," he said, "and be content;
 These fishes in my stead are sent
 By Him who gave the tangled ram
 To spare the child of Abraham."

Our uncle, innocent of books,
 Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,

The ancient teachers never dumb
 Of Nature's unhoused lyceum. 310
 In moons and tides and weather wise,
 He read the clouds as prophecies,
 And foul or fair could well divine,
 By many an occult hint and sign,
 Holding the cunning-warded keys
 To all the woodcraft mysteries;
 Himself to Nature's heart so near
 That all her voices in his ear
 Of beast or bird had meanings clear,
 Like Apollonius of old, 320
 Who knew the tales the sparrows told,
 Or Hermes, who interpreted
 What the sage cranes of Nilus said;
 A simple, guileless, childlike man,
 Content to live where life began;
 Strong only on his native grounds,
 The little world of sights and sounds
 Whose girdle was the parish bounds,
 Whereof his fondly partial pride
 The common features magnified, 330
 As Surrey hills to mountains grew
 In White of Selborne's loving view,—
 He told how teal and loon he shot,
 And how the eagle's eggs he got,
 The feats on pond and river done,
 The prodigies of rod and gun;
 Till, warming with the tales he told,
 Forgotten was the outside cold,
 The bitter wind unheeded blew,
 From ripening corn the pigeons flew, 340
 The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink
 Went fishing down the river-brink;
 In fields with bean or clover gay,
 The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,
 Peered from the doorway of his cell;
 The muskrat plied the mason's trade,
 And tier by tier his mud-walls laid;
 And from the shagbark overhead
 The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer
 And voice in dreams I see and hear,— 351
 The sweetest woman ever Fate
 Perverse denied a household mate,
 Who, lonely, homeless, not the less
 Found peace in love's unselfishness,
 And welcome whereso'er she went,
 A calm and gracious element,
 Whose presence seemed the sweet income
 And womanly atmosphere of home,—
 Called up her girlhood memories, 360
 The huskings and the apple-bees,

¹ Whittier possessed this book. It was Cornelius Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, 1651.

The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,
 Weaving through all the poor details
 And homespun warp of circumstance
 A golden woof-thread of romance.
 For well she kept her genial mood
 And simple faith of maidenhood;
 Before her still a cloud-land lay,
 The mirage loomed across her way;
 The morning dew, that dries so soon 370
 With others, glistened at her noon;
 Through years of toil and soil and care,
 From glossy tress to thin gray hair,
 All unprofaned she held apart
 The virgin fancies of the heart.
 Be shame to him of woman born
 Who hath for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied
 Her evening task the stand beside;
 A full, rich nature, free to trust, 380
 Truthful and almost sternly just,
 Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,
 And make her generous thought a fact,
 Keeping with many a light disguise
 The secret of self-sacrifice.
 O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best
 That Heaven itself could give thee,—rest,
 Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!
 How many a poor one's blessing went
 With thee beneath the low green tent 390
 Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part
 Of all she saw, and let her heart
 Against the household bosom lean,
 Upon the motley-braided mat
 Our youngest and our dearest sat,
 Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
 Now bathed in the unfading green
 And holy peace of Paradise.
 Oh, looking from some heavenly hill, 400
 Or from the shade of saintly palms,
 Or silver reach of river calms,
 Do those large eyes behold me still?
 With me one little year ago:—
 The chill weight of the winter snow
 For months upon her grave has lain;
 And now, when summer south-winds blow
 And brier and harebell bloom again,
 I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
 I see the violet-sprinkled sod 410
 Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak
 The hillside flowers she loved to seek,

Yet following me where'er I went
 With dark eyes full of love's content.
 The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills
 The air with sweetness; all the hills
 Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
 But still I wait with ear and eye
 For something gone which should be nigh,
 A loss in all familiar things, 420
 In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.
 And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,
 Am I not richer than of old?
 Safe in thy immortality,
 What change can reach the wealth I hold?
 What chance can mar the pearl and gold
 Thy love hath left in trust with me?
 And while in life's late afternoon,
 Where cool and long the shadows grow,
 I walk to meet the night that soon 430
 Shall shape and shadow overflow,
 I cannot feel that thou art far,
 Since near at need the angels are;
 And when the sunset gates unbar,
 Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
 And, white against the evening star,
 The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,
 The master of the district school.
 Held at the fire his favored place, 440
 Its warm glow lit a laughing face
 Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared
 The uncertain prophecy of beard.
 He teased the mitten-blinded cat,
 Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,
 Sang songs, and told us what befalls
 In classic Dartmouth's college halls.
 Born the wild Northern hills among,
 From whence his yeoman father wrung
 By patient toil subsistence scant, 450
 Not competence and yet not want,
 He early gained the power to pay
 His cheerful, self-reliant way;
 Could doff at ease his scholar's gown
 To peddle wares from town to town;
 Or through the long vacation's reach
 In lonely lowland districts teach,
 Where all the droll experience found
 At stranger hearths in boarding round,
 The moonlit skater's keen delight, 460
 The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,
 The rustic-party, with its rough
 Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,
 And whirling-plate, and forfeits paid,
 His winter task a pastime made.

Happy the snow-locked homes wherein
 He tuned his merry violin,
 Or played the athlete in the barn,
 Or held the good dame's winding-yarn,
 Or mirth-provoking versions told 470
 Of classic legends rare and old,
 Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome
 Had all the commonplace of home,
 And little seemed at best the odds
 'Twixt Yankee pedlers and old gods;
 Where Pindus-born Arachthus took
 The guise of any grist-mill brook,
 And dread Olympus at his will
 Became a huckleberry hill.

A careless boy that night he seemed; 480
 But at his desk he had the look
 And air of one who wisely schemed,
 And hostage from the future took
 In trained thought and lore of book.
 Large-brained, clear-eyed, of such as he
 Shall Freedom's young apostles be,
 Who, following in War's bloody trail,
 Shall every lingering wrong assail;
 All chains from limb and spirit strike, 490
 Uplift the black and white alike;
 Scatter before their swift advance
 The darkness and the ignorance,
 The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,
 Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,
 Made murder pastime, and the hell
 Of prison-torture possible;
 The cruel lie of caste refute,
 Old forms remold, and substitute
 For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,
 For blind routine, wise-handed skill; 500
 A school-house plant on every hill,
 Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence
 The quick wires of intelligence;
 Till North and South together brought
 Shall own the same electric thought,
 In peace a common flag salute,
 And, side by side in labor's free
 And unresentful rivalry,
 Harvest the fields wherein they fought

Another guest that winter night 510
 Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light.
 Unmarked by time, and yet not young,
 The honeyed music of her tongue
 And words of meekness scarcely told
 A nature passionate and bold,
 Strong, self-concentered, spurning guide,

Its milder features dwarfed beside
 Her unbent will's majestic pride.
 She sat among us, at the best,
 A not unfear'd, half-welcome guest, 520
 Rebuking with her cultured phrase
 Our homeliness of words and ways.
 A certain pard-like, treacherous grace
 Swayed the lithe limbs and dropped the lash,
 Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;
 And under low brows, black with night,
 Rayed out at times a dangerous light;
 The sharp heat-lightnings of her face
 Presaging ill to him whom Fate
 Condemned to share her love or hate. 530
 A woman tropical, intense
 In thought and act, in soul and sense,
 She blended in a like degree
 The vixen and the devotee,
 Revealing with each freak or feint
 The temper of Petruchio's Kate,
 The raptures of Siena's saint.
 Her tapering hand and rounded wrist
 Had facile power to form a fist;
 The warm, dark languish of her eyes 540
 Was never safe from wrath's surprise.
 Brows saintly calm and lips devout
 Knew every change of scowl and pout;
 And the sweet voice had notes more high
 And shrill for social battle-cry.

Since then what old cathedral town
 Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown,
 What convent-gate has held its lock
 Against the challenge of her knock!
 Through Smyrna's plague-hushed thorough-
 fares, 550
 Up sea-set Malta's rocky stairs,
 Gray olive slopes of hills that hem
 Thy tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,
 Or startling on her desert throne
 The crazy Queen of Lebanon
 With claims fantastic as her own,
 Her tireless feet have held their way;
 And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,
 She watches under Eastern skies,
 With hope each day renewed and fresh, 560
 The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,
 Whereof she dreams and prophesies!

Where'er her troubled path may be,
 The Lord's sweet pity with her go!
 The outward wayward life we see,
 The hidden springs we may not know.

Nor is it given us to discern
 What threads the fatal sisters spun,
 Through what ancestral years has run
 The sorrow with the woman born, 570
 What forged her cruel chain of moods,
 What set her feet in solitudes,
 And held the love within her mute,
 What mingled madness in the blood,
 A life-long discord and annoy,
 Water of tears with oil or joy,
 And hid within the folded bud
 Perversities of flower and fruit.

It is not ours to separate
 The tangled skein of will and fate, 580
 To show what metes and bounds should
 stand

Upon the soul's debatable land,
 And between choice and Providence
 Divide the circle of events;
 But He who knows our frame is just,
 Merciful and compassionate,
 And full of sweet assurances
 And hope for all the language is,
 That He remembereth we are dust!

At last the great logs, crumbling low, 590
 Sent out a dull and duller glow,
 The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,
 Ticking its weary circuit through,
 Pointed with mutely warning sign
 Its black hand to the hour of nine.
 That sign the pleasant circle broke:
 My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,
 Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray,
 And laid it tenderly away;
 Then roused himself to safely cover 600
 The dull red brands with ashes over,
 And while, with care, our mother laid
 The work aside, her steps she stayed
 One moment, seeking to express
 Her grateful sense of happiness
 For food and shelter, warmth and health,
 And love's contentment more than wealth,
 With simple wishes (not the weak,
 Vain prayers which no fulfillment seek,
 But such as warm the generous heart, 610
 O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)
 That none might lack, that bitter night,
 For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard
 The wind that round the gables roared,
 With now and then a ruder shock,
 Which made our very bedsteads rock.

We heard the loosened clapboards tossed,
 The board-nails snapping in the frost;
 And on us, through the unplastered wall, 620
 Felt the light sifted snow-flakes fall.
 But sleep stole on, as sleep will do
 When hearts are light and life is new;
 Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,
 Till in the summer-land of dreams
 They softened to the sound of streams,
 Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,
 And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Next morn we wakened with the shout
 Of merry voices high and clear; 630
 And saw the teamsters drawing near
 To break the drifted highways out.
 Down the long hillside treading slow
 We saw the half-buried oxen go,
 Shaking the snow from heads uptossed,
 Their straining nostrils white with frost.
 Before our door the straggling train
 Drew up, an added team to gain.
 The elders threshed their hands a-cold,
 Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes 640
 From lip to lip; the younger folks
 Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,
 Then toiled again the cavalcade
 O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,
 And woodland paths that wound between
 Low drooping pine-boughs winter-weighed.
 From every barn a team afoot,
 At every house a new recruit,
 Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,
 Haply the watchful young men saw 650
 Sweet doorway pictures of the curls
 And curious eyes of merry girls,
 Lifting their hands in mock defense
 Against the snow-ball's compliments,
 And reading in each missive tossed
 The charm with Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound;
 And, following where the teamsters led,
 The wise old Doctor went his round,
 Just pausing at our door to say, 660
 In the brief autocratic way
 Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,
 Was free to urge her claim on all,
 That some poor neighbor sick abed
 At night our mother's aid would need.
 For, one in generous thought and deed,
 What mattered in the sufferer's sight
 The Quaker matron's inward light,
 The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed?

All hearts confess the saints elect 670
 Who, twain in faith, in love agree,
 And melt not in an acid sect
 The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed
 Since the great world was heard from last.
 The Almanac we studied o'er,
 Read and reread our little store
 Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;
 One harmless novel, mostly hid
 From younger eyes, a book forbid, 680
 And poetry (or good or bad,
 A single book was all we had),
 Where Ellwood's meek, drab-skirted Muse,
 A stranger to the heathen Nine,
 Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,
 The wars of David and the Jews.
 At last the floundering carrier bore
 The village paper to our door.
 Lo! broadening outward as we read,
 To warmer zones the horizon spread; 690
 In panoramic length unrolled
 We saw the marvels that it told.
 Before us passed the painted Creeks,
 And daft McGregor on his raids
 In Costa Rica's everglades.

And up Taygetos winding slow
 Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,
 A Turk's head at each saddle-bow!
 Welcome to us its week-old news,
 Its corner for the rustic Muse, 700

Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,
 Its record, mingling in a breath
 The wedding bell and dirge of death:
 Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,
 The latest culprit sent to jail;
 Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,
 Its vendue sales and goods at cost,
 And traffic calling loud for gain.
 We felt the stir of hall and street,
 The pulse of life that round us beat; 710
 The chill embargo of the snow
 Was melted in the genial glow;
 Wide swung again our ice-locked door,
 And all the world was ours once more!

Clasp, Angel of the backward look
 And folded wings of ashen gray
 And voice of echoes far away,
 The brazen covers of thy book;
 The weird palimpsest old and vast,
 Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past; 720
 Where, closely mingling, pale and glow
 The characters of joy and woe;
 The monographs of outlived years,
 Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,
 Green hills of life that slope to death,
 And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees
 Shade off to mournful cypresses
 With the white amaranths underneath.
 Even while I look, I can but heed
 The restless sands' incessant fall, 730
 Importunate hours that hours succeed,
 Each clamorous with its own sharp need,
 And duty keeping pace with all.
 Shut down and clasp the heavy lids;
 I hear again the voice that bids
 The dreamer leave his dream midway
 For larger hopes and graver fears;
 Life greatens in these later years,
 The century's aloë flowers to-day!

Yet, haply, in some lull of life, 740
 Some Truce of God which breaks its strife,
 The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,
 Dreaming in throngful city ways
 Of winter joys his boyhood knew;
 And dear and early friends—the few
 Who yet remain—shall pause to view
 These Flemish pictures of old days;
 Sit with me by the homestead hearth,
 And stretch the hands of memory forth
 To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze! 750
 And thanks untraced to lips unknown
 Shall greet me like the odors blown
 From unseen meadows newly mown,
 Or lilies floating in some pond,
 Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
 The traveler owns the grateful sense
 Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
 And, pausing, takes with forehead bare
 The benediction of the air.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809-1894)

Holmes was born at Cambridge, Massachusetts, on 29 August, 1809. He himself has described in *Elsie Venner* "the Brahmin caste of New England" to which he belonged—a caste formed "by the repetition of the same influences, generation after generation," and composed of those whose ancestors have been college trained and have been lawyers, physicians, or clergymen. The Brahmin's eye "is bright and quick—his lips play over the thought much as a pianist's fingers dance over their music—and his whole air, though it may be timid, and even awkward, has nothing clownish." And the Brahmin "will take to his books as a pointer or setter to his field work." Holmes's father was a clergyman, his grandfather a physician, and a more remote ancestor—whom he shared with R. H. Dana, the author of *Two Years before the Mast*—was the colonial poetess Anne Bradstreet. The boy was brought up in the atmosphere of books, and he almost "lisp[ed] in numbers," delighting from a very early time in the verses of Pope and making rhymes before he knew how to write. In 1825 he entered Harvard, and was graduated four years later. He then spent a year ostensibly in study of the law, but largely in the writing of verse, and thereupon concluded that the law was not for him. Many years later he could not recall precisely why he had so concluded, nor why he had determined to become a medical man, but, at any rate, he did now undertake the study of medicine, first in a private school in Boston, and then in Paris. He was abroad from April, 1833, to October, 1835. In 1836 he took his degree of doctor of medicine, and in the same year issued his earliest volume of poems. In the following year he published a medical treatise. By this time he was settled in the practice of his profession in Boston, his motto being "the smallest fevers thankfully received." In 1839 he was appointed to the professorship of anatomy and physiology at Dartmouth College, but retained that post only a couple of months, continuing instead with his practice in Boston. In the following year he married Amelia Lee Jackson. In 1847 he published his second volume of verse, and also was made Parkman Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the Medical School of Harvard. This post he held until 1882. By the middle of the century he had attained an established position as a man of science, he was in demand as a lecturer in and around Boston, and he was well known as a writer of excellent occasional verse, who could be counted on at any gathering for something at once genial and witty. But it was not until 1857 that he began to be known also as a writer of genial and witty prose. When Lowell assumed the editorship of *The Atlantic Monthly* he made it one of the conditions of his acceptance of the post that Holmes should be a frequent contributor to the new periodical—and *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* was the immediate result. It was a complete success, and it is hardly too much to say that it at once made the fortunes of the *Atlantic*. That series of essays was followed by others, and Holmes also wrote three "medicated novels" which are not novels but which, at least, have their passages of inimitable writing which no lover of Holmes would wish to have missed. The only real break since his young manhood in Holmes's life in his dearly loved "hub of the universe" took place in 1886, when he and his daughter made a journey to Europe. In England they were cordially welcomed, and were, indeed, almost overwhelmed by a continuous succession of luncheons, dinners, receptions, and the like, though Holmes found time to go to the Derby with the Prince of Wales. Returning to America, he continued still to delight readers of the *Atlantic* as late as 1890. In 1894 he died, on 7 October.

Holmes once said, "I have always been good company for myself," and his readers know that he is good company for them. No one is likely to contend that Holmes occupies an important place in serious literature. The greater part of his verse is strictly occasional in character, and its interest has passed with memory of the occasions which called it forth. Much of his prose, too, has no qualities which can long preserve it from oblivion. But in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* he produced a series of light personal essays, full of genial wisdom and pleasant wit, which are singularly charming and are likely long to remain capital reading. And, again, he produced a small body of familiar verse—*vers de société*, as it is called—which is of so high a quality that it can bear comparison with the best that has been done in that difficult species of poetry. These are not the greatest kinds of literature—in fact they are the lightest—but Holmes has, at the least, made for himself a secure place in both. He remains "good company" for his readers, who should be grateful.

Holmes's more important volumes, with their dates, are: *Poems* (1836); *Homeopathy, and its Kindred Delusions* (1842); *The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever* (1843, reissued in enlarged form in

1855); *Poems* (1847); *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1858); *The Professor at the Breakfast-Table* (1860); *Elsie Venner* (1861); *Songs in Many Keys* (1862); *Soundings from the Atlantic* (1864); *The Guardian Angel* (1867); *The Poet at the Breakfast-Table* (1872); *Songs of Many Seasons* (1875); John Lothrop Motley, *A Memoir* (1879); *The Iron Gate, and Other Poems* (1880); *Medical Essays* (1883); *Pages from an Old Volume of Life* (1883); Ralph Waldo Emerson (1885); *A Mortal Antipathy* (1885); *Our Hundred Days in Europe* (1887); *Before the Curfew, and Other Poems* (1888); *Over the Teacups* (1891).

THE HEIGHT OF THE RIDICULOUS¹

I WROTE some lines once on a time
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

I called my servant, and he came;
How kind it was of him
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb!

"These to the printer," I exclaimed,
And, in my humorous way,
I added (as a trifling jest),
"There'll be the devil to pay."

He took the paper, and I watched,
And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

He read the next; the grin grew broad,
And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third; a chuckling noise
I now began to hear.

The fourth; he broke into a roar;
The fifth; his waistband split;
The sixth; he burst five buttons off,
And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights, with sleepless eye,
I watched that wretched man,
And since, I never dare to write
As funny as I can.

OLD IRONSIDES²

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe, 10
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave; 20
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!

THE BALLAD OF THE OYSTERMAN³

It was a tall young oysterman lived by the
river-side,
His shop was just upon the bank, his boat
was on the tide;
The daughter of a fisherman, that was so
straight and slim,
Lived over on the other bank, right opposite
to him.

² Written in 1830. The poem was occasioned by a recommendation of the Secretary of the Navy that the frigate *Constitution*, then useless from age, should be destroyed. Holmes's feelings were aroused, and the poem was written rapidly and published in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*. It was widely copied in other newspapers, and even circulated in Washington as a broadside, with the result that the ship was not destroyed.

³ Written in 1830.

¹ Written in 1830.
The selections from Holmes here reprinted are used by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

It was the pensive oysterman that saw a
lovely maid,
Upon a moonlight evening, a-sitting in the
shade;
He saw her wave her handkerchief, as much
as if to say,
"I'm wide awake, young oysterman, and all
the folks away."

Then up arose the oysterman, and to himself
said he,
"I guess I'll leave the skiff at home, for fear
that folks should see; 10
I read it in the story-book, that, for to kiss
his dear,
Leander swam the Hellespont,—and I will
swim this here."

And he has leaped into the waves, and
crossed the shining stream,
And he has clambered up the bank, all in the
moonlight gleam;
Oh there were kisses sweet as dew, and words
as soft as rain,—
But they have heard her father's step, and in
he leaps again!

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—“Oh,
what was that, my daughter?”
“’Twas nothing but a pebble, sir, I threw
into the water.”
“And what is that, pray tell me, love, that
paddles off so fast?”
“It’s nothing but a porpoise, sir, that’s been
a-swimming past.” 20

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—“Now
bring me my harpoon!
I’ll get into my fishing-boat, and fix the fel-
low soon.”
Down fell that pretty innocent, as falls a
snow-white lamb,
Her hair drooped round her pallid cheeks,
like seaweed on a clam.

Alas for those two loving ones! she waked not
from her swoond,
And he was taken with the cramp, and in the
waves was drowned;
But Fate has metamorphosed them, in pity
of their woe,
And now they keep an oyster-shop for mer-
maids down below.

MY AUNT¹

My aunt! my dear unmarried aunt!
Long years have o’er her flown;
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her,—though she looks
As cheerful as she can;
Her waist is ampler than her life,
For life is but a span.

My aunt! my poor deluded aunt!
Her hair is almost gray; 10
Why will she train that winter curl
In such a spring-like way?
How can she lay her glasses down,
And say she reads as well,
When through a double convex lens
She just makes out to spell?

Her father—grandpapa! forgive
This erring lip its smiles—
Vowed she should make the finest girl
Within a hundred miles; 20
He sent her to a stylish school;
’Twas in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
“Two towels and a spoon.”

They braced my aunt against a board,
To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
To make her light and small;
They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
They screwed it up with pins;— 30
Oh, never mortal suffered more
In penance for her sins.

So, when my precious aunt was done,
My grandsire brought her back
(By daylight, lest some rabid youth
Might follow on the track);
“Ah!” said my grandsire, as he shook
Some powder in his pan,
“What could this lovely creature do
Against a desperate man!” 40

Alas! nor chariot, nor barouche,
Nor bandit cavalcade,
Tore from the trembling father’s arms
His all-accomplished maid.
For her how happy had it been!
And Heaven had spared to me
To see one sad, ungathered rose
On my ancestral tree.

¹ Written in 1831.

THE LAST LEAF¹

I SAW him once before,
 As he passed by the door,
 And again
 The pavement stones resound,
 As he totters o'er the ground
 With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
 Ere the pruning-knife of Time
 Cut him down,
 Not a better man was found 10
 By the Crier on his round
 Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
 And he looks at all he meets
 Sad and wan,
 And he shakes his feeble head,
 That it seems as if he said,
 "They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
 On the lips that he has pressed 20
 In their bloom,
 And the names he loved to hear
 Have been carved for many a year
 On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said—
 Poor old lady, she is dead
 Long ago—
 That he had a Roman nose,
 And his cheek was like a rose
 In the snow; 30

But now his nose is thin,
 And it rests upon his chin
 Like a staff,
 And a crook is in his back,
 And a melancholy crack
 In his laugh.

I know it is is a sin
 For me to sit and grin
 At him here;
 40 But the old three-cornered hat,
 And the breeches, and all that,
 Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
 The last leaf upon the tree
 In the spring,²
 Let them smile, as I do now,
 At the old forsaken bough
 Where I cling.

THE POET'S LOT³

WHAT is a poet's love?—
 To write a girl a sonnet,
 To get a ring, or some such thing,
 And fustianize upon it.

What is a poet's fame?—
 Sad hints about his reason,
 And sadder praise from garreteers,
 To be returned in season.

Where go the poet's lines?—
 Answer, ye evening tapers! 10
 Ye auburn locks, ye golden curls,
 Speak from your folded papers!

Child of the ploughshare, smile;
 Boy of the counter, grieve not,
 Though muses round thy trundle-bed
 Their broidered tissue weave not.

The poet's future holds
 No civic wreath above him;
 Nor slated roof, nor varnished chaise,
 Nor wife nor child to love him. 20

Maid of the village inn,
 Who workest woe on satin
 (The grass in black, the graves in green,
 The epitaph in Latin),

Trust not to them who say,
 In stanzas, they adore thee;
 Oh rather sleep in churchyard clay,
 With urn and cherub o'er thee!

¹ Major Thomas Melville, grandfather of Herman Melville, was the man whose appearance suggested this poem to Holmes. It was written in 1831, and Major Melville died in 1832.

² Holmes wrote that Melville's "aspect among the crowds of a later generation reminded me of a withered leaf which has held to its stem through the storms of autumn and winter, and finds itself still clinging to its bough while the new growths of spring are bursting their buds and spreading their foliage all around it."

³ Published in 1836.

ON LENDING A PUNCH-BOWL¹

THIS ancient silver bowl of mine, it tells of
good old times,
Of joyous days and jolly nights, and merry
Christmas times;
They were a free and jovial race, but honest,
brave, and true,
Who dipped their ladle in the punch when
this old bowl was new.

A Spanish galleon brought the bar,—so runs
the ancient tale;
'Twas hammered by an Antwerp smith,
whose arm was like a flail;
And now and then between the strokes, for
fear his strength should fail,
His wiped his brow and quaffed a cup of
good old Flemish ale.

'Twas purchased by an English squire to
please his loving dame,
Who saw the cherubs, and conceived a long-
ing for the same; 10
And oft as on the ancient stock another
twig was found,
'Twas filled with caudle spiced and hot, and
handed smoking round.

But, changing hands, it reached at length a
Puritan divine,
Who used to follow Timothy, and take a
little wine,
But hated punch and prelacy; and so it was,
perhaps,
He went to Leyden, where he found con-
venticles and schnapps.

And then, of course, you know what's next:
it left the Dutchman's shore
With those that in the *Mayflower* came,—a
hundred souls and more,—
Along with all the furniture, to fill their new
abodes,—
To judge by what is still on hand, at least a
hundred loads. 20

'Twas on a dreary winter's eve, the night
was closing dim,
When brave Miles Standish took the bowl,
and filled it to the brim;

The little Captain stood and stirred the
posset with his sword,
And all his sturdy men-at-arms were ranged
about the board.

He poured the fiery Hollands in,—the man
that never feared,—
He took a long and solemn draught, and
wiped his yellow beard;
And one by one the musketeers—the men
that fought and prayed—
All drank as 'twere their mother's milk, and
not a man afraid.

That night, affrighted from his nest, the
screaming eagle flew,
He heard the Pequot's ringing whoop, the
soldier's wild halloo; 30
And there the sachem learned the rule he
taught to kith and kin:
"Run from the white man when you find
he smells of Hollands gin!"

A hundred years, and fifty more, had spread
their leaves and snows,
A thousand rubs had flattened down each
little cherub's nose;
When once again the bowl was filled, but
not in mirth or joy,—
'Twas mingled by a mother's hand to cheer
her parting boy.

"Drink, John," she said, "'twill do you
good,—poor child, you'll never bear
This working in the dismal trench, out in the
midnight air;
And if—God bless me!—you were hurt,
'twould keep away the chill."
So John *did* drink,—and well he wrought
that night at Bunker's Hill! 40

I tell you, there was generous warmth in
good old English cheer;
I tell you, 'twas a pleasant thought to bring
its symbol here.
'Tis but the fool that loves excess; hast
thou a drunken soul?
Thy bane is in thy shallow skull, not in my
silver bowl!

I love the memory of the past,—its pressed
yet fragrant flowers,—
The moss that clothes its broken walls, the
ivy on its towers;

¹ Published in 1848. Holmes says that the bowl was, according to family tradition, a caudle-cup. It was massive, ornamented with repoussé work, and had two handles.

Nay, this poor bauble it bequeathed,—my
eyes grow moist and dim,
To think of all the vanished joys that danced
around its brim.

Then fill a fair and honest cup, and bear it
straight to me;
The goblet hallows all it holds, whate'er the
liquid be; 50
And may the cherubs on its face protect
me from the sin
That dooms one to those dreadful words,—
“My dear, where *have* you been?”

THE STETHOSCOPE SONG¹

A PROFESSIONAL BALLAD

THERE was a young man in Boston town,
He bought him a stethoscope nice and
new,
All mounted and finished and polished down,
With an ivory cap and a stopper too.

It happened a spider within did crawl,
And spun him a web of ample size,
Wherein there chanced one day to fall
A couple of very imprudent flies.

The first was a bottle-fly, big and blue,
The second was smaller, and thin and 10
long;
So there was a concert between the two,
Like an octave flute and a tavern gong.

Now being from Paris but recently,
This fine young man would show his skill;
And so they gave him, his hand to try,
A hospital patient extremely ill.

Some said that his *liver* was short of *bile*,
And some that his *heart* was over size,
While some kept arguing, all the while,
He was crammed with *tubercles* up to his 20
eyes.

This fine young man then up stepped he,
And all the doctors made a pause;
Said he, The man must die, you see,
By the fifty-seventh of Louis's laws.

But since the case is a desperate one,
To explore his chest it may be well;
For if he should die and it were not done,
You know the *autopsy* would not tell.

Then out his stethoscope he took,
And on it placed his curious ear; 30
Mon Dieu! said he, with a knowing look,
Why, here is a sound that's mighty queer!

The *bourdonnement* is very clear,—
Amphoric buzzing, as I'm alive!
Five doctors took their turn to hear;
Amphoric buzzing, said all the five.

There's *empyema* beyond a doubt;
We'll plunge a *trocar* in his side.
The diagnosis was made out,—
They tapped the patient; so he died. 40

Now such as hate new-fashioned toys
Began to look extremely glum;
They said that *rattles* were made for boys,
And vowed that his *buzzing* was all a hum.

There was an old lady had long been sick,
And what was the matter none did know;
Her pulse was slow, though her tongue was
quick;
To her this knowing youth must go.

So there the nice old lady sat,
With phials and boxes all in a row; 50
She asked the young doctor what he was at,
To thump her and tumble her ruffles so.

Now, when the stethoscope came out,
The flies began to buzz and whiz:
Oh, ho! the matter is clear, no doubt;
An *aneurism* there plainly is.

The *bruit de râpe* and the *bruit de scie*
And the *bruit de diable* are all combined;
How happy Bouillaud would be,
If he a case like this could find! 60

Now, when the neighboring doctors found
A case so rare had been descried,
They every day her ribs did pound
In squads of twenty; so she died.

Then six young damsels, slight and frail,
Received this kind young doctor's cares;
They all were getting slim and pale,
And short of breath on mounting stairs.

They all made rhymes with “sighs” and
“skies,”
And loathed their puddings and buttered
rolls, 70
And dieted, much to their friends' surprise,
On pickles and pencils and chalk and coals.

¹ Published in 1848.

So fast their little hearts did bound,
 The frightened insects buzzed the more;
 So over all their chests he found
 The *rôle sifflant* and the *rôle sonore*.

He shook his head. There's grave disease,—
 I greatly fear you all must die;
 A slight *post-mortem*, if you please,
 Surviving friends would gratify. 80

The six young damsels wept aloud,
 Which so prevailed on six young men
 That each his honest love avowed,
 Whereat they all got well again.

This poor young man was all aghast;
 The price of stethoscopes came down;
 And so he was reduced at last
 To practice in a country town.

The doctors being very sore,
 A stethoscope they did devise 90
 That had a rammer to clear the bore,
 With a knob at the end to kill the flies.

Now use your ears, all you that can,
 But don't forget to mind your eyes,
 Or you may be cheated, like this young man,
 By a couple of silly, abnormal flies.

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS¹

THIS is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
 Sails the unshadowed main,—
 The venturous bark that flings
 On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
 In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
 And coral reefs lie bare,
 Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their
 streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
 Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
 And every chambered cell, 10
 Where its dim dreaming life was wont to
 dwell,
 As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
 Before thee lies revealed,—
 Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt un-
 sealed!

¹ Written in 1858. Included in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, at the end of the fourth essay.

Year after year beheld the silent toil
 That spread his lustrous coil;
 Still, as the spiral grew,
 He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
 Stole with soft step its shining archway
 through,
 Built up its idle door, 20
 Stretched in his last-found home, and knew
 the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought
 by thee,
 Child of the wandering sea,
 Cast from her lap, forlorn!
 From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
 Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!
 While on mine ear it rings,
 Through the deep caves of thought I hear a
 voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my
 soul,
 As the swift seasons roll! 30
 Leave thy low-vaulted past!
 Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
 Shut thee from heaven with a dome more
 vast,
 Till thou at length art free,
 Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's un-
 resting sea!

THE VOICELESS²

WE count the broken lyres that rest
 Where the sweet wailing singers slumber,
 But o'er their silent sister's breast
 The wild-flowers who will stoop to num-
 ber?
 A few can touch the magic string,
 And noisy Fame is proud to win them:—
 Alas for those that never sing,
 But die with all their music in them!

² Written in 1858. Included in the twelfth essay in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, where it is preceded by this paragraph: "Read what the singing-women—one to ten thousand of the suffering women—tell us, and think of the griefs that die unspoken! Nature is in earnest when she makes a woman; and there are women enough lying in the next churchyard with very commonplace blue slate-stones at their head and feet, for whom it was just as true that 'all sounds of life assumed one tone of love,' as for Letitia Landon, of whom Elizabeth Browning said it; but she could give words to her grief, and they could not.—Will you hear a few stanzas of mine?"

Nay, grieve not for the dead alone
Whose song has told their hearts' sad
story,— 10

Weep for the voiceless, who have known
The cross without the crown of glory!
Not where Leucadian breezes sweep
O'er Sappho's memory-haunted billow,
But where the glistening night-dews weep
On nameless sorrow's churchyard pillow.

O hearts that break and give no sign
Save whitening lip and fading tresses,
Till Death pours out his longed-for wine
Slow-dropped from Misery's crushing
presses,— 20
If singing breath or echoing chord
To every hidden pang were given,
What endless melodies were poured,
As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!

HYMN OF TRUST¹

O LOVE Divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On Thee we cast each earth-born care,
We smile at pain while Thou art near!

Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering, Thou art near!

When drooping pleasure turns to grief,
And trembling faith is changed to fear, 10
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf,
Shall softly tell us, Thou art near!

On Thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love Divine, forever dear,
Content to suffer while we know,
Living and dying, Thou art near!

THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE

I

I WAS just going to say, when I was interrupted,² that one of the many ways of classifying minds is under the heads of

¹ Written in 1859. Included in *The Professor at the Breakfast-Table*.

² The interruption was a long one, as Holmes alludes to two papers of his published under the title of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* in the *New England Magazine* for November, 1831, and January, 1832.

arithmetical and algebraical intellects. All economical and practical wisdom is an extension or variation of the following arithmetical formula: $2 + 2 = 4$. Every philosophical proposition has the more general character of the expression $a + b = c$. We are mere operatives, empirics, and egotists, until we learn to think in letters instead of figures.

They all stared. There is a divinity student lately come among us to whom I commonly address remarks like the above, allowing him to take a certain share in the conversation, so far as assent or pertinent questions are involved. He abused his liberty on this occasion by presuming to say that Leibnitz had the same observation.—No, sir, I replied, he has not. But he said a mighty good thing about mathematics, that sounds something like it, and you found it, *not in the original*, but quoted by Dr. Thomas Reid. I will tell the company what he did say, one of these days.

—If I belong to a Society of Mutual Admiration?—I blush to say that I do not at this present moment. I once did, however. It was the first association to which I ever heard the term applied; a body of scientific young men in a great foreign city³ who admired their teacher, and to some

³ The "body of scientific young men in a great foreign city" was the *Société d'Observation Médicale*, of Paris, of which M. Louis was president, and MM. Barth, Grisotte, and our own Dr. Bowditch were members. They agreed in admiring their justly-honored president, and thought highly of some of their associates, who have since made good their promise of distinction.

About the time when these papers were published, the Saturday Club was founded, or, rather, found itself in existence, without any organization, almost without parentage. It was natural enough that such men as Emerson, Longfellow, Agassiz, Peirce, with Hawthorne, Motley, Sumner, when within reach, and others who would be good company for them, should meet and dine together once in a while, as they did, in point of fact, every month, and as some who are still living, with other and newer members, still meet and dine. If some of them had not admired each other they would have been exceptions in the world of letters and science. The club deserves being remembered for having no constitution or by-laws, for making no speeches, reading no papers, observing no ceremonies, coming and going at will without remark, and acting out, though it did not proclaim the motto, "Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?" There was and is nothing of the Bohemian element about this club, but it has had many good times and not a little good talking. (Holmes's note.)

extent each other. Many of them deserved it; they have become famous since. It amuses me to hear the talk of one of those beings described by Thackeray—

Letters four do form his name—

about a social development which belongs to the very noblest stage of civilization. All generous companies of artists, authors, philanthropists, men of science, are, or ought to be, Societies of Mutual Admiration. A man of genius, or any kind of superiority, is not debarred from admiring the same quality in another, nor the other from returning his admiration. They may even associate together and continue to think highly of each other. And so of a dozen such men, if any one place is fortunate enough to hold so many. The being referred to above assumes several false premises. First, that men of talent necessarily hate each other. Secondly, that intimate knowledge or habitual association destroys our admiration of persons whom we esteemed highly at a distance. Thirdly, that a circle of clever fellows, who meet together to dine and have a good time, have signed a constitutional compact to glorify themselves and to put down him and the fraction of the human race not belonging to their number. Fourthly, that it is an outrage that he is not asked to join them.

Here the company laughed a good deal, and the old gentleman who sits opposite said: "That's it! that's it!"

I continued, for I was in the talking vein. As to clever people's hating each other, I think *a little* extra talent does sometimes make people jealous. They become irritated by perpetual attempts and failures, and it hurts their tempers and dispositions. Unpretending mediocrity is good, and genius is glorious; but a weak flavor of genius in an essentially common person is detestable. It spoils the grand neutrality of a commonplace character, as the rinsings of an unwashed wine-glass spoil a draught of fair water. No wonder the poor fellow we spoke of, who always belongs to this class of slightly flavored mediocrities, is puzzled and vexed by the strange sight of a dozen men of capacity working and playing together in harmony. He and his fellows are always fighting. With them familiarity

naturally breeds contempt. If they ever praise each other's bad drawings, or broken-winded novels, or spavined verses, nobody ever supposed it was from admiration; it was simply a contract between themselves and a publisher or dealer.

If the Mutuals have really nothing among them worth admiring, that alters the question. But if they are men with noble powers and qualities, let me tell you that, next to youthful love and family affections, there is no human sentiment better than that which unites the Societies of Mutual Admiration. And what would literature or art be without such associations? Who can tell what we owe to the Mutual Admiration Society of which Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher were members? Or to that of which Addison and Steele formed the center, and which gave us the *Spectator*? Or to that where Johnson, and Goldsmith, and Burke, and Reynolds, and Beauclerk, and Boswell, most admiring among all admirers, met together? Was there any great harm in the fact that the Irvings and Paulding wrote in company? or any unpardonable cabal in the literary union of Verplanck and Bryant and Sands, and as many more as they chose to associate with them?

The poor creature does not know what he is talking about when he abuses this noblest of institutions. Let him inspect its mysteries through the knot-hole he has secured, but not use that orifice as a medium for his popgun. Such a society is the crown of a literary metropolis; if a town has not material for it, and spirit and good feeling enough to organize it, it is a mere caravansary, fit for a man of genius to lodge in, but not to live in. Foolish people hate and dread and envy such an association of men of varied powers and influence, because it is lofty, serene, impregnable, and, by the necessity of the case, exclusive. Wise ones are prouder of the title M. S. M. A. than of all their other honors put together.

—All generous minds have a horror of what are commonly called "facts." They are the brute beasts of the intellectual domain. Who does not know fellows that always have an ill-conditioned fact or two which they lead after them into decent company like so many bull-dogs, ready to let

them slip at every ingenious suggestion, or convenient generalization, or pleasant fancy? I allow no "facts" at this table. What! Because bread is good and wholesome, and necessary and nourishing, shall you thrust a crumb into my windpipe while I am talking? Do not these muscles of mine represent a hundred loaves of bread? and is not my thought the abstract of ten thousand of these crumbs of truth with which you would choke off my speech?

[The above remark must be conditioned and qualified for the vulgar mind. The reader will, of course, understand the precise amount of seasoning which must be added to it before he adopts it as one of the axioms of his life. The speaker disclaims all responsibility for its abuse in incompetent hands.]¹

This business of conversation is a very serious matter. There are men whom it weakens one to talk with an hour more than a day's fasting would do. Mark this which I am going to say, for it is as good as a working professional man's advice, and costs you nothing: It is better to lose a pint of blood from your veins than to have a nerve tapped. Nobody measures your nervous force as it runs away, nor bandages your brain and marrow after the operation.

There are men of *esprit* who are excessively exhausting to some people. They are the talkers who have what may be called *jerky* minds. Their thoughts do not run in the natural order of sequence. They say bright things on all possible subjects, but their zigzags rack you to death. After a jolting half-hour with one of these jerky companions, talking with a dull friend affords great relief. It is like taking the cat in your lap after holding a squirrel.

What a comfort a dull but kindly person is, to be sure, at times! A ground-glass shade over a gas-lamp does not bring more solace to our dazzled eyes than such a one to our minds.

"Do not dull people bore you?" said one of the lady-boarders,—the same who sent me her autograph-book last week with a request for a few original stanzas, not remembering that *The Pactolian* pays me

five dollars a line for every thing I write in its columns.

"Madam," said I (she and the century were in their teens together), "all men are bores, except when we want them. There never was but one man whom I would trust with my latch-key."

"Who might that favored person be?"

"Zimmermann."²

—The men of genius that I fancy most, have erectile heads like the cobra-di-capello. You remember what they tell of William Pinkney, the great pleader; how in his eloquent paroxysms the veins of his neck would swell and his face flush and his eyes glitter, until he seemed on the verge of apoplexy. The hydraulic arrangements for supplying the brain with blood are only second in importance to its own organization. The bulbous-headed fellows who steam well when they are at work are the men that draw big audiences and give us marrowy books and pictures. It is a good sign to have one's feet grow cold when he is writing. A great writer and speaker once told me that he often wrote with his feet in hot water; but for this, *all* his blood would have run into his head, as the mercury sometimes withdraws into the ball of a thermometer.

—You don't suppose that my remarks made at this table are like so many postage-stamps, do you,—each to be only once uttered? If you do, you are mistaken. He must be a poor creature who does not often repeat himself. Imagine the author of the excellent piece of advice, "Know thyself," never alluding to that sentiment again during the course of a protracted existence! Why, the truths a man carries about with him are his tools; and do you think a carpenter is bound to use the same plane but once to smooth a knotty board with, or to hang up his hammer after it has driven its first nail? I shall never repeat a conversation, but an idea often. I shall use the same types when I like, but not commonly the same stereotypes. A thought is often original, though you have uttered it a hundred times. It has come to you over a new

¹ The square brackets here and later in these essays are Holmes's.

² The *Treatise on Solitude* is not so frequently seen lying about on library tables as in our younger days. I remember that I always respected the title and let the book alone. (Holmes's note.)

route, by a new and express train of associations.

Sometimes, but rarely, one may be caught making the same speech twice over, and yet be held blameless. Thus, a certain lecturer, after performing in an inland city, where dwells a *Littératrice* of note, was invited to meet her and others over the social teacup. She pleasantly referred to his many wanderings in his new occupation. "Yes," he replied, "I am like the Huma,¹ the bird that never lights, being always in the cars, as he is always on the wing."—Years elapsed. The lecturer visited the same place once more for the same purpose. Another social cup after the lecture, and a second meeting with the distinguished lady. "You are constantly going from place to place," she said.—"Yes," he answered, "I am like the Huma,"—and finished the sentence as before.

What horrors, when it flashed over him that he had made this fine speech, word for word, twice over! Yet it was not true, as the lady might perhaps have fairly inferred, that he had embellished his conversation with the Huma daily during that whole interval of years. On the contrary, he had never once thought of the odious fowl until the recurrence of precisely the same circumstances brought up precisely the same idea. He ought to have been proud of the accuracy of his mental adjustments. Given certain factors, and a sound brain should always evolve the same fixed product with the certainty of Babbage's calculating machine.

—What a satire, by the way, is that machine on the mere mathematician! A Frankenstein-monster, a thing without brains and without heart, too stupid to make a blunder; which turns out results like a corn-sheller, and never grows any wiser or better, though it grind a thousand bushels of them!

I have an immense respect for a man of talents *plus* "the mathematics." But the calculating power alone should seem to be the least human of qualities, and to have

¹ It was an agreeable incident of two consecutive visits to Hartford, Conn., that I met there the late Mrs. Sigourney. The second meeting recalled the first, and with it the allusion to the Huma, which bird is the subject of a short poem by another New England authoress, which may be found in Mr. Griswold's collection. (Holmes's note.)

the smallest amount of reason in it; since a machine can be made to do the work of three or four calculators, and better than any one of them. Sometimes I have been troubled that I had not a deeper intuitive apprehension of the relations of numbers. But the triumph of the ciphering hand-organ has consoled me. I always fancy I can hear the wheels clicking in a calculator's brain. The power of dealing with numbers is a kind of "detached lever" arrangement, which may be put into a mighty poor watch. I suppose it is about as common as the power of moving the ears voluntarily, which is a moderately rare endowment.

—Little localized powers, and little narrow streaks of specialized knowledge, are things men are very apt to be conceited about. Nature is very wise; but for this encouraging principle how many small talents and little accomplishments would be neglected! Talk about conceit as much as you like, it is to human character what salt is to the ocean; it keeps it sweet, and renders it endurable. Say rather it is like the natural unguent of the sea-fowl's plumage, which enables him to shed the rain that falls on him and the wave in which he dips. When one has had *all* his conceit taken out of him, when he has lost *all* his illusions, his feathers will soon soak through, and he will fly no more.

"So you admire conceited people, do you?" said the young lady who has come to the city to be finished off for—the duties of life.

I am afraid you do not study logic at your school, my dear. It does not follow that I wish to be pickled in brine because I like a salt-water plunge at Nahant. I say that conceit is just as natural a thing to human minds as a center is to a circle. But little-minded people's thoughts move in such small circles that five minutes' conversation gives you an arc long enough to determine their whole curve. An arc in the movement of a large intellect does not sensibly differ from a straight line. Even if it have the third vowel as its center, it does not soon betray it. The highest thought, that is, is the most seemingly impersonal; it does not obviously imply any individual center.

Audacious self-esteem, with good ground for it, is always imposing. What resplendent beauty that must have been which

could have authorized Phryne to "peel" in the way she did! What fine speeches are those two: "*Non omnis moriar*,"¹ and "I have taken all knowledge to be my province"! Even in common people, conceit has the virtue of making them cheerful; the man who thinks his wife, his baby, his house, his horse, his dog, and himself severally unequalled, is almost sure to be a good-humored person, though liable to be tedious at times.

—What are the great faults of conversation? Want of ideas, want of words, want of manners, are the principal ones, I suppose you think. I don't doubt it, but I will tell you what I have found spoil more good talks than anything else;—long arguments on special points between people who differ on the fundamental principles upon which these points depend. No men can have satisfactory relations with each other until they have agreed on certain *ultima* of belief not to be disturbed in ordinary conversation, and unless they have sense enough to trace the secondary questions depending upon these ultimate beliefs to their source. In short, just as a written constitution is essential to the best social order, so a code of finalities is a necessary condition of profitable talk between two persons. Talking is like playing on the harp; there is as much in laying the hand on the strings to stop their vibrations as in twanging them to bring out their music.

—Do you mean to say the pun-question is not clearly settled in your minds? Let me lay down the law upon the subject. Life and language are alike sacred. Homicide and *vericide*—that is, violent treatment of a word with fatal results to its legitimate meaning, which is its life—are alike forbidden. Manslaughter, which is the meaning of the one, is the same as man's laughter, which is the end of the other. A pun is *primâ facie* an insult to the person you are talking with. It implies utter indifference to or sublime contempt for his remarks, no matter how serious. I speak of total depravity, and one says all that is written on the subject is deep raving. I have committed my self-respect by talking with such a person. I should like to commit

him, but cannot, because he is a nuisance. Or I speak of geological convulsions, and he asks me what was the cosine of Noah's ark; also, whether the Deluge was not a deal huger than any modern inundation.

A pun does not commonly justify a blow in return. But if a blow were given for such cause, and death ensued, the jury would be judges both of the facts and of the pun, and might, if the latter were of an aggravated character, return a verdict of justifiable homicide. Thus, in a case lately decided before Miller, J., Doe presented Roe a subscription paper, and urged the claims of suffering humanity. Roe replied by asking, When charity was like a top? It was in evidence that Doe preserved a dignified silence. Roe then said, "When it begins to hum." Doe then—and not till then—struck Roe, and his head happening to hit a bound volume of the *Monthly Rag-Bag and Stolen Miscellany*, intense mortification ensued, with a fatal result. The chief laid down his notions of the law to his brother justices, who unanimously replied, "Jest so." The chief rejoined, that no man should jest so without being punished for it, and charged for the prisoner, who was acquitted, and the pun ordered to be burned by the sheriff. The bound volume was forfeited as a deodand, but not claimed.

People that make puns are like wanton boys that put coppers on the railroad tracks. They amuse themselves and other children, but their little trick may upset a freight train of conversation for the sake of a battered witticism.

I will thank you, B. F., to bring down two books, of which I will mark the places on this slip of paper. (While he is gone, I may say that this boy, our landlady's youngest, is called BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, after the celebrated philosopher of that name. A highly merited compliment.)

I wished to refer to two eminent authorities. Now be so good as to listen. The great moralist says: "To trifle with the vocabulary which is the vehicle of social intercourse is to tamper with the currency of human intelligence. He who would violate the sanctities of his mother tongue would invade the recesses of the paternal till without remorse, and repeat the banquet of Saturn without an indigestion."

¹I shall not altogether die.

And, once more, listen to the historian. "The Puritans hated puns. The Bishops were notoriously addicted to them. The Lords Temporal carried them to the verge of license. Majesty itself must have its Royal quibble. 'Ye be burly, my Lord of Burleigh,' said Queen Elizabeth, 'but ye shall make less stir in our realm than my Lord of Leicester.' The gravest wisdom and the highest breeding lent their sanction to the practice. Lord Bacon playfully declared himself a descendant of 'Og, the King of Bashan. Sir Philip Sidney, with his last breath, reproached the soldier who brought him water, for wasting a casque full upon a dying man. A courtier, who saw Othello performed at the Globe Theater, remarked, that the blackamoor was a brute, and not a man. 'Thou hast reason,' replied a great Lord, 'according to Plato his saying; for this be a two-legged animal *with* feathers.' The fatal habit became universal. The language was corrupted. The infection spread to the national conscience. Political double-dealings naturally grew out of verbal double meanings. The teeth of the new dragon were sown by the Cadmus who introduced the alphabet of equivocation. What was levity in the time of the Tudors grew to regicide and revolution in the age of the Stuarts."

Who was that boarder that just whispered something about the Macaulay-flowers of literature?—There was a dead silence.—I said calmly, I shall henceforth consider any interruption by a pun as a hint to change my boarding-house. Do not plead my example. If *I* have used any such, it has been only as a Spartan father would show up a drunken helot. We have done with them.

—If a logical mind ever found out anything with its logic?—I should say that its most frequent work was to build a *pons asinorum* over chasms which shrewd people can bestride without such a structure. You can hire logic, in the shape of a lawyer, to prove anything that you want to prove. You can buy treatises to show that Napoleon never lived, and that no battle of Bunker-hill was ever fought. The great minds are those with a wide span,¹ which couple truths

related to, but far removed from, each other. Logicians carry the surveyor's chain over the track of which these are the true explorers. I value a man mainly for his primary relations with truth, as I understand truth,—not for any secondary artifice in handling his ideas. Some of the sharpest men in argument are notoriously unsound in judgment. I should not trust the counsel of a clever debater, any more than that of a good chess-player. Either may of course advise wisely, but not necessarily because he wrangles or plays well.

The old gentleman who sits opposite got his hand up, as a pointer lifts his forefoot, at the expression, "his relations with truth, as I understand truth," and when I had done, sniffed audibly, and said I talked like a transcendentalist. For his part, common sense was good enough for him.

Precisely so, my dear sir, I replied; common sense, *as you understand it*. We all have to assume a standard of judgment in our own minds, either of things or persons. A man who is willing to take another's opinion has to exercise his judgment in the choice of whom to follow, which is often as nice a matter as to judge of things for one's self. On the whole, I had rather judge men's minds by comparing their thoughts with my own, than judge of thoughts by knowing who utter them. I must do one or the other. It does not follow, of course, that I may not recognize another man's thoughts as broader and deeper than my own; but that does not necessarily change my opinion, otherwise this would be at the mercy of every superior mind that held a different one. How many of our most cherished beliefs are like those drinking-glasses of the ancient pattern, that serve us well so long as we keep them in our hand, but spill all if we attempt to set them down! I have sometimes compared conversation to the Italian game of *mora*, in which one player lifts his hand with so many fingers extended, and the other gives the number if he can. I show my thought, another his, if they agree, well; if they differ, we find the largest common factor, if we can, but at any rate avoid disputing about remainders and fractions, which is to real talk what tuning an instrument is to playing on it.

—What if, instead of talking this morning,

¹ There is something like this in J. H. Newman's *Grammar of Assent*. See *Characteristics*, arranged by W. S. Lilly, p. 81. (Holmes's note.)

I should read you a copy of verses, with critical remarks by the author? Any of the company can retire that like.

ALBUM VERSES

When Eve had led her lord away,
And Cain had killed his brother,
The stars and flowers, the poets say,
Agreed with one another

To cheat the cunning tempter's art,
And teach the race its duty,
By keeping on its wicked heart
Their eyes of light and beauty.

A million sleepless lids, they say,
Will be at least a warning; 10
And so the flowers would watch by day,¹
The stars from eve to morning.

On hill and prairie, field and lawn,
Their dewy eyes upturning,
The flowers still watch from reddening dawn
Till western skies are burning.

Alas! each hour of daylight tells
A tale of shame so crushing,
That some turn white as sea-bleached shells,
And some are always blushing. 20

But when the patient stars look down
On all their light discovers,
The traitor's smile, the murderer's frown,
The lips of lying lovers,

They try to shut their saddening eyes,
And in the vain endeavor
We see them twinkling in the skies,
And so they wink forever.

What do *you* think of these verses, my friends?—Is that piece an impromptu? said my landlady's daughter. (*Act. 19+*. Tender-eyed blonde. Long ringlets. Cameo pin. Gold pencil-case on a chain. Locket. Bracelet. Album. Autograph book. Accordeon. Reads Byron, Tupper, and Sylvanus Cobb, Junior, while her mother makes the puddings. Says "Yes?" when you tell her anything.)—*Oui et non, ma petite*,—Yes and no, my child. Five of the seven verses were written off-hand; the other two took a week,—that is, were hanging round the desk in a ragged, forlorn, unrhymed condition as long as that. All poets will

tell you just such stories. *C'est le DERNIER pas qui coute.*¹ Don't you know how hard it is for some people to get out of a room after their visit is really over? They want to be off, and you want to have them off, but they don't know how to manage it. One would think they had been built in your parlor or study, and were waiting to be launched. I have contrived a sort of ceremonial inclined plane for such visitors, which being lubricated with certain smooth phrases, I back them down, metaphorically speaking, stern-foremost, into their "native element," the great ocean of out-doors. Well, now, there are poems as hard to get rid of as these rural visitors. They come in glibly, use up all the serviceable rhymes, *day, ray, beauty, duty, skies, eyes, other, brother, mountain, fountain*, and the like; and so they go on until you think it is time for the wind-up, and the wind-up won't come on any terms. So they lie about until you get sick of the sight of them, and end by thrusting some cold scrap of a final couplet upon them, and turning them out of doors. I suspect a good many "impromptus" could tell just such a story as the above.—Here turning to our landlady, I used an illustration which pleased the company much at the time, and has since been highly commended. "Madam," I said, "you can pour three gills and three quarters of honey from that pint jug, if it is full, in less than one minute; but, Madam, you could not empty that last quarter of a gill, though you were turned into a marble Hebe, and held the vessel upside down for a thousand years."

One gets tired to death of the old, old rhymes, such as you see in that copy of verses,—which I don't mean to abuse, or to praise either. I always feel as if I were a cobbler, putting new top-leathers to an old pair of boot-soles and bodies, when I am fitting sentiments to these venerable jingles.

.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	youth
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	morning
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	truth
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	warning

Nine tenths of the "Juvenile Poems" written spring out of the above musical and suggestive coincidences.

"Yes?" said our landlady's daughter.

¹It is the *last* step which counts.

I did not address the following remark to her, and I trust, from her limited range of reading, she will never see it; I said it softly to my next neighbor.

When a young female wears a flat circular side-curl, gummed on each temple,—when she walks with a male, not arm in arm, but his arm against the back of hers,—and when she says “Yes?” with the note of interrogation, you are generally safe in asking her what wages she gets, and who the “feller” was you saw her with.

“What were you whispering?” said the daughter of the house, moistening her lips, as she spoke, in a very engaging manner.

“I was only laying down a principle of social diagnosis.”

“Yes?”

—It is curious to see how the same wants and tastes find the same implements and modes of expression in all times and places. The young ladies of Otaheite, as you may see in Cook’s *Voyages*, had a sort of crinoline arrangement fully equal in radius to the largest spread of our own lady-baskets. When I fling a Bay-State shawl over my shoulders, I am only taking a lesson from the climate which the Indian had learned before me. A *blanket*-shawl we call it, and not a plaid; and we wear it like the aborigines, and not like the Highlanders.

—We are the Romans of the modern world, the great assimilating people. Conflicts and conquests are of course necessary accidents with us, as with our prototypes. And so we come to their style of weapon. Our army sword is the short, stiff, pointed *gladius* of the Romans; and the American bowie-knife is the same tool, modified to meet the daily wants of civil society. I announce at this table an axiom not to be found in Montesquieu or the journals of Congress:—

The race that shortens its weapons lengthens its boundaries.

Corollary. It was the Polish *lance* that left Poland at last with nothing of her own to bound.

Dropped from her nerveless grasp the *shattered spear!*

What business had Sarmatia to be fighting for liberty with a fifteen-foot pole between her and the breasts of her enemies? If she

had but clutched the old Roman and young American weapon, and come to close quarters, there might have been a chance for her; but it would have spoiled the best passage in *The Pleasures of Hope*.

—Self-made men?—Well, yes. Of course everybody likes and respects self-made men. It is a great deal better to be made in that way than not to be made at all. Are any of you younger people old enough to remember that Irishman’s house on the marsh at Cambridgeport, which house he built from drain to chimney-top with his own hands? It took him a good many years to build it, and one could see that it was a little out of plumb, and a little wavy in outline, and a little queer and uncertain in general aspect. A regular hand could certainly have built a better house; but it was a very good house for a “self-made” carpenter’s house, and people praised it, and said how remarkably well the Irishman had succeeded. They never thought of praising the fine blocks of houses a little farther on.

Your self-made man, whittled into shape with his own jack-knife, deserves more credit, if that is all, than the regular engine-turned article, shaped by the most approved pattern, and French-polished by society and travel. But as to saying that one is every way the equal of the other, that is another matter. The right of strict social discrimination of all things and persons, according to their merits, native or acquired, is one of the most precious republican privileges. I take the liberty to exercise it when I say that, *other things being equal*, in most relations of life I prefer a man of family.

What do I mean by a man of family?—O, I’ll give you a general idea of what I mean. Let us give him a first-rate fit out; it costs us nothing.

Four or five generations of gentlemen and gentlewomen; among them a member of his Majesty’s Council for the Province, a Governor or so, one or two Doctors of Divinity, a member of Congress, not later than the time of long boots with tassels.

Family portraits.¹ The member of the

¹ The full-length pictures by Copley I was thinking of are such as may be seen in the Memorial Hall of Harvard University, but many are to be met with in different parts of New England, sometimes in the possession of the poor descendants of the rich gentle-

Council, by Smibert. The great merchant-uncle, by Copley, full length, sitting in his arm-chair, in a velvet cap and flowered robe, with a globe by him, to show the range of his commercial transactions, and letters with large red seals lying round, one directed conspicuously to The Honorable, *etc.*, *etc.* Great-grandmother, by the same artist; brown satin, lace very fine, hands superlative; grand old lady, stiffish, but imposing. Her mother, artist unknown; flat, angular, hanging sleeves; parrot on fist. A pair of Stuarts, *viz.*, 1. A superb, full-blown, mediæval gentleman, with a fiery dash of Tory blood in his veins, tempered down with that of a fine old rebel grandmother, and warmed up with the best of old India Madeira; his face is one flame of ruddy sunshine; his ruffled shirt rushes out of his bosom with an impetuous generosity, as if it would drag his heart after it; and his smile is good for twenty thousand dollars to the Hospital, besides ample bequests to all relatives and dependants. 2. Lady of the same; remarkable cap; high waist, as in time of Empire; bust *à la Josephine*; wisps of curls, like celery-tips, at sides of forehead; complexion clear and warm, like rose-cordial. As for the miniatures by Malbone, we don't count them in the gallery.

Books, too, with the names of old college-students in them,—family names;—you will find them at the head of their respective classes in the days when students took rank on the catalogue from their parents' condition. Elzevirs, with the Latinized appellations of youthful progenitors, and *Hic liber est meus* on the title-page. A set of Hogarth's original plates. Pope, original edition, 15 volumes, London, 1717. Barrow on the lower shelves in folio. Tillotson on the upper, in a little dark platoon of octodecimos.

Some family silver; a string of wedding and funeral rings; the arms of the family

folks in lace ruffles and glistening satins, grandees and grand dames of the ante-Revolutionary period. I remember one poor old gentleman who had nothing left of his family possessions but the full-length portraits of his ancestors, the Counselor and his lady, saying, with a gleam of the pleasantry which had come down from the days of Mather Byles, and "Balch the Hatter," and Sigourney, that he fared not so badly after all, for he had a pair of *canvas-backs* every day through the whole year. (Holmes's note.)

curiously blazoned; the same in worsted, by a maiden aunt.

If the man of family has an old place to keep these things in, furnished with claw-footed chairs and black mahogany tables, and tall bevel-edged mirrors, and stately upright cabinets, his outfit is complete.

No, my friends, I go (always, other things being equal) for the man who inherits family traditions and the cumulative humanities of at least four or five generations. Above all things, as a child, he should have tumbled about in a library. All men are afraid of books, who have not handled them from infancy. Do you suppose our dear *didascalos*¹ over there ever read *Poli Synopsis*, or consulted *Castelli Lexicon*, while he was growing up to their stature? Not he; but virtue passed through the hem of their parchment and leather garments whenever he touched them, as the precious drugs sweated through the bat's handle in the Arabian story. I tell you he is at home wherever he smells the invigorating fragrance of Russia leather. No self-made man feels so. One may, it is true, have all the antecedents I have spoken of, and yet be a boor or a shabby fellow. One may have none of them, and yet be fit for councils and courts. Then let them change places. Our social arrangement has this great beauty, that its strata shift up and down as they change specific gravity, without being clogged by layers of prescription. But I still insist on my democratic liberty of choice, and I go for the man with the gallery of family portraits against the one with the twenty-five-cent daguerreotype, unless I find out that the last is the better of the two.

—I should have felt more nervous about the late comet, if I had thought the world was ripe. But it is very green yet, if I am not mistaken; and besides, there is a great deal of coal to use up, which I cannot bring myself to think was made for nothing. If

¹ "Our dear *didascalos*" was meant for Professor James Russell Lowell, now Minister to England. It requires the union of exceptional native gifts and generations of training to bring the "natural man" of New England to the completeness of scholarly manhood, such as that which adds new distinction to the name he bears, already remarkable for its successive generations of eminent citizens.

"Self-made" is imperfectly made, or education is a superfluity and a failure. (Holmes's note.)

certain things, which seem to me essential to a millennium, had come to pass, I should have been frightened; but they haven't. Perhaps you would like to hear my

LATTER-DAY WARNINGS

When legislators keep the law,
When banks dispense with bolts and locks,
When berries, whortle—rasp—and straw—
Grow bigger *downwards* through the box,—

When he that selleth house or land
Shows leak in roof or flaw in right,—
When haberdashers choose the stand
Whose window hath the broadest light,—

When preachers tell us all they think,
And party leaders all they mean,— 10
When what we pay for, that we drink,
From real grape and coffee-bean,—

When lawyers take what they would give,
And doctors give what they would take,—
When city fathers eat to live,
Save when they fast for conscience' sake,—

When one that hath a horse on sale
Shall bring his merit to the proof,
Without a lie for every nail
That holds the iron on the hoof,— 20

When in the usual place for rips
Our gloves are stitched with special care,
And guarded well the whalebone tips
Where first umbrellas need repair,—

When Cuba's weeds have quite forgot
The power of suction to resist,
And claret-bottles harbor not
Such dimples as would hold your fist,—

When publishers no longer steal,
And pay for what they stole before,— 30
When the first locomotive's wheel
Rolls through the Hoosac tunnel's bore;¹—

¹ This hoped for, but almost despaired of, event, occurred on the 9th of February, 1875. The writer of the above lines was as much pleased as his fellow-citizens at the termination of an enterprise which gave constant occasion for the most inveterate pun on record. When the other conditions referred to are as happily fulfilled as this has been, he will still say as before, that it is time for the ascension garment to be ordered. (Holmes's note.)

Till then let Cumming blaze away,
And Miller's saints blow up the globe;
But when you see that blessed day,
Then order your ascension robe!

The company seemed to like the verses, and I promised them to read others occasionally, if they had a mind to hear them. Of course they would not expect it every morning. Neither must the reader suppose that all these things I have reported were said at any one breakfast-time. I have not taken the trouble to date them, as Raspail, *père*, used to date every proof he sent to the printer; but they were scattered over several breakfasts; and I have said a good many more things since, which I shall very possibly print some time or other, if I am urged to do it by judicious friends.

I finished off with reading some verses of my friend the Professor, of whom you may perhaps hear more by and by. The Professor read them, he told me, at a farewell meeting, where the youngest of our great historians² met a few of his many friends at their invitation.

Yes, we knew we must lose him,—though
friendship may claim
To blend her green leaves with the laurels of
fame;
Though fondly, at parting, we call him our
own,
'T is the whisper of love when the bugle has
blown.

As the rider who rests with the spur on his
heel,—
As the guardsman who sleeps in his corselet
of steel,—
As the archer who stands with his shaft on
the string,
He stoops from his toil to the garland we
bring.

What pictures yet slumber unborn in his
loom
Till their warriors shall breathe and their
beauties shall bloom, 10

² "The youngest of our great historians," referred to in the poem, was John Lothrop Motley. His career of authorship was as successful as it was noble, and his works are among the chief ornaments of our national literature. Are Republics still ungrateful, as of old? (Holmes's note.)

While the tapestry lengthens the life-glowing
dyes
That caught from our sunsets the stain of
their skies!

In the alcoves of death, in the charnels of
time,
Where flit the gaunt specters of passion and
crime,
There are triumphs untold, there are martyrs
unsung,
There are heroes yet silent to speak with his
tongue!

Let us hear the proud story which time has
bequeathed
From lips that are warm with the freedom
they breathed!
Let him summon its tyrants, and tell us their
doom,
Though he sweep the black past like Van
Tromp with his broom! 20

The dream flashes by, for the west-winds
awake
On pampas, on prairie, o'er mountain and
lake,
To bathe the swift bark, like a sea-girdled
shrine,
With incense they stole from the rose and
the pine.

So fill a bright cup with the sunlight that
gushed
When the dead summer's jewels were
trampled and crushed:
THE TRUE KNIGHT OF LEARNING,—the
world holds him dear,—
Love bless him, Joy crown him, God speed
his career!

II

I REALLY believe some people save their
bright thoughts as being too precious for
conversation. What do you think an
admiring friend said the other day to one
that was talking good things,—good enough
to print? "Why," said he, "you are wast-
ing merchantable literature, a cash article,
at the rate, as nearly as I can tell, of fifty
dollars an hour." The talker took him to
the window and asked him to look out and
tell what he saw.

"Nothing but a very dusty street," he
said, "and a man driving a sprinkling-
machine through it."

"Why don't you tell the man he is wasting
that water? What would be the state of
the highways of life, if we did not drive our
thought-sprinklers through them with the
valves open, sometimes?"

"Besides, there is another thing about this
talking, which you forget. It shapes our
thoughts for us;—the waves of conversation
roll them as the surf rolls the pebbles on the
shore. Let me modify the image a little.
I rough out my thoughts in talk as an artist
models in clay. Spoken language is so
plastic,—you can pat and coax, and spread
and shave, and rub out, and fill up, and
stick on so easily, when you work that soft
material, that there is nothing like it for
modeling. Out of it come the shapes which
you turn into marble or bronze in your
immortal books, if you happen to write
such. Or, to use another illustration, writ-
ing or printing is like shooting with a rifle;
you may hit your reader's mind, or miss it;—
but talking is like playing at a mark with
the pipe of an engine; if it is within reach,
and you have time enough, you can't help
hitting it."

The company agreed that this last illus-
tration was of superior excellence, or, in
the phrase used by them, "Fust-rate." I
acknowledged the compliment, but gently
rebuked the expression. "Fust-rate,"
"prime," "a prime article," "a superior
piece of goods," "a handsome garment,"
"a gent in a flowered vest,"—all such ex-
pressions are final. They blast the lineage
of him or her who utters them, for
generations up and down. There is one
other phrase which will soon come to be
decisive of a man's social *status*, if it is not
already: "That tells the whole story." It
is an expression which vulgar and conceited
people particularly affect, and which well-
meaning ones, who know better, catch from
them. It is intended to stop all debate,
like the previous question in the General
Court. Only it doesn't; simply because
"that" does not usually tell the whole, nor
one half of the whole story.

—It is an odd idea, that almost all our
people have had a professional education.
To become a doctor a man must study some

three years and hear a thousand lectures, more or less. Just how much study it takes to make a lawyer I cannot say, but probably not more than this. Now, most decent people hear one hundred lectures or sermons (discourses) on theology every year,—and this, twenty, thirty, fifty years together. They read a great many religious books besides. The clergy, however, rarely hear any sermons except what they preach themselves. A dull preacher might be conceived, therefore, to lapse into a state of *quasi* heathenism, simply for want of religious instruction. And, on the other hand, an attentive and intelligent hearer, listening to a succession of wise teachers, might become actually better educated in theology than any one of them. We are all theological students, and more of us qualified as doctors of divinity than have received degrees at any of the universities.

It is not strange, therefore, that very good people should often find it difficult, if not impossible, to keep their attention fixed upon a sermon treating feebly a subject which they have thought vigorously about for years, and heard able men discuss scores of times. I have often noticed, however, that a hopelessly dull discourse acts *inductively*, as electricians would say, in developing strong mental currents. I am ashamed to think with what accompaniments and variations and flourishes I have sometimes followed the droning of a heavy speaker,—not willingly,—for my habit is reverential,—but as a necessary result of a slight continuous impression on the senses and the mind, which kept both in action without furnishing the food they required to work upon. If you ever saw a crow with a king-bird after him, you will get an image of a dull speaker and a lively listener. The bird in sable plumage flaps heavily along his straightforward course, while the other sails round him, over him, under him, leaves him, comes back again, tweaks out a black feather, shoots away once more, never losing sight of him, and finally reaches the crow's perch at the same time the crow does, having cut a perfect labyrinth of loops and knots and spirals while the slow fowl was painfully working from one end of his straight line to the other.

I think these remarks were received

rather coolly. A temporary boarder from the country, consisting of a somewhat more than middle-aged female, with a parchment forehead and a dry little "frisette" shingling it, a sallow neck with a necklace of gold beads, a black dress too rusty for recent grief, and contours in *basso-rilievo*, left the table prematurely, and was reported to have been very virulent about what I said. So I went to my good old minister, and repeated the remarks, as nearly as I could remember them, to him. He laughed good-naturedly, and said there was considerable truth in them. He thought he could tell when people's minds were wandering, by their looks. In the earlier years of his ministry he had sometimes noticed this, when he was preaching;—very little of late years. Sometimes, when his colleague was preaching, he observed this kind of inattention; but after all, it was not so very unnatural. I will say, by the way, that it is a rule I have long followed, to tell my worst thoughts to my minister, and my best thoughts to the young people I talk with.]

—I want to make a literary confession now, which I believe nobody has made before me. You know very well that I write verses sometimes, because I have read some of them at this table. (The company assented,—two or three of them in a resigned sort of way, as I thought, as if they supposed I had an epic in my pocket, and were going to read half a dozen books or so for their benefit.)—I continued. Of course I write some lines or passages which are better than others; some which, compared with the others, might be called relatively excellent. It is in the nature of things that I should consider these relatively excellent lines or passages as absolutely good. So much must be pardoned to humanity. Now I never wrote a "good" line in my life, but the moment after it was written it seemed a hundred years old. Very commonly I had a sudden conviction that I had seen it somewhere. Possibly I may have sometimes unconsciously stolen it, but I do not remember that I ever once detected any historical truth in these sudden convictions of the antiquity of my new thought or phrase. I have learned utterly to distrust them, and never allow them to bully me out of a thought or line.

This is the philosophy of it. (Here the number of the company was diminished by a small secession.) Any new formula which suddenly emerges in our consciousness has its roots in long trains of thought; it is virtually old when it first makes its appearance among the recognized growths of our intellect. Any crystalline group of musical words has had a long and still period to form it. Here is one theory.

But there is a larger law which perhaps comprehends these facts. It is this. The rapidity with which ideas grow old in our memories is in a direct ratio to the squares of their importance. Their apparent age runs up miraculously, like the value of diamonds, as they increase in magnitude. A great calamity, for instance, is as old as the trilobites an hour after it has happened. It stains backward through all the leaves we have turned over in the book of life, before its blot of tears or of blood is dry on the page we are turning. For this we seem to have lived; it was foreshadowed in dreams that we leaped out of in the cold sweat of terror; in the "dissolving views" of dark day-visions; all omens pointed to it; all paths led to it. After the tossing half-forgetfulness of the first sleep that follows such an event, it comes upon us afresh, as a surprise, at waking; in a few moments it is old again,—old as eternity.

[I wish I had not said all this then and there. I might have known better. The pale schoolmistress, in her mourning dress, was looking at me, as I noticed, with a wild sort of expression. All at once the blood dropped out of her cheeks as the mercury drops from a broken barometer-tube, and she melted away from her seat like an image of snow; a slung-shot could not have brought her down better. God forgive me!

After this little episode, I continued, to some few who remained balancing teaspoons on the edges of cups, twirling knives, or tilting upon the hind legs of their chairs until their heads reached the wall, where they left gratuitous advertisements of various popular cosmetics.]

When a person is suddenly thrust into any strange, new position of trial, he finds the place fits him as if he had been measured for it. He has committed a great crime, for instance, and is sent to the State Prison.

The traditions, prescriptions, limitations, privileges, all the sharp conditions of his new life, stamp themselves upon his consciousness as the signet on soft wax;—a single pressure is enough. Let me strengthen the image a little. Did you ever happen to see that most soft-spoken and velvet-handed steam-engine at the Mint? The smooth piston slides backward and forward as a lady might slip her delicate finger in and out of a ring. The engine lays one of *its* fingers calmly, but firmly, upon a bit of metal; it is a coin now, and will remember that touch, and tell a new race about it, when the date upon it is crusted over with twenty centuries. So it is that a great silent-moving misery puts a new stamp on us in an hour or a moment,—as sharp an impression as if it had taken half a lifetime to engrave it.

It is awful to be in the hands of the wholesale professional dealers in misfortune; undertakers and jailers magnetize you in a moment, and you pass out of the individual life you were living into the rhythmical movements of their horrible machinery. Do the worst thing you can, or suffer the worst that can be thought of, you find yourself in a category of humanity that stretches back as far as Cain, and with an expert at your elbow who has studied your case all out beforehand, and is waiting for you with his implements of hemp or mahogany. I believe, if a man were to be burned in any of our cities to-morrow for heresy, there would be found a master of ceremonies who knew just how many fagots were necessary, and the best way of arranging the whole matter.¹

¹ Accidents are liable to happen if no thoroughly trained expert happens to be present. When Catharine Hays was burnt at Tyburn, in 1726, the officiating artist scorched his own hands, and the whole business was awkwardly managed for want of practical familiarity with the process. We have still remaining a guide to direct us in one important part of the arrangements. Bishop Hooper was burned at Gloucester, England, in the year 1555. A few years ago, in making certain excavations, the charred stump of the stake to which he was bound was discovered. An account of the interesting ceremony, so important in ecclesiastical history—the *argumentum ad ignem*, with a photograph of the half-burned stick of timber was sent me by my friend, Mr. John Bellows, of Gloucester, a zealous antiquarian, widely known by his wonderful miniature French dictionary, one of the scholarly printers and publishers who honor the calling of Aldus

—So we have not won the Goodwood cup; *au contraire*, we were a “bad fifth,” if not worse than that; and trying it again, and the third time, has not yet bettered the matter. Now I am as patriotic as any of my fellow-citizens,—too patriotic in fact, for I have got into hot water by loving too much of my country; in short, if any man, whose fighting weight is not more than eight stone four pounds, disputes it, I am ready to discuss the point with him. I should have gloried to see the stars and stripes in front at the finish. I love my country and I love horses. Stubbs’s old mezzotint of Eclipse hangs over my desk, and Herring’s portrait of Plenipotentiary—whom I saw run at Epsom—over my fireplace. Did I not elope from school to see Revenge, and Prospect, and Little John, and Peacemaker run over the race-course where now yon suburban village flourishes, in the year eighteen hundred and ever-so-few? Though I never owned a horse, have I not been the proprietor of six equine females, of which one was the prettiest little “Morgin” that ever stepped? Listen, then, to an opinion I have often expressed long before this venture of ours in England. Horse-racing is not a republican institution; horse-trotting is. Only very rich persons can keep race-horses, and everybody knows they are kept mainly as gambling implements. All that matter about blood and speed we won’t discuss; we understand all that; useful, very,—of course,—great obligations to the Godolphin “Arabian,” and the rest. I say racing-horses are essentially gambling implements, as much as roulette tables. Now, I am not preaching at this moment; I may read you one of my sermons some other morning; but I maintain that gambling, on the great scale, is not republican. It belongs to two phases of society,—a cankered over-civilization, such as exists in rich aristocracies, and the reckless life of borderers and adventurers, or the semi-barbarism of a civilization resolved into its primitive elements. Real Republicanism is stern and severe; its essence is not in forms of government, but in the omnipotence of public opinion which grows out of it. This public opinion cannot prevent gambling

and the Elzevirs. The stake was big enough to chain the whole Bench of Bishops to as fast as the Athanasian creed still holds them. (Holmes’s note.)

with dice or stocks, but it can and does compel it to keep comparatively quiet. But horse-racing is the most public way of gambling, and with all its immense attractions to the sense and the feelings,—to which I plead very susceptible,—the disguise is too thin that covers it, and everybody knows what it means. Its supporters are the Southern gentry,—fine fellows, no doubt, but not republicans exactly, as we understand the term,—a few Northern millionaires more or less thoroughly millioned, who do not represent the real people, and the mob of sporting men, the best of whom are commonly idlers, and the worst very bad neighbors to have near one in a crowd, or to meet in a dark alley. In England, on the other hand, with its aristocratic institutions, racing is a natural growth enough; the passion for it spreads downwards through all classes, from the Queen to the costermonger. London is like a shelled corn-cob on the Derby day, and there is not a clerk who could raise the money to hire a saddle with an old hack under it that can sit down on his office-stool the next day without wincing.

Now just compare the racer with the trotter for a moment. The racer is incidentally useful, but essentially something to bet upon, as much as the thimble-rigger’s “little joker.” The trotter is essentially and daily useful, and only incidentally a tool for sporting men.

What better reason do you want for the fact that the racer is most cultivated and reaches his greatest perfection in England, and that the trotting horses of America beat the world? And why should we have expected that the pick—if it was the pick—of our few and far-between racing stables should beat the pick of England and France? Throw over the fallacious time-test, and there was nothing to show for it but a natural kind of patriotic feeling, which we all have, with a thoroughly provincial conceit, which some of us must plead guilty to.

We may beat yet.¹ As an American, I

¹ We have beaten in many races in England since this was written, and at last carried off the blue ribbon of the turf at Epsom. But up to the present time trotting matches and baseball are distinctively American, as contrasted with running races and cricket, which belong, as of right, to England. The wonderful

hope we shall. As a moralist and occasional sermonizer, I am not so anxious about it. Wherever the trotting horse goes, he carries in his train brisk omnibuses, lively bakers' carts, and therefore hot rolls, the jolly butcher's wagon, the cheerful gig, the wholesome afternoon drive with wife and child,—all the forms of moral excellence, except truth, which does not agree with any kind of horse-flesh. The racer brings with him gambling, cursing, swearing, drinking, and a distaste for mob-caps and the middle-aged virtues.

And by the way, let me beg you not to call a *trotting match* a *race*, and not to speak of a "thoroughbred" as a "*blooded*" horse, unless he has been recently phlebotomized. I consent to your saying "blood horse," if you like. Also, if, next year, we send out Posterior and Posteriorress, the winners of the great national four-mile race in 7:18½, and they happen to get beaten, pay your bets, and behave like men and gentlemen about it, if you know how.

[I felt a great deal better after blowing off the ill-temper condensed in the above paragraph. To brag little,—to show well,—to crow gently, if in luck,—to pay up, to own up, and to shut up, if beaten, are the virtues of a sporting man, and I can't say that I think we have shown them in any great perfection of late.]

—Apropos of horses. Do you know how important good jockeying is to authors? Judicious management; letting the public see your animal just enough, and not too much; holding him up hard when the market is too full of him; letting him out at just the right buying intervals; always gently feeling his mouth; never slacking and never jerking the rein;—this is what I mean by jockeying.

effects of breeding and training in a particular direction are shown in the records of the trotting horse. In 1844 Lady Suffolk trotted a mile in 2:26½, which was, I think, the fastest time to that date. In 1859 Flora Temple's time at Kalamazoo—I remember Mr. Emerson surprised me once by correcting my error of a quarter of a second in mentioning it—was 2:19¾. Dexter in 1867 brought the figure down to 2:17¼. There is now a whole class of horses that can trot under 2:20, and in 1881 Maud S. distanced all previous records with 2:10¼. Many of our best running horses go to England. Racing in distinction from trotting, I think, attracts less attention in this country now than in the days of American Eclipse and Henry. (Holmes's note.)

—When an author has a number of books out a cunning hand will keep them all spinning, as Signor Blitz does his dinner-plates; fetching each one up, as it begins to "wabble," by an advertisement, a puff, or a quotation.

—Whenever the extracts from a living writer begin to multiply fast in the papers, without obvious reason, there is a new book or a new edition coming. The extracts are *ground-bait*.

—Literary life is full of curious phenomena. I don't know that there is anything more noticeable than what we may call *conventional reputations*. There is a tacit understanding in every community of men of letters that they will not disturb the popular fallacy respecting this or that electrogilded celebrity. There are various reasons for this forbearance: one is old; one is rich; one is good-natured; one is such a favorite with the pit that it would not be safe to hiss him from the manager's box. The venerable augurs of the literary or scientific temple may smile faintly when one of the tribe is mentioned; but the farce is in general kept up as well as the Chinese comic scene of entreating and imploring a man to stay with you, with the implied compact between you that he shall by no means think of doing it. A poor wretch he must be who would wantonly sit down on one of these bandbox reputations. A Prince-Rupert's-drop, which is a tear of unannealed glass, lasts indefinitely, if you keep it from meddling hands; but break its tail off, and it explodes and resolves itself into powder. These celebrities I speak of are the Prince-Rupert's-drops of the learned and polite world. See how the papers treat them! What an array of pleasant kaleidoscopic phrases, which can be arranged in ever so many charming patterns, is at their service! How kind the "Critical Notices"—where small authorship comes to pick up chips of praise, fragrant, sugary, and sappy—always are to them! Well, life would be nothing without paper-credit and other fictions; so let them pass current. Don't steal their chips; don't puncture their swimming-bladders; don't come down on their pasteboard boxes; don't break the ends of their brittle and unstable reputations, you fellows who all feel sure that your names will be household words a thousand years from now.

"A thousand years is a good while," said the old gentleman who sits opposite, thoughtfully.

—Where have I been for the last three or four days? Down at the Island,¹ deer-shooting.—How many did I bag? I brought home one buck shot.—The Island is where? No matter. It is the most splendid domain that any man looks upon in these latitudes. Blue sea around it, and running up into its heart, so that the little boat slumbers like a baby in lap, while the tall ships are stripping naked to fight the hurricane outside, and storm-stay-sails banging and flying in ribbons. Trees, in stretches of miles; beeches, oaks, most numerous;—many of them hung with moss, looking like bearded Druids; some coiled in the clasp of huge, dark-stemmed grape-vines. Open patches where the sun gets in and goes to sleep, and the winds come so finely sifted that they are as soft as swan's-down. Rocks scattered about,—Stonehenge-like monoliths. Fresh-water lakes; one of them, Mary's lake, crystal-clear, full of flashing pickerel lying under the lily-pads like tigers in the jungle. Six pounds of ditto killed one morning for breakfast. *Ego fecit.*

The divinity-student looked as if he would like to question my Latin. No sir, I said,—you need not trouble yourself. There is a higher law in grammar not to be put down by Andrews and Stoddard. Then I went on.

Such hospitality as that island has seen there has not been the like of in these our New England sovereignties. There is nothing in the shape of kindness and courtesy that can make life beautiful, which has not found its home in that ocean-principality. It has welcomed all who were worthy of welcome, from the pale clergyman who came to breathe the sea-air with its medicinal salt and iodine, to the great statesman who turned his back on the affairs of empire, and smoothed his Olympian forehead, and flashed his white teeth in merriment over the long table, where his wit was the keenest and his story the best.

¹ The beautiful island referred to is Naushon, the largest of a group lying between Buzzard's Bay and the Vineyard Sound, south of the mainland of Massachusetts. It is the noblest domain in New England, and the present Lord of the Manor is worthy of succeeding "the Governor" of blessed memory. (Holmes's note.)

[I don't believe any man ever talked like that in this world. I don't believe *I* talked just so; but the fact is, in reporting one's conversation, one cannot help *Blair-ing* it up more or less, ironing out crumpled paragraphs, starching limp ones, and crimping and plaiting a little sometimes; it is as natural as prinking at the looking-glass.]

—How can a man help writing poetry in such a place? Everybody does write poetry that goes there. In the state archives, kept in the library of the Lord of the Isle, are whole volumes of unpublished verse,—some by well-known hands, and others quite as good, by the last people you would think of as versifiers,—men who could pension off all the genuine poets in the country, and buy ten acres of Boston common, if it was for sale, with what they had left. Of course I had to write my little copy of verses with the rest; here it is, if you will hear me read it. When the sun is in the west, vessels sailing in an easterly direction look bright or dark to one who observes them from the north or south, according to the tack they are sailing upon. Watching them from one of the windows of the great mansion, I saw these perpetual changes, and moralized thus:—

SUN AND SHADOW

As I look from the isle, o'er its billows of green,

To the billows of foam-crested blue,
Yon bark, that afar in the distance is seen,
Half dreaming, my eyes will pursue:
Now dark in the shadow, she scatters the spray

As the chaff in the stroke of the flail;
Now white as the sea-gull, she flies on her way,

The sun gleaming bright on her sail.

Yet her pilot is thinking of dangers to shun,—

Of breakers that whiten and roar; 10
How little he cares, if in shadow or sun

They see him that gaze from the shore!
He looks to the beacon that looms from the reef,

To the rock that is under his lee,
As he drifts on the blast, like a wind-wafted leaf,

O'er the gulfs of the desolate sea.

Thus drifting afar to the dim-vaulted caves
Where life and its ventures are laid,
The dreamers who gaze while we battle the
waves

May see us in sunshine or shade; 20
Yet true to our course, though our shadow
grow dark,

We'll trim our broad sail as before,
And stand by the rudder that governs the
bark,
Nor ask how we look from the shore!

—Insanity is often the logic of an accurate mind overtaken. Good mental machinery ought to break its own wheels and levers, if anything is thrust among them suddenly which tends to stop them or reverse their motion. A weak mind does not accumulate force enough to hurt itself; stupidity often saves a man from going mad. We frequently see persons in insane hospitals, sent there in consequence of what are called *religious* mental disturbances. I confess that I think better of them than of many who hold the same notions, and keep their wits and appear to enjoy life very well, outside of the asylums. Any decent person ought to go mad, if he really holds such or such opinions. It is very much to his discredit in every point of view, if he does not. What is the use of my saying what some of these opinions are? Perhaps more than one of you hold such as I should think ought to send you straight over to Somerville, if you have any logic in your heads or any human feeling in your hearts. Anything that is brutal, cruel, heathenish, that makes life hopeless for the most of mankind and perhaps for entire races,—anything that assumes the necessity of the extermination of instincts which were given to be regulated,—no matter by what name you call it,—no matter whether a fakir, or a monk, or a deacon believes it,—if received, ought to produce insanity in every well-regulated mind. That condition becomes a normal one, under the circumstances. I am very much ashamed of some people for retaining their reason, when they know perfectly well that if they were not the most stupid or the most selfish of human beings, they would become *non-compotes* at once.

[Nobody understood this but the theological student and the schoolmistress. They

looked intelligently at each other; but whether they were thinking about my paradox or not, I am not clear.—It would be natural enough. Stranger things have happened. Love and Death enter boarding-houses without asking the price of board, or whether there is room for them. Alas! these young people are poor and pallid! Love *should* be both rich and rosy, but *must* be either rich or rosy. Talk about military duty! What is that to the warfare of a married maid-of-all-work, with the title of mistress, and an American female constitution, which collapses just in the middle third of life, and comes out vulcanized India-rubber, if it happened to live through the period when health and strength are most wanted?]

—Have I ever acted in private theatricals? Often. I have played the part of the "Poor Gentleman," before a great many audiences,—more, I trust, than I shall ever face again. I did not wear a stage-costume, nor a wig, nor moustaches of burnt cork, but I was placarded and announced as a public performer, and at the proper hour I came forward with the ballet-dancer's smile upon my countenance, and made my bow and acted my part. I have seen my name stuck up in letters so big that I was ashamed to show myself in the place by daylight. I have gone to a town with a sober literary essay in my pocket, and seen myself everywhere announced as the most desperate of *buffos*,—one who was obliged to restrain himself in the full exercise of his powers, from prudential considerations. I have been through as many hardships as Ulysses, in the pursuit of my histrionic vocation. I have traveled in cars until the conductors all knew me like a brother. I have run off the rails, and stuck all night in snow-drifts, and sat behind females that would have the window open when one could not wink without his eyelids freezing together. Perhaps I shall give you some of my experiences one of these days;—I will not now, for I have something else for you.

Private theatricals, as I have figured in them in country lyceum-halls, are one thing,—and private theatricals, as they may be seen in certain gilded and frescoed saloons of our metropolis, are another. Yes, it is pleasant to see real gentlemen and ladies,

who do not think it necessary to mouth, and rant, and stride, like most of our stage heroes and heroines, in the characters which show off their graces and talents; most of all to see a fresh, unrouged, unspoiled, highbred young maiden, with a lithe figure, and a pleasant voice, acting in those love-dramas which make us young again to look upon, when real youth and beauty will play them for us.

—Of course I wrote the prologue I was asked to write. I did not see the play, though. I knew there was a young lady in it, and that somebody was in love with her, and she was in love with him, and somebody (an old tutor, I believe) wanted to interfere, and, very naturally, the young lady was too sharp for him. The play of course ends charmingly; there is a general reconciliation, and all concerned form a line and take each other's hands, as people always do after they have made up their quarrels,—and then the curtain falls,—if it does not stick, as it commonly does at private theatrical exhibitions, in which case a boy is detailed to pull it down, which he does, blushing violently.

Now, then, for my prologue. I am not going to change my *cæsuras* and *cadences* for anybody; so if you do not like the heroic, or iambic trimeter brachy-catalectic, you had better not wait to hear it.

THIS IS IT

A Prologue? Well, of course the ladies know;—

I have my doubts. No matter,—here we go! What is a prologue? Let our Tutor teach:

Pro means beforehand; *logus* stands for speech.

'Tis like the harper's prelude on the strings,
The prima donna's courtesy ere she sings.

"The world's a stage,"—as Shakespeare said,
one day;

The stage a world—was what he meant to say.

The outside world's a blunder, that is clear;
The real world that Nature meant is here. 10
Here every foundling finds its lost mamma;
Each rogue, repentant, melts his stern papa;
Misers relent, the spendthrift's debts are paid,

The cheats are taken in the traps they laid;

One after one the troubles all are past
Till the fifth act comes right side up at last,
When the young couple, old folks, rogues,
and all,

Join hands, so happy at the curtain's fall.

—Here suffering virtue ever finds relief,
And black-browed ruffians always come to grief, 20

—When the lorn damsel, with a frantic speech,

And cheeks as hueless as a brandy-peach,
Cries, "Help, kyind Heaven!" and drops
upon her knees

On the green—baize,—beneath the (canvas)
trees,—

See to her side avenging Valor fly:—

"Ha! Villain! Draw! Now, Terraitorr, yield
or die!"

—When the poor hero flounders in despair,
Some dear lost uncle turns up millionaire,—
Clasps the young scapegrace with paternal joy,

Sobs on his neck, "*My boy! MY BOY!! MY BOY!!!*" 30

Ours, then, sweet friends, the real world
to-night

Of love that conquers in disaster's spite.

Ladies, attend! While woeful cares and doubt
Wrong the soft passion in the world without,
Though fortune scowl, though prudence
interfere,

One thing is certain: Love will triumph here!

Lords of creation, whom your ladies rule,—
The world's great masters, when you're out
of school,—

Learn the brief moral of our evening's play:
Man has his will,—but woman has her way! 40

While man's dull spirit toils in smoke and fire,

Woman's swift instinct threads the electric wire,—

The magic bracelet stretched beneath the waves

Beats the black giant with his score of slaves.

All earthly powers confess your sovereign art
But that one rebel,—woman's willful heart,
All foes you master; but a woman's wit
Lets daylight through you ere you know
you're hit.

So, just to picture what her art can do,
Hear an old story made as good as new. 50

Rudolph, professor of the headsman's trade,
Alike was famous for his arm and blade.

One day a prisoner Justice had to kill
Knelt at the block to test the artist's skill.
Bare-armed, swart-visaged, gaunt, and
shaggy-browed,

Rudolph the headsman rose above the
crowd.

His falchion lightened with a sudden gleam,
As the pike's armor flashes in the stream.

He sheathed his blade; he turned as if to go;
The victim knelt, still waiting for the
blow. 60

"Why strikest not? Perform thy murderous
act,"

The prisoner said. (His voice was slightly
cracked.)

"Friend, I *have* struck," the artist straight
replied;

"Wait but one moment, and yourself
decide."

He held his snuff-box,—“Now then, if you
please!”

The prisoner sniffed, and, with a crashing
sneeze,

Off his head tumbled,—bowled along the
floor,—

Bounced down the steps;—the prisoner
said no more!

Woman! thy falchion is a glittering eye;
If death lurks in it, oh, how sweet to die! 70
Thou takest hearts as Rudolph took the
head;

We die with love, and never dream we're
dead!

The prologue went off very well, as I hear.
No alterations were suggested by the lady
to whom it was sent, so far as I know.
Sometimes people criticize the poems one
sends them, and suggest all sorts of improve-
ments.¹ Who was that silly body that
wanted Burns to alter “Scots wha hae,” so
as to lengthen the last line, thus?—

“Edward!” Chains and slavery.

¹ I remember being asked by a celebrated man of
letters to let him look over an early, but somewhat
elaborate poem of mine. He read the manuscript
and suggested the change of one word, which I adopted
in deference to his opinion. The emendation was any-
thing but an improvement, and in later editions the
passage reads as when first-written. (Holmes's note.)

Here is a little poem I sent a short time
since to a committee for a certain celebra-
tion. I understood that it was to be a
festive and convivial occasion, and ordered
myself accordingly. It seems the president
of the day was what is called a “teetotaler.”
I received a note from him in the following
words, containing the copy subjoined, with
the emendations annexed to it.

Dear Sir,—your poem gives good satisfaction to
the committee. The sentiments expressed with
reference to liquor are not, however, those gener-
ally entertained by this community. I have
therefore consulted the clergyman of this place,
who has made some slight changes, which he
thinks will remove all objections, and keep the
valuable portions of the poem. Please to inform
me of your charge for said poem. Our means
are limited, *etc., etc., etc.*

Yours with respect.

Here it is,—with the slight alterations.²

Come! fill a fresh bumper,—for why should
we go

logwood
While the ~~nectar~~ still reddens our cups as
they flow!

decoction
Pour out the ~~rich juices~~ still bright with the
sun,

dye-stuff
Till o'er the brimmed crystal the ~~rubies~~ shall
run.

half-ripened apples
The ~~purple globed clusters~~ their life-dews
have bled;

taste sugar of
How sweet is the ~~breath~~ of the ~~fragrance~~
lead
~~—they shed!~~

rank poisons wines!!!
For summer's ~~last roses~~ lie hid in the ~~wines~~
stable-boys

That were garnered by ~~maidens who laughed~~
smoking long-nines.
~~—through the vines.~~

² I recollect a British criticism of the poem “with
the slight alterations,” in which the writer was quite
indignant at the treatment my convivial song had
received. No committee, he thought, would dare to
treat a Scotch author in that way. I could not help
being reminded of Sydney Smith, and the surgical
operation he proposed, in order to get a pleasantry
into the head of a North Briton. (Holmes's note.)

Then a ^{scowl} smile, and a ^{howl} glass, and a ^{scoff} toast, and a
^{sneer} cheer,
 strychnine and whiskey, and ratsbane and beer
 For all ~~the good wine, and we've some of it~~
~~here~~
 In cellar, in pantry, in attic, in hall,
 Down, down, with the tyrant that masters us all!
~~Long live the gay servant that laughs for us~~
~~all!~~

The company said I had been shabbily treated, and advised me to charge the committee double,—which I did. But as I never got my pay, I don't know that it made much difference. I am a very particular person about having all I write printed as I write it. I require to see a proof, a revise, a re-revise, and a double re-revise, or fourth-proof rectified impression of all my productions, especially verse. A misprint kills a sensitive author. An intentional change of his text murders him. No wonder so many poets die young!

I have nothing more to report at this time, except two pieces of advice I gave to the young women at table. One relates to a vulgarism of language, which I grieve to say is sometimes heard even from female lips. The other is of more serious purport, and applies to such as contemplate a change of condition,—matrimony, in fact.

—The woman who "calc'lates" is lost.

—Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust.

XI

[THE company looked a little flustered one morning when I came in,—so much so, that I inquired of my neighbor, the divinity-student, what had been going on. It appears that the young fellow whom they call John had taken advantage of my being a little late (I having been rather longer than usual dressing that morning) to circulate several questions involving a quibble or play upon words,—in short, containing that indignity to the human understanding, condemned in the passages from the distinguished moralist of the last century and the illustrious historian of the present, which I

cited on a former occasion, and known as a *pun*. After breakfast, one of the boarders handed me a small roll of paper containing some of the questions and their answers. I subjoin two or three of them, to show what a tendency there is to frivolity and meaningless talk in young persons of a certain sort, when not restrained by the presence of more reflective natures.—It was asked, "Why tertian and quartan fevers were like certain short-lived insects." Some interesting physiological relation would be naturally suggested. The inquirer blushes to find that the answer is in the paltry equivocation, that they *skip* a day or two.—"Why an Englishman must go to the Continent to weaken his grog or punch." The answer proves to have no relation whatever to the temperance-movement, as no better reason is given than that island- (or, as it is absurdly written, *ile and*) water won't mix.—But when I came to the next question and its answer, I felt that patience ceased to be a virtue. "Why an onion is like a piano" is a query that a person of sensibility would be slow to propose; but that in an educated community an individual could be found to answer it in these words,—"Because it smell odious," *quasi*, it's melodious,—is not credible, but too true. I can show you the paper.

Dear reader, I beg your pardon for repeating such things. I know most conversations reported in books are altogether above such trivial details, but folly will come up at every table as surely as purslain and chickweed and sorrel will come up in gardens. This young fellow ought to have talked philosophy, I know perfectly well; but he didn't,—he made jokes.]

I am willing,—I said,—to exercise your ingenuity in a rational and contemplative manner.—No, I do not proscribe certain forms of philosophical speculation which involve an approach to the absurd or the ludicrous, such as you may find, for example, in the folio of the Reverend Father Thomas Sanchez, in his famous Disputations, *De Sancto Matrimonio*. I will therefore turn this levity of yours to profit by reading you a rhymed problem, wrought out by my friend the Professor.

THE DEACON'S MASTERPIECE: OR THE WONDERFUL "ONE-HOSS- SHAY"

A LOGICAL STORY

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss-shay,

That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five,
Georgius Secundus was then alive,— 10
Snuffy old drone from the German hive;
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss-shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill, 20
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
A chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*,")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'n' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun'; 30
It should be so built that it *couldn't* break
daown,

—"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the
strain;

'n' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest

T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floor and sills; 40
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;

The crossbars were ash, from the straightest
trees,

The panels of white-wood, that cuts like
cheese,

But lasts like iron for things like these;

The hubs of logs from the "Settler's
ellum,"—

Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em,

Never an ax had seen their chips,

And the wedges flew from between their lips,

Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;

Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw, 50

Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,

Steel of the finest, bright and blue;

Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;

Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide

Found in the pit when the tanner died.

That was the way he "put her through."—

"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll
dew."

Do! I tell you, I rather guess

She was a wonder, and nothing less!

Colts grew horses, beards turned gray, 60

Deacon and deaconess dropped away,

Children and grand-children—where were
they?

But there stood the stout old one-hoss-shay

As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED;—it came and found
The Deacon's Masterpiece strong and sound.

Eighteen hundred increased by ten;—

"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.

Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—

Running as usual; much the same. 70

Thirty and forty at last arrive,

And then come fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here

Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year

Without both feeling and looking queer.

In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,

So far as I know, but a tree and truth.

(This is a moral that runs at large;

Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra
charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—The Earthquake-
day.— 80

There are traces of age in the one-hoss-shay,

A general flavor of mild decay,

But nothing local, as one may say.

There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
 Had made it so like in every part
 That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
 For the wheels were just as strong as the
 thills,
 And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
 And the panels just as strong as the floor,
 And the whippetree neither less nor more, 90
 And the back-crossbar as strong as the
 fore,
 And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
 And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt
 In another hour it will be *worn out*!

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
 This morning the parson takes a drive.
 Now, small boys, get out of the way!
 Here comes the wonderful one-hoss-shay,
 Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
 "Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went
 they. 100

The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
 Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
 At what the—Moses—was coming next.
 All at once the horse stood still,
 Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
 —First a shiver, and then a thrill,
 Then something decidedly like a spill,—
 And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
 At half-past nine by the meet'n'-house
 clock,—
 Just the hour of the Earthquake shock! 110
 —What do you think the parson found,
 When he got up and stared around?
 The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
 As it had been to the mill and ground.
 You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
 How it went to pieces all at once,—
 All at once, and nothing first,—
 Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss-shay.
 Logic is logic. That's all I say. 120

—I think there is one habit,—I said to our
 company a day or two afterwards,—worse
 than that of punning. It is the gradual sub-
 stitution of cant or slang terms for words
 which truly characterize their objects. I
 have known several very genteel idiots whose
 whole vocabulary had deliquesced into some
 half dozen expressions. All things fell into
 one of two great categories,—*fast* or *slow*.

Man's chief end was to be a *brick*. When the
 great calamities of life overtook their friends,
 these last were spoken of as being a *good
 deal cut up*. Nine tenths of human existence
 were summed up in the single word, *bore*.
 These expressions come to be the algebraic
 symbols of minds which have grown too weak
 or indolent to discriminate. They are the
 blank checks of intellectual bankruptcy;—
 you may fill them up with what idea you
 like; it makes no difference, for there are
 no funds in the treasury upon which they are
 drawn. Colleges and good-for-nothing smok-
 ing-clubs are the places where these con-
 versational fungi spring up most luxuriantly.
 Don't think I undervalue the proper use and
 application of a cant word or phrase. It
 adds piquancy to conversation, as a mush-
 room does to a sauce. But it is no better
 than a toadstool, odious to the sense and
 poisonous to the intellect, when it spawns
 itself all over the talk of men and youths
 capable of talking, as it sometimes does. As
 we hear slang phraseology, it is commonly
 the dish-water from the washings of English
 dandyism, schoolboy or full-grown, wrung
 out of a three-volume novel which had
 sopped it up, or decanted from the pictured
 urn of Mr. Verdant Green, and diluted to
 suit the provincial climate.

—The young fellow called John spoke up
 sharply and said, it was "rum" to hear me
 "pitchin' into fellers" for "goin' it in the
 slang line," when I used all the flash words
 myself just when I pleased.

—I replied with my usual forbearance.—
 Certainly, to give up the algebraic symbol
 because *a* or *b* is often a cover for ideal
 nihility, would be unwise. I have heard a
 child laboring to express a certain condition,
 involving a hitherto undescribed sensation
 (as it supposed), all of which could have
 been sufficiently explained by the partic-
 ple—*bored*. I have seen a country-clergy-
 man, with a one-story intellect and a one-
 horse vocabulary, who has consumed his
 valuable time (and mine) freely, in develop-
 ing an opinion of a brother-minister's dis-
 course which would have been abundantly
 characterized by a peach-down-lipped sopho-
 more in the one word—*slow*. Let us dis-
 criminate, and be shy of absolute proscrip-
 tion. I am omniverbivorous by nature and
 training. Passing by such words as are

poisonous, I can swallow most others, and chew such as I cannot swallow.

Dandies are not good for much, but they are good for something. They invent or keep in circulation those conversational blank checks or counters just spoken of, which intellectual capitalists may sometimes find it worth their while to borrow of them. They are useful, too, in keeping up the standard of dress, which, but for them, would deteriorate, and become, what some old fools would have it, a matter of convenience, and not of taste and art. Yes, I like dandies well enough,—on one condition.

"What is that, Sir?"—said the divinity-student.

That they have pluck. I find that lies at the bottom of all true dandyism. A little boy dressed up very fine, who puts his finger in his mouth and takes to crying, if other boys make fun of him, looks very silly. But if he turns red in the face and knotty in the fists, and makes an example of the biggest of his assailants, throwing off his fine Leghorn and his thickly-buttoned jacket, if necessary, to consummate the act of justice, his small toggery takes on the splendors of the crested helmet that frightened Astyanax. You remember that the Duke said his dandy officers were his best officers. The "Sunday blood," the super-superb sartorial equestrian of our annual Fast-day, is not imposing or dangerous. But such fellows as Brummel and D'Orsay and Byron are not to be snubbed quite so easily. Look out for "*la main de fer sous le gant de velours*"¹ (which I printed in English the other day without quotation-marks, thinking whether any *scarabæus criticus*² would add this to his globe and roll in glory with it into the newspapers,—which he didn't do it, in the charming pleonasm of the London language, and therefore I claim the sole merit of exposing the same). A good many powerful and dangerous people have had a decided dash of dandyism about them. There was Alcibiades, the "curled son of Clinias," an accomplished young man, but what would be called a "swell" in these days. There was Aristoteles, a very distinguished writer, in whom you have heard,—a philosopher, in short, whom it took centuries to

learn, centuries to unlearn, and is now going to take a generation or more to learn over again. Regular dandy he was. So was Marcus Antonius; and though he lost his game, he played for big stakes, and it wasn't his dandyism that spoiled his chance. Petrarca was not to be despised as a scholar or a poet, but he was one of the same sort. So was Sir Humphrey Davy; so was Lord Palmerston, formerly, if I am not forgetful. Yes,—a dandy is good for something as such; and dandies such as I was just speaking of have rocked this planet like a cradle,—aye, and left it swinging to this day.—Still, if I were you, I wouldn't go to the tailor's, on the strength of these remarks, and run up a long bill which will render pockets a superfluity in your next suit. *Elegans "nascitur, non fit."* A man is born a dandy, as he is born a poet. There are heads that can't wear hats; there are necks that can't fit cravats; there are jaws that can't fill out collars—(Willis touched this last point in one of his earlier ambrotypes, if I remember rightly); there are *tournures* nothing can humanize, and movements nothing can subdue to the gracious suavity or elegant languor or stately serenity which belong to different styles of dandyism.

We are forming an aristocracy, as you may observe, in this country,—not a *gratiâ-Dei*, nor a *jure-divino* one,—but a *de-facto* upper stratum of being, which floats over the turbid waves of common life like the iridescent film you may have seen spreading over the water about our wharves,—very splendid, though its origin may have been tar, tallow, train-oil, or other such unctuous commodities. I say, then, we are forming an aristocracy; and, transitory as its individual life often is, it maintains itself tolerably, as a whole. Of course money is its corner-stone. But now observe this. Money kept for two or three generations transforms a race,—I don't mean merely in manners and hereditary culture, but in blood and bone. Money buys air and sunshine, in which children grow up more kindly, of course, than in close, back streets; it buys country places to give them happy and healthy summers, good nursing, good doctoring, and the best cuts of beef and mutton. When the spring-chickens come to market—I beg your pardon,—that is

¹ The iron hand beneath the velvet glove.

² Critical beetle.

not what I was going to speak of. As the young females of each successive season come on, the finest specimens among them, other things being equal, are apt to attract those who can afford the expensive luxury of beauty. The physical character of the next generation rises in consequence. It is plain that certain families have in this way acquired an elevated type of face and figure, and that in a small circle of city-connections one may sometimes find models of both sexes which one of the rural counties would find it hard to match from all its townships put together. Because there is a good deal of running down, of degeneration and waste of life, among the richer classes, you must not overlook the equally obvious fact I have just spoken of,—which in one or two generations more will be, I think, much more patent than just now.

The weak point in our chryso-aristocracy is the same I have alluded to in connection with cheap dandyism. Its thorough manhood, its high-caste gallantry, are not so manifest as the plate-glass of its windows and the more or less legitimate heraldry of its coach-panels. It is very curious to observe of how small account military folks are held among our Northern people. Our young men must gild their spurs, but they need not win them. The equal division of property keeps the younger sons of rich people above the necessity of military service. Thus the army loses an element of refinement, and the moneyed upper class forgets what it is to count heroism among its virtues. Still, I don't believe in any aristocracy without pluck as its backbone. Ours may show it when the time comes if it ever does come.¹

—These United States furnish the greatest market for intellectual *green fruit* of all the places in the world. I think so, at any rate. The demand for intellectual labor is so enormous and the market so far from nice, that young talent is apt to fare like unripe gooseberries,—get plucked to make a fool of. Think of a country which buys eighty

thousand copies of the *Proverbial Philosophy*, while the author's admiring countrymen have been buying twelve thousand! How can one let his fruit hang in the sun until it gets fully ripe, while there are eighty thousand such hungry mouths ready to swallow it and proclaim its praises? Consequently, there never was such a collection of crude pippins and half-grown windfalls as our native literature displays among its fruits. There are literary green-groceries at every corner, which will buy anything, from a button-pear to a pine-apple. It takes a long apprenticeship to train a whole people to reading and writing. The temptation of money and fame is too great for young people. Do I not remember that glorious moment when the late Mr. — we won't say who,—editor of the — we won't say what, offered me the sum of fifty cents *per* double-columned quarto page for shaking my young boughs over his foolscap apron? Was it not an intoxicating vision of gold and glory? I should doubtless have reveled in its wealth and splendor, but for learning that the *fifty cents* was to be considered a rhetorical embellishment, and by no means a literal expression of past fact or present intention.

—Beware of making your moral staple consist of the negative virtues. It is good to abstain, and teach others to abstain, from all that is sinful or hurtful. But making a business of it leads to emaciation of character, unless one feeds largely also on the more nutritious diet of active sympathetic benevolence.

—I don't believe one word of what you are saying,—spoke up the angular female in black bombazine.

I am sorry you disbelieve it, Madam,—I said, and added softly to my next neighbor,—but you prove it.

The young fellow sitting near me winked; and the divinity-student said, in an undertone,—*Optime dictum*.

Your talking Latin,—said I,—reminds me of an odd trick of one of my old tutors. He read so much of that language, that his English half turned into it. He got caught in town, one hot summer, in pretty close quarters, and wrote, or began to write, a series of city pastorals. Eclogues he called them, and meant to have published them

¹ The marble tablets and memorial windows in our churches and monumental buildings bear evidence as to whether the young men of favored social position proved worthy of their privileges or not during the four years of trial which left us a nation. (Holmes's note.)

by subscription. I remember some of his verses, if you want to hear them.—You, Sir (addressing myself to the divinity-student), and all such as have been through college, or what is the same thing, received an honorary degree, will understand them without a dictionary. The old man had a great deal to say about “æstivation,” as he called it, in opposition, as one might say, to *hibernation*. Intramural æstivation, or town-life in summer, he would say, is a peculiar form of suspended existence, or semi-asphyxia. One wakes up from it about the beginning of the last week in September. This is what I remember of his poem:—

ÆSTIVATION

An Unpublished Poem, by my late Latin Tutor

In candent ire the solar splendor flames;
The foles, languescient, pend from arid rames;
His humid front the cive, anhelung, wipes,
And dreams of erring on ventiferous ripes.

How dulce to vive occult to mortal eyes,
Dorm on the herb with none to supervise,
Carp the suave berries from the crescent
vine,
And bibe the flow from longicaudate kine!

To me, alas! no verdurous visions come,
Save yon exiguous pool's conferva-scum,—IO
No concave vast repeats the tender hue
That laves my milk-jug with celestial blue!

Me wretched! Let me curr to quercine
shades!

Effund your albid hausts, lactiferous maids!
Oh, might I vole to some umbrageous
clump,—

Depart,—be off,—excede,—evade,—erump!

—I have lived by the sea-shore and by the mountains.—No, I am not going to say which is best. The one where your place is is the best for you. But this difference there is: you can domesticate mountains, but the sea is *feræ naturæ*. You may have a hut, or know the owner of one, on the mountain-side; you see a light half-way up its ascent in the evening, and you know there is a home, and you might share it. You have noted certain trees, perhaps; you know the particular zone where the hemlocks look so

black in October, when the maples and beeches have faded. All its reliefs and intaglios have electrotyped themselves in the medallions that hang round the walls of your memory's chamber.—The sea remembers nothing. It is feline. It licks your feet,—its huge flanks purr very pleasantly for you; but it will crack your bones and eat you, for all that, and wipe the crimsoned foam from its jaws as if nothing had happened. The mountains give their lost children berries and water; the sea mocks their thirst and lets them die. The mountains have a grand, stupid, lovable tranquillity; the sea has a fascinating, treacherous intelligence. The mountains lie about like huge ruminants, their broad backs awful to look upon, but safe to handle. The sea smooths its silver scales until you cannot see their joints,—but their shining is that of a snake's belly, after all.—In deeper suggestiveness I find as great a difference. The mountains dwarf mankind and foreshorten the procession of its long generations. The sea drowns out humanity and time; it has no sympathy with either; for it belongs to eternity, and of that it sings its monotonous song forever and ever.

Yet I should love to have a little box by the sea-shore. I should love to gaze out on the wild feline element from a front window of my own, just as I should love to look on a caged panther, and see it stretch its shining length, and then curl over and lap its smooth sides, and by-and-by begin to lash itself into rage and show its white teeth and spring at its bars, and howl the cry of its mad, but, to me, harmless fury.—And then, —to look at it with that inward eye,—who does not love to shuffle off time and its concerns, at intervals,—to forget who is President and who is Governor, what race he belongs to, what language he speaks, which golden-headed nail of the firmament his particular planetary system is hung upon, and listen to the great liquid metronome as it beats its solemn measure, steadily swinging when the solo or duet of human life began, and to swing just as steadily after the human chorus has died out and man is a fossil on its shores?

—What should decide one, in choosing a summer residence?—Constitution, first of all. How much snow could you melt in an

hour, if you were planted in a hogshead of it? Comfort is essential to enjoyment. All sensitive people should remember that persons in easy circumstances suffer much more from cold in summer—that is, the warm half of the year—than in winter, or the other half. You must cut your climate to your constitution, as much as your clothing to your shape. After this, consult your taste and convenience. But if you would be happy in Berkshire, you must carry mountains in your brain; and if you would enjoy Nahant, you must have an ocean in your soul. Nature plays at dominos with you; you must match her piece, or she will never give it up to you.

—The schoolmistress said, in a rather mischievous way, that she was afraid some minds or souls would be a little crowded, if they took in the Rocky Mountains or the Atlantic.

Have you ever read the little book called *The Stars and the Earth*?—said I.—Have you seen the Declaration of Independence photographed in a surface that a fly's foot would cover? The forms or conditions of Time and Space, as Kant will tell you, are nothing in themselves,—only our way of looking at things. You are right, I think, however, in recognizing the idea of Space as being quite as applicable to minds as to the outer world. Every man of reflection is vaguely conscious of an imperfectly-defined circle which is drawn about his intellect. He has a perfectly clear sense that the fragments of his intellectual circle include the curves of many other minds of which he is cognizant. He often recognizes these as manifestly concentric with his own, but of less radius. On the other hand, when we find a portion of an arc on the outside of our own, we say it *intersects* ours, but are very slow to confess or to see that it *circumscribes* it. Every now and then a man's mind is stretched by a new idea or sensation, and never shrinks back to its former dimensions. After looking at the Alps, I felt that my mind had been stretched beyond the limits of elasticity, and fitted so loosely on my old ideas of space that I had to spread these to fit it.

—If I thought I should ever see the Alps!—said the schoolmistress.

Perhaps you will, some time or other,—I said.

It is not very likely,—she answered.—I have had one or two opportunities, but I had rather be anything than governess in a rich family.

[Proud, too, you little soft-voiced woman! Well, I can't say I like you any the worse for it. How long will school-keeping take to kill you? Is it possible the poor thing works with her needle, too? I don't like those marks on the side of her forefinger.

Tableau. Chamouni. Mont Blanc in full view. Figures in the foreground; two of them standing apart; one of them a gentleman of—oh,—ah,—yes! the other a lady in a white cashmere, leaning on his shoulder.—The ingenuous reader will understand that this was an internal, private, personal, subjective diorama, seen for one instant on the background of my own consciousness, and abolished into black nonentity by the first question which recalled me to actual life, as suddenly as if one of those iron shop-blinds (which I always pass at dusk with a shiver, expecting to stumble over some poor but honest shop-boy's head, just taken off by its sudden and unexpected descent, and left outside upon the sidewalk) had come down in front of it “by the run.”]

—Should you like to hear what moderate wishes life brings one to at last? I used to be very ambitious,—wasteful, extravagant, and luxurious in all my fancies. Read too much in the *Arabian Nights*. Must have the lamp,—couldn't do without the ring. Exercise every morning on the brazen horse. Plump down into castles as full of little milk-white princesses as a nest is of young sparrows. All love me dearly at once.—Charming idea of life, but too high-colored for the reality. I have outgrown all this; my tastes have become exceedingly primitive,—almost, perhaps, ascetic. We carry happiness into our condition, but must not hope to find it there. I think you will be willing to hear some lines which embody the subdued and limited desires of my maturity.

CONTENTMENT

"Man wants but little here below."

Little I ask; my wants are few;
I only wish a hut of stone
(A *very plain* brown stone will do),
That I may call my own;—

And close at hand is such a one,
In yonder street that fronts the sun.

Plain food is quite enough for me;
Three courses are as good as ten;—
If Nature can subsist on three,
Thank Heaven for three. Amen! 10
I always thought cold victual nice;—
My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

I care not much for gold or land;—
Give me a mortgage here and there,—
Some good bank-stock,—some note of hand,
Or trifling railroad share;—
I only ask that Fortune send
A *little* more than I shall spend.

Honors are silly toys, I know,
And titles are but empty names;— 20
I would, *perhaps*, be Plenipo,—
But only near St. James;—
I'm very sure I should not care
To fill our Gubernator's chair.

Jewels are baubles; 'tis a sin
To care for such unfruitful things;—
One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
Some, *not so large*, in rings,—
A ruby and a pearl, or so,
Will do for me;—I laugh at show. 30

My dame should dress in cheap attire
(Good, heavy silks are never dear);—
I own perhaps I *might* desire
Some shawls of true cashmere,—
Some marrowy crape of China silk,
Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive
So fast that folks must stop and stare:
An easy gait—two, forty-five—
Suits me; I do not care;— 40
Perhaps, for just a *single spurt*,
Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own
Titians and Raphaels three or four.—
I love so much their style and tone,—
One Turner, and no more
(A landscape,—foreground golden dirt,—
The sunshine painted with a squirt).

Of books but few,—some fifty score
For daily use, and bound for wear; 50
The rest upon an upper floor;—
Some *little* luxury *there*
Of red morocco's gilded gleam,
And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,
Which others often show for pride,
I value for their power to please,
And selfish churls deride;—
One Stradivarius, I confess,
Two Meerschaums, I would fain possess. 60

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,
Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—
Shall not carved tables serve my turn,
But *all* must be of buhl?
Give grasping pomp its double share,—
I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die,
Nor long for Midas' golden touch,
If Heaven more generous gifts deny,
I shall not miss them *much*;— 70
Too grateful for the blessing lent
Of simple tastes and mind content!

* * * * *

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819-1891)

Lowell came of a family whose Massachusetts history extends back as far as 1639, and a family notable for the honorable achievements of more than one of its members. His father was the minister of the West Church in Boston, and lived in one of the pre-Revolutionary houses of Cambridge, Elmwood, not very far from Craigie House. There Lowell was born on 22 February, 1819, and there he spent his boyhood and youth, going to a good classical school near by, and thence to Harvard College, from which he was graduated in 1838. Already in his student years he was what he remained throughout his life, a great reader—a reader restricted in his range, but one who, within the confines of *belles lettres*, read widely, copiously, enormously. Indeed, no small part of Lowell's literary work may be regarded as an indication of what happy things good company, the best company, enjoyed continuously, will do for one. And, too, already in his student years he was a writer of verse and of essays, and he was chosen Class Poet in his senior year. The poem was duly written, but was not read on Class Day, because at that time Lowell was in rustication at Concord, having been suspended from the College because of irregularities in attendance upon morning prayers.

After his graduation he commenced study of the law. It was already clear, perhaps clear enough to himself, that his heart was in literary pursuits, but he not unnaturally hesitated to trust himself to so frail a bark as a literary career. From the law he turned for a short time to thought of a career in business, but all the time he was writing, and he announced his final decision in 1841 by the publication of his first volume of verse, *A Year's Life*. In 1841 also he became engaged to Maria White, who exerted upon him a strong influence, both in giving definition to deep moral convictions which the two shared and in encouraging him to express these copiously in poetry. In 1843 a second volume of poems was published, and in 1844 a volume of essays, *Conversations on Some of the Old Poets*. In the same year Lowell and Maria White were married. He had now become a steady contributor of both prose and verse to periodicals, at first chiefly those active in opposing slavery, and was making a name for himself, and in 1846 he suddenly extended his public with the first of the *Biglow Papers*. He had not planned to write a series. He had simply turned for variety to a new method of expressing his hatred of slavery, but, as he later said, "The success of my experiment soon began not only to astonish me, but to make me feel the responsibility of knowing that I had in my hand a weapon" able to pierce the ears of thousands. Hence he kept on writing more *Biglow Papers*, and in 1848 he collected into a volume those now known as the First Series. In the same year he published *Poems*, Second Series, *A Fable for Critics*, and *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, and in the following year a collected edition of his poems. The two volumes of this edition were, however, his last publications—outside of contributions to periodicals—for some years.

In 1851-1852 Lowell and his wife were in Europe for about fifteen months, and in October, 1853, Mrs. Lowell died. Her husband's grief was deep, and his activities for a time almost paralyzed. In 1855 he delivered in Boston some lectures on English poetry, and was immediately thereafter chosen Longfellow's successor at Harvard, his title being Smith Professor of the French and Spanish Languages and Literatures and Professor of Belles Lettres. He spent some time in Europe in preparation for his academic work. By 1857 he was back in Cambridge, and in this year he married Frances Dunlap, of Portland, Maine. In 1857, too, *The Atlantic Monthly* began to appear, with Lowell as its editor;—a post he held for a little over two years, while he also contributed regularly to its pages until 1862, when he and Charles Eliot Norton joined in editing *The North American Review*. For the next ten years his essays appeared chiefly in this periodical. The Civil War called forth a second series of *Biglow Papers* (collected into a volume in 1866), and the deep currents of intense patriotic feeling which that War opened up in Lowell also found remarkable and very different expression in the memorial odes which he wrote at the War's close and in following years. The essays which were the result of Lowell's reading and study during his mature years were collected and published in *Among My Books* (1870), *My Study Windows* (1871), and *Among My Books*, Second Series (1876). Before the publication of the last-named Lowell had spent two years in Europe (1872-1874), and in 1877 he was appointed U. S. Minister to Spain. From 1880 until 1885 he represented the United States at the Court of St. James, London. In the latter year, while they were still in England, his wife died. And Lowell himself died six years later at Elmwood, on 12 August.

Lowell's great contemporary reputation rested partly upon personal qualities which the mere reader of his books cannot always know. It rested, too, partly upon work which, intimately con-

nected with passing events or with a past stage of American cultural development, is now important historically rather than intrinsically. His very remarkable qualities and powers tended rather to possess him than to be deliberately used for any unified purpose. He was unreflective, and the unity and balance of his character rested rather upon a group of moral prejudices than upon any conscious effort to work out and express through his poetry and criticism and political utterances a single and coherent view of life. Ferris Greenslet, in his excellent biography of Lowell, tells us that he "had a way of uttering a good thing in talk, then jotting it down in his notebook, then writing it to a correspondent, and then using it, a little filed and polished, in whatever he happened to be composing at the time." And Lowell's essays and his mature poetry are full of "good things"—many of them so good that we would not on any account miss them—but too often they are not held together by any general plan or purpose. And this is true of his work as a whole. It is of the nature of casual comment; it is miscellaneous; it represents the call upon his energies of diverse opportunities and interests; and it makes one conclude that Lowell was a man who never quite found himself. W. C. Brownell, in his acute essay on Lowell (*American Prose Masters*), pictures him as primarily a representative figure, the accomplished mouthpiece, so to say, of mid-nineteenth-century America, uttering its prejudices with his own extraordinary cleverness or, on occasion, depth of conviction. This seems to be a true picture. And it indicates that, while he was little fitted for the work of criticism, still, a certain proportion of his poetry and prose keeps its interest and its value because in it we hear, at its informed best, the authentic voice of nineteenth-century New England.

SONNETS¹

III

I WOULD not have this perfect love of ours
Grow from a single root, a single stem,
Bearing no goodly fruit, but only flowers
That idly hide life's iron diadem:
It should grow alway like that Eastern tree
Whose limbs take root and spread forth
 constantly;
That love for one, from which there doth
 not spring
Wide love for all, is but a worthless thing.
Not in another world, as poets prate,
Dwell we apart above the tide of things, 10
High floating o'er earth's clouds on faery
 wings;
But our pure love doth ever elevate
Into a holy bond of brotherhood
All earthly things, making them pure and
 good.

VI

GREAT Truths are portions of the soul of man;
Great souls are portions of Eternity;
Each drop of blood that e'er through true
 heart ran
With lofty message, ran for thee and me;

¹ The sonnets are given the numbers they bear in the Riverside Edition of Lowell's writings and the Cambridge Edition of his poems. Sonnet III was written in 1840, VI in 1841, and XXV was published in 1843.

The selections from Lowell's writings reprinted in this volume are used with the permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

For God's law, since the starry song began,
Hath been, and still forevermore must be,
That every deed which shall outlast Time's
 span

Must spur the soul to be erect and free;
Slave is no word of deathless lineage sprung;
Too many noble souls have thought and
 died, 10

Too many mighty poets lived and sung,
And our good Saxon, from lips purified
With martyr-fire, throughout the world hath
 rung

Too long to have God's holy cause denied.

XXV

I GRIEVE not that ripe Knowledge takes away
The charm that Nature to my childhood
 wore,

For, with that insight, cometh, day by day,
A greater bliss than wonder was before;
The real doth not clip the poet's wings,—
To win the secret of a weed's plain heart
Reveals some clew to spiritual things,
And stumbling guess becomes firm-footed
 art:

Flowers are not flowers unto the poet's eyes,
Their beauty thrills him by an inward
 sense; 10

He knows that outward seemings are but lies,
Or, at the most, but earthly shadows,
 whence

The soul that looks within for truth may
 guess

The presence of some wondrous heaven-
 liness.

THE SOWER¹

I SAW a Sower walking slow
 Across the earth, from east to west;
 His hair was white as mountain snow,
 His head drooped forward on his breast.

With shriveled hands he flung his seed,
 Nor ever turned to look behind;
 Of sight or sound he took no heed;
 It seemed he was both deaf and blind.

His dim face showed no soul beneath,
 Yet in my heart I felt a stir,
 As if I looked upon the sheath
 That once had held Excalibur.

I heard, as still the seed he cast,
 How, crooning to himself, he sung,
 "I sow again the holy Past,
 The happy days when I was young.

"Then all was wheat without a tare,
 Then all was righteous, fair, and true;
 And I am he whose thoughtful care
 Shall plant the Old World in the New.

"The fruitful germs I scatter free,
 With busy hand, while all men sleep;
 In Europe now, from sea to sea,
 The nations bless me as they reap."

Then I looked back along his path,
 And heard the clash of steel on steel,
 Where man faced man, in deadly wrath,
 While clanged the tocsin's hurrying peal.

The sky with burning towns flared red,
 Nearer the noise of fighting rolled,
 And brothers' blood, by brothers shed,
 Crept curdling over pavements cold.

Then marked I how each germ of truth
 Which through the dotard's fingers ran
 Was mated with a dragon's tooth
 Whence there sprang up an armed man.

I shouted, but he could not hear;
 Made signs, but these he could not see;
 And still, without a doubt or fear,
 Broadcast he scattered anarchy.

Long to my straining ears the blast
 Brought faintly back the words he sung:
 "I sow again the holy Past,
 The happy days when I was young."

FREEDOM²

ARE we, then, wholly fallen? Can it be
 That thou, North wind, that from thy
 mountains bringest

Their spirit to our plains, and thou, blue sea,
 Who on our rocks thy wreaths of freedom
 flingest,

As on an altar,—can it be that ye
 Have wasted inspiration on dead ears,
 Dulled with the too familiar clank of chains?
 The people's heart is like a harp for years
 Hung where some petrifying torrent rains
 Its slow-incrusting spray: the stiffened
 chords

Faint and more faint make answer to the
 tears

That drip upon them: idle are all words:
 Only a golden plectrum wakes the tone
 Deep buried 'neath that ever-thickening
 stone.

We are not free: doth Freedom, then, consist
 In musing with our faces toward the Past,
 While petty cares, and crawling interests,
 twist

Their spider-threads about us, which at last
 Grow strong as iron chains, to cramp and
 bind

In formal narrowness heart, soul, and
 mind?

Freedom is recreated year by year,
 In hearts wide open on the Godward side,
 In souls calm-cadenced as the whirling
 sphere,

In minds that sway the future like a tide.
 No broadest creeds can hold her, and no
 codes;

She chooses men for her august abodes,
 Building them fair and fronting to the dawn;
 Yet, when we seek her, we but find a few
 Light footprints, leading morn-ward through
 the dew:

Before the day had risen, she was gone.

And we must follow: swiftly runs she on,
 And, if our steps should slacken in despair,
 Half turns her face, half smiles through
 golden hair,

Forever yielding, never wholly won:
 That is not love which pauses in the race
 Two close-linked names on fleeting sand to
 trace;

¹ Written in 1848.² Written in 1848.

Freedom gained yesterday is no more ours;
Men gather but dry seeds of last year's
flowers;

Still there's a charm ungranted, still a grace,
Still rosy Hope, the free, the unattained, 40
Makes us Possession's languid hand let fall;
'T is but a fragment of ourselves is gained,
The Future brings us more, but never all.

And, as the finder of some unknown realm,
Mounting a summit whence he thinks to see
On either side of him the imprisoning sea,
Beholds, above the clouds that overwhelm
The valley-land, peak after snowy peak
Stretch out of sight, each like a silver helm
Beneath its plume of smoke, sublime and
bleak, 50

And what he thought an island finds to be
A continent to him first oped,—so we
Can from our height of Freedom look along
A boundless future, ours if we be strong;
Or if we shrink, better remount our ships
And, fleeing God's express design, trace back
The hero-freighted *Mayflower's* prophet-
track
To Europe, entering her blood-red eclipse.

THE BIGLOW PAPERS¹

FIRST SERIES

NO. I. A LETTER

FROM MR. EZEKIEL BIGLOW OF JAALAM TO THE
HON. JOSEPH T. BUCKINGHAM, EDITOR OF THE
BOSTON COURIER, ENCLOSING A POEM OF HIS
SON, MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.

JAYLEM, june 1846.

MISTER EDDYTER:—Our Hosea wuz down to
Boston last week, and he see a cruetin Sarjunt a
struttin round as popler as a hen with 1 chicking,
with 2 fellers a drummin and ffin arter him like
all nater. the sarjunt he thout Hosea hed n't
gut his i teeth cut cos he looked a kindo 's though

¹ The papers composing the First Series were published at intervals in the *Boston Courier* and the *Anti-Slavery Standard* from June, 1846, until September, 1848, and were reprinted in a volume in the latter year. They were a part of Lowell's literary campaign against slavery, and their immediate occasion was the war against Mexico, brought about by the efforts of Southerners to protect their "peculiar institution" by extending the slaveholding area of the United States. In May, 1846, President Polk was authorized to use the militia and to call for 50,000 volunteers in case of need. He at once asked for the full number. Lowell

he 'd jest com down, so he cal'lated to hook him in, but Hosy wood n't take none o' his sarse for all he hed much as 20 Rooster's tales stuck onto his hat and eenamost enuf brass a bobbin up and down on his shoulders and figureed onto his coat and trousis, let alone wut nater hed sot in his featers, to make a 6 pounder out on.

wal, Hosea he com home considerabal riled, and arter I 'd gone to bed I heern Him a thrashin round like a short-tailed Bull in fli-time. The old Woman ses she to me ses she, Zekle, ses she, our Hosee's gut the chollery or suthin anuther ses she, don't you Bee skeered, ses I, he 's oney amakin pottery ses i, he 's ollers on hand at that ere busynes like Da & martin, and shure enuf, cum mornin, Hosy he cum down stares full chizzle, hare on eend and cote tales flyin, and sot rite of to go reed his varses to Parson Wilbur bein he haint aney grate shows o' book larnin himself, bimeby he cum back and sed the parson wuz drefle tickled with 'em as i hoop you will Be, and said they wuz True grit.

Hosea ses taint hardly fair to call 'em hisn now, cos the parson kind o' slicked off sum o' the last varses, but he told Hosee he did n't want to put his ore in to tetch to the Rest on 'em, bein they wuz verry well As thay wuz, and then Hosy ses he sed suthin a nuther about Simplex Mundishes or sum sech feller, but I guess Hosea kind o' did n't hear him, for I never hearn o' nobody o' that name in this villadge, and I've lived here man and boy 76 year cum next tater diggin, and thair aint no wheres a kitting spryer 'n I be.

If you print 'em I wish you 'd just let folks know who hosy's father is, cos my ant Keziah used to say it 's nater to be curus ses she, she ain't livin though and he 's a likely kind o' lad.

EZEKIEL BIGLOW

THRASH away, you'll hev to rattle
On them kittle-drums o' yourn,—
'Taint a knowin' kind o' cattle
Thet is ketched with moldy corn;
Put in stiff, you fifer feller,
Let folks see how spry you be,—
Guess you'll toot till you are yellor
'Fore you git ahold o' me!

published the papers under a somewhat elaborate disguise, in the beginning because, he said, he wished "slavery to think it has as many enemies as possible." There is reason to suppose that the absence of his name helped to give him a valuable sense of freedom—even after his authorship of the *Papers* became generally known—which enabled him to write more independently, vividly, and naturally than he did in the greater part of his more formal verse, with the result that the *Biglow Papers* have kept their interest better than all save a small number of his other poems.

Thet air flag's a leetle rotten,
 Hope it aint your Sunday's best;— 10
 Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton
 To stuff out a soger's chest:
 Sence we farmers hev to pay fer 't,
 Ef you must wear humps like these,
 Sposin' you should try salt hay fer 't,
 It would du ez slick ez grease.

'T would n't suit them Southun fellers,
 They 're a drefle graspin' set,
 We must ollers blow the bellers
 Wen they want their irons het; 20
 May be it 's all right ez preachin',
 But *my* narves it kind o' grates,
 Wen I see the overreachin'
 O' them nigger-drivin' States.

Them thet rule us, them slave-traders,
 Haint they cut a thunderin' swarth
 (Helped by Yankee renegaders),
 Thru the vartu o' the North!
 We begin to think it 's nater
 To take sarse an' not be riled;— 30
 Who 'd expect to see a tater
 All on eend at bein' biled?

Ez fer war, I call it murder,—
 There you hev it plain an' flat;
 I don't want to go no funder
 Than my Testymet fer that;
 God hez sed so plump an' fairly,
 It 's ez long ez it is broad,
 An' you 've gut to git up airly
 Ef you want to take in God. 40

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers
 Make the thing a grain more right;
 'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers
 Will excuse ye in His sight;
 Ef you take a sword an' dror it,
 An' go stick a feller thru,
 Guv'ment aint to answer for it,
 God 'll send the bill to you.

Wut 's the use o' meetin'-goin'
 Every Sabbath, wet or dry, 50
 Ef it 's right to go amowin'
 Feller-men like oats an' rye?
 I dunno but wut it 's pooty
 Trainin' round in bobtail coats,—
 But it 's curus Christian dooty
 This 'ere cuttin' folks's throats.

They may talk o' Freedom's airy
 Tell they 're pupple in the face,—
 It 's a grand gret cemetary
 Fer the barthrights of our race; 60
 They jest want this Californy
 So 's to lug new slave-states in
 To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
 An' to plunder ye like sin.

Aint it cute to see a Yankee
 Take sech everlastin' pains,
 All to git the Devil's thankee
 Helpin' on 'em weld their chains? 70
 Wy, it 's jest ez clear ez figgers,
 Clear ez one an' one make two,
 Chaps thet make black slaves o' niggers
 Want to make wite slaves o' you.

Tell ye jest the eend I 've come to
 Arter cipherin' plaguy smart,
 An' it makes a handy sum, tu,
 Any gump could larn by heart;
 Laborin' man an' laborin' woman
 Hev one glory an' one shame.
 Ev'y thin' thet 's done inhuman
 Injers all on 'em the same. 80

'Taint by turnin' out to hack folks
 You 're agoin' to git your right,
 Nor by lookin' down on black folks
 Coz you 're put upon by wite;
 Slavery aint o' nary color,
 'Taint the hide thet makes it wus,
 All it keers fer in a feller
 'S jest to make him fill its pus.

Want to tackle *me* in, du ye?
 I expect you 'll hev to wait; 90
 Wen cold lead puts daylight thru ye
 You'll begin to kal'late;
 S'pose the crows wun't fall to pickin'
 All the carkiss from your bones,
 Coz you helped to give a lickin'
 To them poor half-Spanish drones?

Jest go home an' ask our Nancy
 Wether I'd be sech a goose
 Ez to jine ye,—guess you'd fancy
 The eternal bung wuz loose! 100
 She wants me fer home consumption,
 Let alone the hay 's to mow,—
 Ef you 're arter folks o' gumption,
 You 've a darned long row to hoe.

Take them editors thet's crowin'
 Like a cockerel three months oid,—
 Don't ketch any on 'em goin',
 Though they *be* so blasted bold;
Aint they a prime lot o' fellers?
 'Fore they think on't guess they 'll
 sprout 110
 (Like a peach thet 's got the yellers),
 With the meanness bustin' out.

Wal, go 'long to help 'em stealin'
 Bigger pens to cram with slaves,
 Help the men thet 's ollers dealin'
 Insults on your fathers' graves;
 Help the strong to grind the feeble,
 Help the many agin the few,
 Help the men thet call your people
 Witewashed slaves an' peddlin' crew! 120

Massachusetts, God forgive her,
 She 's akneelin' with the rest,
 She, thet ough' to ha' clung ferever
 In her grand old eagle-nest;
 She thet ough' to stand so fearless
 Wile the wracks are round her hurled,
 Holdin' up a beacon peerless
 To the oppressed of all the world!

Ha'n't they sold your colored seamen?
 Ha'n't they made your env'ys w'iz? 130
Wut 'll make ye act like freemen?
Wut 'll git your dander riz?
 Come, I'll tell ye wut I'm thinkin'
 Is our dooty in this fix,
 They 'd ha' done 't ez quick ez winkin'
 In the days o' seventy-six.

Clang the bells in every steeple,
 Call all true men to disown
 The tradoozers of our people,
 The enslavers o' their own; 140
 Let our dear old Bay State proudly
 Put the trumpet to her mouth,
 Let her ring this messidge loudly
 In the ears of all the South:—

"I 'll return ye good fer evil
 Much ez we frail mortils can,
 But I wun't go help the Devil
 Makin' man the cus o' man;
 Call me coward, call me traiter,
 Jest ez suits your mean idees,— 150
 Here I stand a tyrant-hater,
 An' the friend o' God an' Peace!"

Ef I'd *my* way I hed ruther
 We should go to work an' part,—
 They take one way, we take t' other,—
 Guess it would n't break my heart;¹
 Man hed ough' to put asunder
 Them thet God has noways jined;
 An' I should n't gretly wonder
 Ef there's thousands o' my mind. 160

[The first recruiting sergeant on record I conceive to have been that individual who is mentioned in the Book of Job as *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it*. Bishop Latimer will have him to have been a bishop, but to me that other calling would appear more congenial. The sect of Cainites is not yet extinct, who esteemed the first-born of Adam to be the most worthy, not only because of that privilege of primogeniture, but inasmuch as he was able to overcome and slay his younger brother. That was a wise saying of the famous Marquis Pescara to the Papal Legate, that *it was impossible for men to serve Mars and Christ at the same time*. Yet in time past the profession of arms was judged to be *κατ' ἐξοχήν*² that of a gentleman, nor does this opinion want for strenuous upholders even in our day. Must we suppose, then, that the profession of Christianity was only intended for losels, or, at best, to afford an opening for plebeian ambition? Or shall we hold with that nicely metaphysical Pomeranian, Captain Vratz, who was Count Königsmark's chief instrument in the murder of Mr. Thynne, that the Scheme of Salvation has been arranged with an especial eye to the necessities of the upper classes and that "God would consider a *gentleman* and deal with him suitably to the condition and profession he had placed him in"? It may be said of us all, *Exemplo plus quam ratione vivimus*.³—H. W.]⁴

¹ The threat of secession from the Union had first been made, after the adoption of the Constitution, by New England federalists, and had been repeated by New Englanders on various occasions through the first half of the nineteenth century. Calhoun first heard of secession when he was a student in Connecticut. Bryant at the outbreak of the War of 1812 was youthfully eager to take up arms, not against England, but in defense of Massachusetts against the Union. The Garrisonian abolitionists were openly in favor of the secession of the Northern states, though Whittier, in his poem entitled *Texas*, seemed to favor Southern secession.

² Preëminently.

³ We live by example rather than by doctrine.

⁴ Here and later the square brackets are Lowell's. When the *Biglow Papers* were collected they were published as if edited—"with an introduction, notes, glossary, and copious index"—by Homer Wilbur, the "Parson Wilbur" to whom Hosea Biglow took the above poem for his judgment upon it after it was written. Passages signed H. W. are the fictitious Wilbur's editorial notes.

NO. III. WHAT MR. ROBINSON THINKS

[A few remarks on the following verses will not be out of place. The satire in them was not meant to have any personal, but only a general, application. Of the gentleman upon whose letter they were intended as a commentary Mr. Biglow had never heard, till he saw the letter itself. The position of the satirist is oftentimes one which he would not have chosen, had the election been left to himself. In attacking bad principles, he is obliged to select some individual who has made himself their exponent, and in whom they are impersonate, to the end that what he says may not, through ambiguity, be dissipated *tenues in auras*.¹ For what says Seneca? *Longum iter per præcepta, breve et efficace per exempla*.² A bad principle is comparatively harmless while it continues to be an abstraction, nor can the general mind comprehend it fully till it is printed in that large type which all men can read at sight, namely, the life and character, the sayings and doings, of particular persons. It is one of the cunningest fetches of Satan, that he never exposes himself directly to our arrows, but, still dodging behind this neighbor or that acquaintance, compels us to wound him through them, if at all. He holds our affections as hostages, the while he patches up a truce with our conscience.

Meanwhile, let us not forget that the aim of the true satirist is not to be severe upon persons, but only upon falsehood, and, as Truth and Falsehood start from the same point, and sometimes even go along together for a little way, his business is to follow the path of the latter after it diverges, and to show her floundering in the bog at the end of it. Truth is quite beyond the reach of satire. There is so brave a simplicity in her, that she can no more be made ridiculous than an oak or a pine. The danger of the satirist is that continual use may deaden his sensibility to the force of language. He becomes more and more liable to strike harder than he knows or intends. He may be careful to put on his boxing-gloves, and yet forget that, the older they grow, the more plainly may the knuckles inside be felt. Moreover, in the heat of contest, the eye is insensibly drawn to the crown of victory, whose tawdry tinsel glitters through that dust of the ring which obscures Truth's wreath of simple leaves. I have sometimes thought that my young friend, Mr. Biglow, needed a monitory hand laid on his arm, — *aliquid sufflaminandus erat*.³ I have never

thought it good husbandry to water the tender plants of reform with *aqua fortis*, yet, where so much is to do in the beds, he were a sorry gardener who should wage a whole day's war with an iron scuffle on those ill weeds that make the garden-walks of life unsightly, when a sprinkle of Attic salt will wither them up. *Est ars etiam maledicendi*,⁴ says Scaliger, and truly it is a hard thing to say where the graceful gentleness of the lamb merges in downright sheepishness. We may conclude with worthy and wise Dr. Fuller, that "one may be a lamb in private wrongs, but in hearing general affronts to goodness they are asses which are not lions."—H. W.]

GUVERNER B.⁵ is a sensible man;

He stays to his home an' looks arter his folks;

He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,

An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes;

But John P.

Robinson⁶ he

Sez he wunt vote fer Guverner B.

My! aint it terrible? Wut shall we du?

We can't never choose him o' course,—
thet 's flat;

Guess we shall hev to come round (don't
you?), 10

An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an' all that;

Fer John P.

Robinson he

Sez he wunt vote fer Guverner B.

General C. is a drefle smart man:

He 's ben on all sides that give places or
pelf;

But consistency still wuz a part of his
plan,—

He's ben true to *one* party,—an' thet is
himself;—

So John P.

Robinson he

Sez he shall vote fer General C. 20

⁴ There is even an art in cursing.

⁵ G. N. Briggs, Governor of Massachusetts, 1844-1851. In 1847, when this poem was written, he was a candidate for reelection on the Whig ticket, and was running against Brigadier-General Caleb Cushing, who at the time was in Mexico. Briggs was elected by a large majority.

⁶ A lawyer of Lowell, Massachusetts, and a prominent Whig, who in this campaign went over to the Democratic side and supported Cushing.

¹ Into thin air.

² Through precept the way is long, through example short and sure.

³ He should be somewhat restrained.

General C. he goes in fer the war;
 He don't vally principle more 'n an old cud;
 Wut did God make us raytional creeturs fer,
 But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an'
 blood?
 So John P.
 Robinson he
 Sez he shall vote fer General C.

We were gittin' on nicely up here to our vil-
 lage,
 With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut
 aint, 30
 We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an'
 pillage,
 An thet eppyletts worn't the best mark of
 a saint;
 But John P.
 Robinson he
 Sez this kind o' thing 's an exploded
 idee.

The side of our country must ollers be took,
 An' Presidunt Polk, you know, *he* is our
 country.
 An' the angel thet writes all our sins in a book
 Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the *per*
contry;
 An' John P. 40
 Robinson he
 Sez this is his view o' the thing to a T.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argimunts
 lies;
 Sez they 're nothin' on airth but jest *fee*,
faw, fum:
 An' thet all this big talk of our destinies
 Is half on it ign'ance, an' t' other half rum;
 But John P.
 Robinson he
 Sez it aint no sech thing; an', of course,
 so must we.

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his life 50
 Thet th' Apostles rigged out in their swal-
 ler-tail coats,
 An' marched round in front of a drum an' a
 fife,
 To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em
 votes;
 But John P.
 Robinson he
 Sez they did n't know everythin' down
 in Judee.

Wal, it 's a marcy we 've gut folks to tell us
 The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters,
 I vow,—
 God sends country lawyers, an' other wise
 fellers,
 To start the world's team wen it gets in a
 slough; 60
 Fer John P.
 Robinson he
 Sez the world 'll go right, ef he hollers
 our Gee!

[The attentive reader will doubtless have perceived in the foregoing poem an allusion to that pernicious sentiment,—“Our country, right or wrong.” It is an abuse of language to call a certain portion of land, much more, certain personages, elevated for the time being to high station, our country. I would not sever nor loosen a single one of those ties by which we are united to the spot of our birth, nor minish by a tittle the respect due to the Magistrate. I love our own Bay State too well to do the one, and as for the other, I have myself for nigh forty years exercised, however unworthily, the function of Justice of the Peace, having been called thereto by the unsolicited kindness of that most excellent man and upright patriot, Caleb Strong. *Patriæ fumus igne alieno luculentior*¹ is best qualified with this,—*Ubi libertas, ibi patria*.² We are inhabitants of two worlds, and owe a double, but not a divided allegiance. In virtue of our clay, this little ball of earth exacts a certain loyalty of us, while, in our capacity as spirits, we are admitted citizens of an invisible and holier fatherland. There is a patriotism of the soul whose claim absolves us from our other and terrene fealty. Our true country is that ideal realm which we represent to ourselves under the names of religion, duty, and the like. Our terrestrial organizations are but far-off approaches to so fair a model, and all they are verily traitors who resist not any attempt to divert them from this their original intendment. When, therefore, one would have us to fling up our caps and shout with the multitude,—“*Our country, however bounded!*” he demands of us that we sacrifice the larger to the less, the higher to the lower, and that we yield to the imaginary claims of a few acres of soil our duty and privilege as liegemen of Truth. Our true country is bounded on the north and the south, on the east and the west, by Justice, and when she oversteps that invisible boundary-line by so much as a hair's-breadth, she ceases to be our mother, and chooses rather to be looked upon *quasi*

¹ The smoke of one's own country is brighter than the flame of a foreign one.

² Where liberty is, there is my country.

noverca.¹ That is a hard choice when our earthly love of country calls upon us to tread one path and our duty points us to another. We must make as noble and becoming an election as did Penelope between Icarius and Ulysses. Veiling our faces, we must take silently the hand of Duty to follow her.

* * * * *

—H. W.]

NO. VI. THE PIOUS EDITOR'S CREED

[At the special instance of Mr. Biglow, I preface the following satire with an extract from a sermon preached during the past summer, from Ezekiel, xxxiv, 2: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel." Since the Sabbath on which this discourse was delivered, the editor of the *Jaalam Independent Blunderbuss* has unaccountably absented himself from our house of worship.

"I know of no so responsible position as that of the public journalist. The editor of our day bears the same relation to his time that the clerk bore to the age before the invention of printing. Indeed, the position which he holds is that which the clergyman should hold even now. But the clergyman chooses to walk off to the extreme edge of the world, and to throw such seed as he has clear over into that darkness which he calls the Next Life. As if *next* did not mean *nearest*, and as if any life were nearer than that immediately present one which boils and eddies all around him at the caucus, the ratification meeting, and the polls! Who taught him to exhort men to prepare for eternity, as for some future era of which the present forms no integral part? The furrow which Time is even now turning runs through the Everlasting, and in that must he plant, or nowhere. Yet he would fain believe and teach that we are *going* to have more of eternity than we have now. This *going* of his is like that of the auctioneer, on which *gone* follows before we have made up our minds to bid,—in which manner, not three months back, I lost an excellent copy of Chappelow on Job. So it has come to pass that the preacher, instead of being a living force, has faded into an emblematic figure at christenings, weddings, and funerals. Or, if he exercise any other function, it is as keeper and feeder of certain theologic dogmas, which, when occasion offers, he unkennels with a *staboy!* 'to bark and bite as 't is their nature to,' whence that reproach of *odium theologicum* has arisen.

"Meanwhile, see what a pulpit the editor mounts daily, sometimes with a congregation of fifty thousand within reach of his voice, and never so much as a nodder, even, among them! And from what a Bible can he choose his text,

—a Bible which needs no translation, and which no priestcraft can shut and clasp from the laity,—the open volume of the world, upon which, with a pen of sunshine or destroying fire, the inspired Present is even now writing the annals of God! Methinks the editor who should understand his calling, and be equal thereto, would truly deserve that title of ποιμὴν λαῶν,² which Homer bestows upon princes. He would be the Moses of our nineteenth century; and whereas the old Sinai, silent now, is but a common mountain stared at by the elegant tourist and crawled over by the hammering geologist, he must find his tables of the new law here among factories and cities in this Wilderness of Sin (Numbers, xxxiii, 12) called Progress of Civilization, and be the captain of our Exodus into the Canaan of a truer social order.

"Nevertheless, our editor will not come so far within even the shadow of Sinai as Mahomet did, but chooses rather to construe Moses by Joe Smith. He takes up the crook, not that the sheep may be fed, but that he may never want a warm woollen suit and a joint of mutton.

"*Immemor, O, fidei, pecorumque oblite tuorum!*³ For which reason I would derive the name *editor* not so much from *edo*, to publish, as from *edo*, to eat, that being the peculiar profession to which he esteems himself called. He blows up the flames of political discord for no other occasion than that he may thereby handily boil his own pot. I believe there are two thousand of these mutton-loving shepherds in the United States, and of these, how many have even the dimmest perception of their immense power, and the duties consequent thereon? Here and there, haply, one. Nine hundred and ninety-nine labor to impress upon the people the great principles of *Tweedledum*, the other nine hundred and ninety-nine preach with equal earnestness the gospel according to *Tweedledee*."—H. W.]

I DU believe in Freedom's cause,
Ez fur away ez Payris is;
I love to see her stick her claws
In them infarnal Phayrisees;
It 's wal enough agin a king
To dror resolves an' triggers,—
But libbaty 's a kind o' thing
Thet don't agree with niggers.

I du believe the people want
A tax on teas an' coffees,
Thet nothin' aint extravygunt,—
Purvidin' I 'm in office;

10

² Shepherd of the people.

³ O, forgetful of honesty, and unheedful of your sheep!

¹ As a stepmother.

Fer I hev loved my country sence
My eye-teeth filled their sockets,
An' Uncle Sam I reverence,
Partic'larly his pockets.

I du believe in *any* plan
O' levyin' the texes,
Ez long ez, like a lumberman,
I git jest wut I axes;
I go free-trade thru thick an' thin,
Because it kind o' rouses
The folks to vote,—an' keeps us in
Our quiet custom-houses.

I du believe it 's wise an' good
To sen' out furrin missions,
Thet is, on sartin understood
An' orthydox conditions;—
I mean nine thousan' dolls. per ann.,
Nine thousan' more fer outfit,
An' me to recommend a man
The place 'ould jest about fit.

I du believe in special ways
O' prayin' an' convartin';
The bread comes back in many days,
An' buttered, tu, fer sartin;
I mean in preyin' till one busts
On wut the party chooses,
An' in convartin' public trusts
To very privit uses.

I du believe hard coin the stuff
Fer 'lectioneers to spout on;
The people 's ollers soft enough
To make hard money out on;
Dear Uncle Sam pervides fer his,
An' gives a good-sized junk to all,—
I don't care *how* hard money is,
Ez long ez mine 's paid punctooal.

I du believe with all my soul
In the gret Press's freedom,
To pint the people to the goal
An' in the traces lead 'em;
Palsied the arm thet forges yokes
At my fat contracts squintin',
An' withered be the nose thet pokes
Inter the gov'ment printin'!

I du believe thet I should give
Wut 's his'n unto Cæsar,

Fer it's by him I move an' live,
Frum him my bread an' cheese air;
I du believe thet all o' me
Doth bear his superscription,—
Will, conscience, honor, honesty,
An things o' thet description.

I du believe in prayer an' praise
To him thet hez the grantin'
O' jobs,—in every thin' thet pays,
But most of all in CANTIN';
This doth my cup with marcies fill,
This lays all thought o' sin to rest,—
I *don't* believe in princerple,
But O, I *du* in interest.

I du believe in bein' this
Or thet, ez it may happen
One way or t' other hendiest is
To ketch the people nappin';
It aint by princerples nor men
My preudunt course is steadied,—
I scent wich pays the best, an' then
Go into it baldheaded.

I du believe thet holdin' slaves
Comes nat'ral to a Presidunt,
Let 'lone the rowdedow it saves
To hev a wal-broke precedunt;
Fer any office, small or gret,
I could n't ax with no face,
'uthout I 'd ben, thru dry an' wet,
Th' unrizzest kind o' doughface.

I du believe wutever trash
'll keep the people in blindness,—
Thet we the Mexicuns can thrash
Right inter brotherly kindness,
Thet bombshells, grape, an' powder 'n' ball
Air good-will's strongest magnets,
Thet peace, to make it stick at all,
Must be druv in with bagnets.

In short, I firmly du believe
In Humbug generally,
Fer it 's a thing thet I perceive
To hev a solid vally;
This heth my faithful shepherd ben,
In pasturs sweet heth led me,
An' this 'll keep the people green
To feed ez they hev fed me.

READER! walk up at once (it will soon be too late)
and buy at a perfectly ruinous rate

FABLE FOR CRITICS:

OR, BETTER,

(I like, as a thing that the reader's first fancy may strike,
an old-fashioned title-page,
such as presents a tabular view of the volume's contents,)

A GLANCE

AT A FEW OF OUR LITERARY PROGENIES

(Mrs. Malaprop's word)

FROM

THE TUB OF DIOGENES;

A VOCAL AND MUSICAL MEDLEY,

THAT IS,

A SERIES OF JOKES

By A Wonderful Quiz,

who accompanies himself with a rub-a-dub-dub, full of spirit and grace,
on the top of the tub.

Set forth in October, the 31st day,
In the year '48, G. P. Putnam, Broadway

It being the commonest mode of procedure, I
premise a few candid remarks

TO THE READER:—

This trifle, begun to please only myself and my own private fancy, was laid on the shelf. But some friends, who had seen it, induced me, by

¹ Written in 1847 and 1848. Lowell explained, in a later edition of the *Fable*: "This *jeu d'esprit* was extemporized, I may fairly say, so rapidly was it written, purely for my own amusement and with no thought of publication. I sent daily installments of it to a friend in New York, the late Charles F. Briggs. He urged me to let it be printed, and I at last consented to its anonymous publication. The secret was kept till after several persons had laid claim to its authorship." From letters written in 1847 and 1848 to Briggs it would appear that Lowell did write the *Fable* with the intention of publishing it at once, and that he felt confident of its success with the public. His confidence was justified, and the *Fable*, like *The Biglow Papers*, has kept its interest better than many of his more formal poems. Lowell's biographer (H. E. Scudder) has called attention to the fact that Leigh Hunt's *Feast of the Poets* had been included in a volume of Hunt's poems published in Boston in 1844. "The measure is the same. Phæbus Apollo also introduces the poets, though Hunt's scheme is more deliberate than Lowell's, and there is the same disposition to make use of unexpected rhymes."

dint of saying they liked it, to put it in print. That is, having come to that very conclusion, I asked their advice when 'twould make no confusion. For though (in the gentlest of ways) they had hinted it was scarce worth the while, I should doubtless have printed it.

I began it, intending a Fable, a frail, slender thing, rhyme-ywinged, with a sting in its tail. But, by addings and alterings not previously planned, digressions chance-hatched, like birds' eggs in the sand, and dawdlings to suit every whimsey's demand (always freeing the bird which I held in my hand, for the two perched, perhaps out of reach, in the tree),—it grew by degrees to the size which you see. I was like the old woman that carried the calf, and my neighbors, like hers, no doubt, wonder and laugh; and when, my strained arms with their grown burthen full, I call it my Fable, they call it a bull.

Having scrawled at full gallop (as far as that goes) in a style that is neither good verse nor bad prose, and being a person whom nobody knows, some people will say I am rather more free with my readers than it is becoming to be, that I seem to expect them to wait on my leisure in following wherever I wander at pleasure, that, in short, I take more than a young author's lawful ease, and laugh in a queer way so like Mephistopheles, that the Public will doubt, as they grope through my rhythm, if in truth I am making fun of them or with them.

So the excellent Public is hereby assured that the sale of my book is already secured. For there is not a poet throughout the whole land but will purchase a copy or two out of hand, in the fond expectation of being amused in it, by seeing his betters cut up and abused in it. Now, I find, by a pretty exact calculation, there are something like ten thousand bards in the nation, of that special variety whom the Review and Magazine critics call *lofty* and *true*, and about thirty thousand (*this* tribe is increasing) of the kinds who are termed *full of promise* and *pleasing*. The Public will see by a glance at this schedule, that they cannot expect me to be over-sedulous about courting *them*, since it seems I have got enough fuel made sure of for boiling my pot.

As for such of our poets as find not their names mentioned once in my pages, with praises or blames, let them SEND IN THEIR CARDS, without further DELAY, to my friend G. P. PUTNAM, Esquire, in Broadway, where a LIST will be kept with the strictest regard to the day and the hour of receiving the card. Then, taking them up as I chance to have time (that is, if their names can be twisted in rhyme), I will honestly give each his PROPER POSITION, at the rate of ONE AUTHOR to each NEW EDITION. Thus a PREMIUM is offered sufficiently HIGH (as the magazines say when they tell their best lie) to induce bards to CLUB

their resources and buy the balance of every edition, until they have all of them fairly been run through the mill.

One word to such readers (judicious and wise) as read books with something behind the mere eyes, of whom in the country, perhaps, there are two, including myself, gentle reader, and you. All the characters sketched in this slight *jeu d'esprit*, though, it may be, they seem, here and there, rather free, and drawn from a somewhat too cynical standpoint, are *meant* to be faithful, for that is the grand point, and none but an owl would feel sore at a rub from a jester who tells you, without any subterfuge, that he sits in Diogenes' tub.¹

A FABLE FOR CRITICS

PHÆBUS, sitting one day in a laurel-tree's shade,
Was reminded of Daphne, of whom it was made,
For the god being one day too warm in his wooing,
She took to the tree to escape his pursuing;
Be the cause what it might, from his offers she shrunk,
And Ginevra-like, shut herself up in a trunk;
And, though 'twas a step into which he had driven her,
He somehow or other had never forgiven her;
Her memory he nursed as a kind of a tonic,
Something bitter to chew when he'd play the Byronic, 10
And I can't count the obstinate nymphs that he brought over
By a strange kind of smile he put on when he thought of her.
"My case is like Dido's," he sometimes remarked;
"When I last saw my love, she was fairly embarked
In a laurel, as *she* thought—but (ah, how Fate mocks!)
She has found it by this time a very bad box;
Let hunters from me take this saw when they need it,—
You're not always sure of your game when you've treed it.
Just conceive such a change taking place in one's mistress!
What romance would be left?—who can flatter or kiss trees? 20

And, for mercy's sake, how could one keep up a dialogue
With a dull wooden thing that will live and will die a log,—
Not to say that the thought would forever intrude
That you've less chance to win her the more she is wood?
Ah! it went to my heart, and the memory still grieves,
To see those loved graces all taking their leaves;
Those charms beyond speech, so enchanting but now,
As they left me forever, each making its bough!
If her tongue *had* a tang sometimes more than was right,
Her new bark is worse than ten times her old bite." 30

Now, Daphne—before she was happily treeified—
Over all other blossoms the lily had deified,
And when she expected the god on a visit ('Twas before he had made his intentions explicit,
Some buds she arranged with a vast deal of care,
To look as if artlessly twined in her hair,
Where they seemed, as he said, when he paid his addresses,
Like the day breaking through the long night of her tresses;
So whenever he wished to be quite irresistible,
Like a man with eight trumps in his hand at a whist-table 40
(I feared me at first that the rhyme was untwistable,
Though I might have lugged in an allusion to Cristabel),—
He would take up a lily, and gloomily look in it,
As I shall at the——, when they cut up my book in it.

Well, here, after all the bad rhyme I've been spinning,
I've got back at last to my story's beginning:
Sitting there, as I say, in the shade of his mistress,
As dull as a volume of old Chester mysteries,
Or as those puzzling specimens which, in old histories,

¹ Additional remarks were prefixed to the second edition, but they are not here reprinted.

We read of his verses—the Oracles,
 namely 50
 (I wonder the Greeks should have swallowed
 them tamely,
 For one might bet safely whatever he has to
 risk,
 They were laid at his door by some ancient
 Miss Asterisk,
 And so dull that the men who retailed them
 out-doors
 Got the ill name of augurs, because they were
 bores),—
 First, he mused what the animal substance
 or herb is
 Would induce a mustache, for you know he's
imberbis,¹
 Then he shuddered to think how his youth-
 ful position
 Was assailed by the age of his son the phy-
 sician;
 At some poems he glanced, had been sent to
 him lately, 60
 And the meter and sentiment puzzled him
 greatly;
 "Mehercle! I'd make such proceeding felo-
 nious,—
 Have they all of them slept in the cave of
 Trophonius?
 Look well to your seat, 'tis like taking an
 airing
 On a corduroy road, and that out of repairing;
 It leads one, 'tis true, through the primitive
 forest,
 Grand natural features, but then one has no
 rest;
 You just catch a glimpse of some ravishing
 distance,
 When a jolt puts the whole of it out of exist-
 ence,—
 Why not use their ears, if they happen to
 have any?" 70
 —Here the laurel-leaves murmured the name
 of poor Daphne.

"O, weep with me, Daphne," he sighed,
 "for you know it's
 A terrible thing to be pestered with poets!
 But, alas, she is dumb, and the proverb holds
 good,
 She never will cry till she's out of the wood!
 What wouldn't I give if I never had known
 of her?"

'Twere a kind of relief had I something to
 groan over:
 If I had but some letters of hers, now, to
 toss over,
 I might turn for the nonce a Byronic philos-
 opher,
 And bewitch all the flats by bemoaning the
 loss of her. 80
 One needs something tangible, though, to
 begin on,—
 A loom, as it were, for the fancy to spin on;
 What boots all your grist? it can never be
 ground
 Till a breeze makes the arms of the windmill
 go round
 (Or if 'tis a water-mill, alter the metaphor,
 And say it won't stir, save the wheel be well
 wet afore,
 Or lug in some stuff about water "so dream-
 ily,"—
 It is not a metaphor, though, 'tis a simile);
 A lily, perhaps, would set *my* mill a-going,
 For just at this season, I think, they are
 blowing. 90
 Here, somebody, fetch one; not very far hence
 They're in bloom by the score, 'tis but climb-
 ing a fence;
 There's a poet hard by, who does nothing
 but fills his
 Whole garden, from one end to t'other, with
 lilies;
 A very good plan, were it not for satiety,
 One longs for a weed here and there, for
 variety;
 Though a weed is no more than a flower in
 disguise,
 Which is seen through at once, if love give a
 man eyes."

Now there happened to be among Phœ-
 bus's followers,
 A gentleman, one of the omnivorous swal-
 lowers, 100
 Who bolt every book that comes out of the
 press,
 Without the least question of larger or less,
 Whose stomachs are strong at the expense of
 their head,—
 For reading new books is like eating new
 bread,
 One can bear it at first, but by gradual steps
 he
 Is brought to death's door of a mental dys-
 pepsy.

¹ Beardless.

On a previous stage of existence, our Hero
 Had ridden outside, with the glass below zero;
 He had been, 'tis a fact you may safely rely
 on,
 Of a very old stock a most eminent scion,—
 A stock all fresh quacks their fierce boluses
 ply on, 111
 Who stretch the new boots Earth's unwilling
 to try on,
 Whom humbugs of all shapes and sorts keep
 their eye on,
 Whose hair's in the mortar of every new
 Zion,
 Who, when whistles are dear, go directly and
 buy one,
 Who think slavery a crime that we must not
 say fie on,
 Who hunt, if they e'er hunt at all, with the
 lion
 (Though they hunt lions also, whenever they
 spy one),
 Who contrive to make every good fortune a
 wry one,
 And at last choose the hard bed of honor to
 die on, 120
 Whose pedigree, traced to earth's earliest
 years,
 Is longer than anything else but their ears;—
 In short, he was sent into life with the wrong
 key,
 He unlocked the door, and stepped forth a
 poor donkey.
 Though kicked and abused by his bipedal
 betters,
 Yet he filled no mean place in the kingdom of
 letters;
 Far happier than many a literary hack,
 He bore only paper-mill rags on his back
 (For it makes a vast difference which side the
 mill
 One expends on the paper his labor and
 skill); 130
 So, when his soul waited a new transmigration,
 And Destiny balanced 'twixt this and that
 station,
 Not having much time to expend upon
 bothers,
 Remembering he'd had some connection
 with authors,
 And considering his four legs had grown paralytic,—
 She set him on two, and he came forth a
 critic.

Through his babyhood no kind of pleasure
 he took
 In any amusement but tearing a book;
 For him there was no intermediate stage
 From babyhood up to straight-laced middle
 age; 140
 There were years when he didn't wear coat-
 tails behind,
 But a boy he could never be rightly defined;
 Like the Irish Good Folk, though in length
 scarce a span,
 From the womb he came gravely, a little old
 man;
 While other boys' trousers demanded the toil
 Of the motherly fingers on all kinds of soil,
 Red, yellow, brown, black, clayey, gravelly,
 loamy,
 He sat in the corner and read *Viri Romæ*.
 He never was known to unbend or to revel
 once
 In base, marbles, hockey, or kick up the devil
 once; 150
 He was just one of those who excite the
 benevolence
 Of your old prigs who sound the soul's depths
 with a ledger,
 And are on the lookout for some young men
 to "edger-
 cate," as they call it, who won't be too costly,
 And who'll afterward take to the ministry
 mostly;
 Who always wear spectacles, always look
 bilious,
 Always keep on good terms with each *mater-*
 familias
 Throughout the whole parish, and manage to
 rear
 Ten boys like themselves, on four hundred a
 year:
 Who, fulfilling in turn the same fearful con-
 ditions, 160
 Either preach through their noses, or go upon
 missions.

In this way our Hero got safely to college,
 Where he bolted alike both his commons and
 knowledge;
 A reading-machine, always wound up and
 going,
 He mastered whatever was not worth the
 knowing,
 Appeared in a gown, and a vest of black
 satin,
 To spout such a Gothic oration in Latin

That Tully could never have made out a
word in it
(Though himself was the model the author
preferred in it),
And grasping the parchment which gave him
in fee 170
All the mystic and-so-forths contained in
A.B.,
He was launched (life is always compared to
a sea)
With just enough learning, and skill for the
using it,
To prove he'd a brain, by forever confusing it.
So worthy St. Benedict, piously burning
With the holiest zeal against secular learning,
Nesciensque scienter, as writers express it,
Indoctusque sapienter a Roma recessit.¹

'Twould be endless to tell you the things
that he knew,
Each a separate fact, undeniably true, 180
But with him or each other they'd nothing to
do;
No power of combining, arranging, discern-
ing,
Digested the masses he learned into learning;
There was one thing in life he had practical
knowledge for
(And this, you will think, he need scarce go
to college for),—
Not a deed would he do, nor a word would he
utter,
Till he'd weighed its relations to plain bread
and butter.
When he left Alma Mater, he practiced his
wits
In compiling the journals' historical bits,—
Of shops broken open, men falling in fits, 190
Great fortunes in England bequeathed to
poor printers,
And cold spells, the coldest for many past
winters,—
Then, rising by industry, knack, and address,
Got notices up for an unbiased press,
With a mind so well poised, it seemed equally
made for
Applause or abuse, just which chanced to be
paid for:
From this point his progress was rapid and
sure,
To the post of a regular heavy reviewer.

¹ Knowingly ignorant and wisely unlearned departed
from Rome.

And here I must say he wrote excellent
articles
On Hebraical points, or the force of Greek
particles; 200
They filled up the space nothing else was pre-
pared for,
And nobody read that which nobody cared
for;
If any old book reached a fiftieth edition,
He could fill forty pages with safe erudi-
tion:
He could gauge the old books by the old set
of rules,
And his very old nothings pleased very old
fools;
But give him a new book, fresh out of the
heart,
And you put him at sea without compass or
chart,—
His blunders aspired to the rank of an
art;
For his lore was engraft, something foreign
that grew in him, 210
Exhausting the sap of the native and true in
him,
So that when a man came with a soul that
was new in him,
Carving new forms of truth out of Nature's
old granite,
New and old at their birth, like Le Verrier's
planet,
Which, to get a true judgment, themselves
must create
In the soul of their critic the measure and
weight,
Being rather themselves a fresh standard of
grace,
To compute their own judge, and assign him
his place,
Our reviewer would crawl all about it and
round it,
And, reporting each circumstance just as he
found it, 220
Without the least malice,—his record would
be
Profoundly æsthetic as that of a flea,
Which, supping on Wordsworth, should print,
for our sakes,
Recollections of nights with the Bard of the
Lakes,
Or, lodged by an Arab guide, ventured to
render a
Comprehensive account of the ruins at Den-
derah.

As I said, he was never precisely unkind,
 The defect in his brain was just absence of
 mind;
 If he boasted, 'twas simply that he was self-
 made,
 A position which I, for one, never gain-
 said, 230
 My respect for my Maker supposing a skill
 In His works which our Hero would answer
 but ill;
 And I trust that the mold which he used may
 be cracked, or he,
 Made bold by success, may enlarge his phyl-
 actery,
 And set up a kind of a man-manufactory,—
 An event which I shudder to think about,
 seeing
 That Man is a moral, accountable being.

He meant well enough, but was still in the
 way,
 As dunces still are, let them be where they
 may;
 Indeed, they appear to come into exist-
 ence 240
 To impede other folks with their awkward
 assistance;
 If you set up a dunce on the very North pole
 All alone with himself, I believe, on my soul,
 He'd manage to get betwixt somebody's
 shins,
 And pitch him down bodily, all in his sins,
 To the grave polar bears sitting round on the
 ice,
 All shortening their grace, to be in for a slice;
 Or, if he found nobody else there to pother,
 Why, one of his legs would just trip up the
 other,
 For there's nothing we read of in torture's
 inventions, 250
 Like a well-meaning dunce, with the best of
 intentions.

A terrible fellow to meet in society,
 Not the toast that he buttered was ever so
 dry at tea;
 There he'd sit at the table and stir in his
 sugar,
 Crouching close for a spring, all the while,
 like a cougar;
 Be sure of your facts, of your measures and
 weights,
 Of your time,—he's as fond as an Arab of
 dates;

You'll be telling, perhaps, in your comical
 way,
 Of something you've seen in the course of the
 day;
 And, just as you're tapering out the conclu-
 sion, 260
 You venture an ill-fated classic allusion,—
 The girls have all got their laughs ready,
 when, whack!
 The cougar comes down on your thunder-
 struck back!
 You had left out a comma,—your Greek's
 put in joint,
 And pointed at cost of your story's whole
 point.
 In the course of the evening you find chance
 for certain
 Soft speeches to Anne, in the shade of the
 curtain:
 You tell her your heart can be likened to *one*
 flower,
 "And that, O most charming of women's the
 sunflower,
 Which turns"—here a clear nasal voice, to
 your terror, 270
 From outside the curtain, says, "That's all
 an error."
 As for him, he's—no matter, he never grew
 tender,
 Sitting after a ball, with his feet on the fender,
 Shaping somebody's sweet features out of
 cigar smoke
 (Though he'd willingly grant you that such
 doings are smoke);
 All women he damns with *mutabile semper*,¹
 And if ever he felt something like love's dis-
 temper,
 'Twas tow'rds a young lady who spoke
 ancient Mexican,
 And assisted her father in making a lexicon;
 Though I recollect hearing him get quite
 ferocious 280
 About Mary Clausum, the mistress of Gro-
 tius,²
 Or something of that sort,—but, no more to
 bore ye
 With character-painting, I'll turn to my
 story.

* * * * *

¹ Always changeable.

² *Mare Clausum* (The Enclosure of the Sea) is the title of a treatise published in 1635 by John Selden, in answer to Hugo Grotius's *Mare Liberum* (The Freedom of the Sea).

"But stay, here comes Tityrus Griswold,¹
and leads on
The flocks whom he first plucks alive, and
then feeds on,—
A loud-cackling swarm, in whose feathers
warm-dressed,
He goes for as perfect a—swan as the rest.

"There comes Emerson first, whose rich
words, every one,
Are like gold nails in temples to hang trophies
on,
Whose prose is grand verse, while his verse,
the lord knows, 290
Is some of it pr— No, 't is not even prose;
I'm speaking of meters; some poems have
welled
From those rare depths of soul that have
ne'er been excelled;
They're not epics, but that doesn't matter a
pin,
In creating, the only hard thing's to begin;
A grass-blade's no easier to make than an
oak;
If you've once found the way, you've
achieved the grand stroke;
In the worst of his poems are mines of rich
matter,
But thrown in a heap with a crush and a
clatter;
Now it is not one thing nor another alone 300
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,
The something pervading, uniting the whole,
The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,
So that just in removing this trifle or that,
you
Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the
statue;
Roots, wood, bark, and leaves singly perfect
may be,
But, clapped hodge-podge together, they
don't make a tree.

"But to come back to Emerson (whom, by
the way,
I believe we left waiting),—his is, we may
say,
A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders,
whose range 310
Has Olympus for one pole, for t'other the
Exchange;

¹ R. W. Griswold, compiler of three anthologies, *The Poets and Poetry of America* (1842), *The Prose Writers of America* (1847), and *The Female Poets of America* (1848).

He seems, to my thinking (although I'm
afraid
The comparison must, long ere this, have been
made),
A Plotinus-Montaigne, where the Egyptian's
gold mist
And the Gascon's shrewd wit cheek-by-jowl
coexist;
All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he's
got
To I don't (nor they either) exactly know
what;
For though he builds glorious temples, 'tis odd
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.
'Tis refreshing to old-fashioned people like
me 320
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,
In whose mind all creation is duly respected
As parts of himself—just a little projected;
And who's willing to worship the stars and
the sun,
A convert to—nothing but Emerson.
So perfect a balance there is in his head,
That he talks of things sometimes as if they
were dead;
Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that
sort,
He looks at as merely ideas; in short,
As if they were fossils stuck round in a cab-
inet, 330
Of such vast extent that our earth's a mere
dab in it;
Composed just as he is inclined to conjecture
her,
Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine
parts pure lecturer;
You are filled with delight at his clear demon-
stration,
Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the occa-
sion,
With the quiet precision of science he'll sort
'em
But you can't help suspecting the whole a
post mortem.

"There are persons, mole-blind to the
soul's make and style,
Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and Car-
lyle;
To compare him with Plato would be vastly
fairer, 340
Carlyle's the more burly, but E. is the rarer;
He sees fewer objects, but clearer, trulier,
If C.'s as original, E.'s more peculiar;

That he's more of a man you might say of the
one,

Of the other he's more of an Emerson;
C.'s the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb,—
E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim;
The one's two thirds Norseman, the other
half Greek,

Where the one's most abounding, the other's
to seek;

C.'s generals require to be seen in the
mass.— 350

E.'s specialties gain if enlarged by the glass;
C. gives nature and God his own fits of the
blues,

And rims common-sense things with mystical
hues,—

E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,
And looks coolly around him with sharp
common-sense;

C. shows you how every-day matters unite
With the dim transdiurnal recesses of
night,—

While E., in a plain, preternatural way,
Makes mysteries matters of mere every day;
C. draws all his characters quite *à la*
Fuseli,— 360

Not sketching their bundles of muscles and
thews illy,

He paints with a brush so untamed and
profuse,

They seem nothing but bundles of muscles
and thews;

E. is rather like Flaxman, lines strait and
severe,

And a colorless outline, but full, round, and
clear;—

To the men he thinks worthy he frankly
accords

The design of a white marble statue in
words.

C. labors to get at the center, and then
Take a reckoning from there of his actions
and men;

E. calmly assumes the said center as
granted, 370

And, given himself, has whatever is wanted.

"He has imitators in scores, who omit
No part of the man but his wisdom and
wit,—

Who go carefully o'er the sky-blue of his
brain,

And when he has skimmed it once, skim
it again;

If at all they resemble him, you may be sure
it is

Because their shoals mirror his mists and
obscurities,

As a mud-puddle seems deep as heaven for
a minute,

While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected
within it.

* * * * *

"There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and
as dignified, 380

As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is
ignified,

Save when by reflection 'tis kindled o'
nights

With a semblance of flame by the chill
Northern Lights.

He may rank (Griswold says so) first bard
of your nation

(There's no doubt that he stands in supreme
ice-olation),

Your topmost Parnassus he may set his heel
on,

But no warm applauses come, peal following
peal on,—

He's too smooth and too polished to hang
any zeal on:

Unqualified merits, I'll grant, if you choose,
he has 'em,

But he lacks the one merit of kindling
enthusiasm; 390

If he stir you at all, it is just, on my soul,
Like being stirred up with the very North
Pole.

"He is very nice reading in summer, but
inter

Nos, we don't want *extra* freezing in winter;
Take him up in the depth of July, my
advice is,

When you feel an Egyptian devotion to ices.
But, deduct all you can, there's enough
that's right good in him,

He has a true soul for field, river, and wood
in him;

And his heart, in the midst of brick walls,
or where'er it is,

Glows, softens, and thrills with the tenderest
charities— 400

To you mortals that delve in this trade-
ridden planet?

No, to old Berkshire's hills, with their
limestone and granite.

If you're one who *in loco* (add *foco* here)
desipis,¹
 You will get of his outermost heart (as I
 guess) a piece;
 But you'd get deeper down if you came as
 a precipice,
 And would break the last seal of its inward-
 est fountain,
 If you only could palm yourself off for a
 mountain.
 Mr. Quivis, or somebody quite as dis-
 cerning,
 Some scholar who's hourly expecting his
 learning,
 Calls B. the American Wordsworth; but
 Wordsworth 410
 May be rated at more than your whole
 tuneful herd's worth.
 No, don't be absurd, he's an excellent
 Bryant;
 But, my friends, you'll endanger the life
 of your client,
 By attempting to stretch him up into a
 giant:
 If you choose to compare him, I think there
 are two per-
 sons fit for a parallel—Thompson and
 Cowper;²
 I don't mean exactly,—there's something
 of each,
 There's T.'s love of nature, C.'s penchant
 to preach;
 Just mix up their minds so that C.'s spice
 of craziness
 Shall balance and neutralize T.'s turn for
 laziness, 420
 And it gives you a brain cool, quite friction-
 less, quiet,
 Whose internal police nips the buds of all
 riot,—
 A brain like a permanent strait-jacket put
 on
 The heart that strives vainly to burst off a
 button,—

¹ Who indulges in trifling. The term *Locofoco* was applied about 1835 to members of the Democratic party in New York who opposed the granting of monopolistic charters. Later it was applied to any Democrat.

² To demonstrate quickly and easily how per-
 versely absurd 'tis to sound this name *Cowper*,
 As people in general call him named *super*,
 I remark that he rhymes it himself with horse-
 trooper.
 (Lowell's note.)

A brain which, without being slow or
 mechanic,
 Does more than a larger less drilled, more
 volcanic;
 He's a Cowper condensed, with no craziness
 bitten,
 And the advantage that Wordsworth before
 him had written.
 "But, my dear little bardlings, don't
 prick up your ears
 Nor suppose I would rank you and Bryant
 as peers; 430
 If I call him an iceberg, I don't mean to say
 There is nothing in that which is grand in
 its way;
 He is almost the one of your poets that
 knows
 How much grace, strength, and dignity lie
 in Repose;
 If he sometimes fall short, he is too wise
 to mar
 His thought's modest fullness by going too
 far;
 'Twould be well if your authors should all
 make a trial
 Of what virtue there is in severe self-denial,
 And measure their writings by Hesiod's
 staff,
 Which teaches that all has less value than
 half. 440
 "There is Whittier, whose swelling and
 vehement heart
 Strains the strait-breasted drab of the
 Quaker apart,
 And reveals the live Man, still supreme
 and erect,
 Underneath the bemummying wrappers of
 sect;
 There was ne'er a man born who had more
 of the swing
 Of the true lyric bard and all that kind of
 thing;
 And his failures arise (though he seem not
 to know it)
 From the very same cause that has made
 him a poet,—
 A fervor of mind which knows no separation
 'Twixt simple excitement and pure inspi-
 ration, 450
 As my Pythoness erst sometimes erred from
 not knowing
 If 'twere I or mere wind through her tripod
 was blowing;

Let his mind once get head in its favorite
direction
And the torrent of verse bursts the dams of
reflection,
While, borne with the rush of the meter
along,
The poet may chance to go right or go
wrong,
Content with the whirl and delirium of
song;
Then his grammar's not always correct, nor
his rhymes,
And he's prone to repeat his own lyrics
sometimes,
Not his best, though, for those are struck
off at white-heats 460
When the heart in his breast like a trip-
hammer beats,
And can ne'er be repeated again any more
Than they could have been carefully plotted
before:
Like old what's-his-name there at the
battle of Hastings
(Who, however, gave more than mere
rhythmical bastings),
Our Quaker leads off metaphorical fights
For reform and whatever they call human
rights,
Both singing and striking in front of the
war,
And hitting his foes with the mallet of
Thor;
Anne haec, one exclaims, on beholding his
knocks, 470
Vestis filii tui,¹ O leather-clad Fox?
Can that be thy son, in the battle's mid
din,
Preaching brotherly love and then driving
it in
To the brain of the tough old Goliath of sin,
With the smoothest of pebbles from Castaly's
spring
Impressed on his hard moral sense with a
sling?

"All honor and praise to the right-
hearted bard
Who was true to The Voice when such
service was hard,
Who himself was so free he dared sing for
the slave
When to look but a protest in silence was
brave; 480

¹ Can this be the vesture of your son?

All honor and praise to the women and men
Who spoke out for the dumb and the down-
trodden then!
It needs not to name them, already for each
I see History preparing the statue and
niche;
They were harsh, but shall *you* be so shocked
at hard words
Who have beaten your pruning-hooks up
into swords,
Whose rewards and hurrahs men are surer
to gain
By the reaping of men and of women than
grain?
Why should *you* stand aghast at their fierce
wordy war, if
You scalp one another for Bank or for
Tariff? 490
Your calling them cut-throats and knaves
all day long
Doesn't prove that the use of hard language
is wrong;
While the World's heart beats quicker to
think of such men
As signed Tyranny's doom with a bloody
steel-pen,
While on Fourth-of-Julys beardless orators
fright one
With hints at Harmodius and Aristogeiton,
You need not look shy at your sisters and
brothers
Who stab with sharp words for the freedom
of others;—
No, a wreath, twine a wreath for the loyal
and true
Who, for sake of the many, dared stand
with the few, 500
Not of blood-spattered laurel for enemies
braved,
But of broad, peaceful oak-leaves for
citizens saved!

* * * * *

"There is Hawthorne, with genius so
shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength
that is there;
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,
So earnest, so graceful, so lithe, and so fleet,
Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet;
'Tis as if a rough oak that for ages had
stood,
With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of
the wood,

Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and
scathe, 510
With a single anemone trembly and rathe;
His strength is so tender, his wildness so
meek,
That a suitable parallel sets one to seek,—
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan
Tieck;
When Nature was shaping him, clay was
not granted
For making so full-sized a man as she
wanted,
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared
From some finer-grained stuff for a woman
prepared,
And she could not have hit a more excellent
plan
For making him fully and perfectly man. 520
The success of her scheme gave her so much
delight,
That she tried it again, shortly after, in
Dwight;
Only, while she was kneading and shaping
the clay,
She sang to her work in her sweet childish
way,
And found, when she'd put the last touch
to his soul,
That the music had somehow got mixed
with the whole.

“Here's Cooper, who's written six volumes
to show
He's as good as a lord: well, let's grant
that he's so;
If a person prefer that description of praise,
Why, a coronet's certainly cheaper than
bays; 530
But he need take no pains to convince us
he's not
(As his enemies say) the American Scott.
Choose any twelve men, and let C. read
aloud
That one of his novels of which he's most
proud,
And I'd lay any bet that, without ever
quitting
Their box, they'd be all, to a man, for
acquitting.
He has drawn you one character, though,
that is new,
One wildflower he's plucked that is wet with
the dew

Of this fresh Western world, and, the thing
not to mince,
He has done naught but copy it ill ever
since; 540
His Indians, with proper respect be it
said,
Are just Natty Bumpo, daubed over with
red,
And his very Long Toms are the same
useful Nat,
Rigged up in duck pants and a sou'-wester
hat
(Though once in a Coffin, a good chance
was found
To have slipped the old fellow away under
ground).
All his other men-figures are clothes upon
sticks,
The *dernière chemise* of a man in a fix
(As a captain besieged, when his garrison's
small,
Sets up caps upon poles to be seen o'er the
wall); 550
And the women he draws from one model
don't vary,
All sappy as maples and flat as a prairie.
When a character's wanted, he goes to the
task
As a cooper would do in composing a
cask;
He picks out the staves, of their qualities
heedful,
Just hoops them together as tight as is
needful,
And, if the best fortune should crown the
attempt, he
Has made at the most something wooden and
empty.

“Don't suppose I would underrate
Cooper's abilities;
If I thought you'd do that, I should feel
very ill at ease; 560
The men who have given to *one* character
life
And objective existence are not very rife;
You may number them all, both prose-
writers and singers,
Without overrunning the bounds of your
fingers,
And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker
Than Adams the parson or Primrose the
vicar.

"There is one thing in Cooper I like, too,
 and that is
 That on manners he lectures his country-
 men gratis;
 Not precisely so either, because, for a
 rarity,
 He is paid for his tickets in unpopularity. 570
 Now he may overcharge his American
 pictures,
 But you'll grant there's a good deal of truth
 in his strictures;
 And I honor the man who is willing to
 sink
 Half his present repute for the freedom to
 think,
 And, when he has thought, be his cause
 strong or weak,
 Will risk t'other half for the freedom to
 speak,
 Caring naught for what vengeance the mob
 has in store,
 Let that mob be the upper ten thousand or
 lower.

"There are truths you Americans need
 to be told,
 And it never'll refute them to swagger and
 scold; 580
 John Bull, looking o'er the Atlantic, in
 choler
 At your aptness for trade, says you worship
 the dollar;
 But to scorn such eye-dollar-try's what very
 few do,
 And John goes to that church as often as
 you do.
 No matter what John says, don't try to
 outcrow him,
 'Tis enough to go quietly on and outgrow
 him;
 Like most fathers, Bull hates to see Number
 One
 Displacing himself in the mind of his son,
 And detests the same faults in himself he'd
 neglected
 When he sees them again in his child's glass
 reflected; 590
 To love one another you're too like by
 half;
 If he is a bull, you're a pretty stout calf,
 And tear your own pasture for naught but
 to show
 What a nice pair of horns you're beginning
 to grow.

"There are one or two things I should just
 like to hint,
 For you don't often get the truth told you
 in print;
 The most of you (this is what strikes all
 beholders)
 Have a mental and physical stoop in the
 shoulders;
 Though you ought to be free as the winds
 and the waves,
 You've the gait and the manners of run-
 away slaves; 600
 Though you brag of your New World, you
 don't half believe in it;
 And as much of the Old as is possible weave
 in it;
 Your goddess of freedom, a tight, buxom
 girl,
 With lips like a cherry and teeth like a
 pearl,
 With eyes bold as Herë's, and hair floating
 free,
 And full of the sun as the spray of the sea,
 Who can sing at a husking or romp at a
 shearing,
 Who can trip through the forests alone
 without fearing,
 Who can drive home the cows with a song
 through the grass,
 Keeps glancing aside into Europe's cracked
 glass, 610
 Hides her red hands in gloves, pinches up
 her lithe waist,
 And makes herself wretched with trans-
 marine taste;
 She loses her fresh country charm when she
 takes
 Any mirror except her own rivers and lakes.

"You steal Englishmen's books and think
 Englishmen's thought,
 With their salt on her tail your wild eagle
 is caught;
 Your literature suits its each whisper and
 motion
 To what will be thought of it over the
 ocean;
 The cast clothes of Europe your statesman-
 ship tries
 And mumbles again the old blarneys and
 lies;— 620
 Forget Europe wholly, your veins throb
 with blood,
 To which the dull current in hers is but mud;

Let her sneer, let her say your experiment
 fails,
 In her voice there's a tremble e'en now while
 she rails,
 And your shore will soon be in the nature
 of things
 Covered thick with gilt drift-wood of cast-
 away kings,
 Where alone, as it were in a Longfellow's
Wail,
 Her fugitive pieces will find themselves
 safe.
 O my friends, thank your god, if you have
 one, that he
 'Twixt the Old World and you set the gulf
 of a sea; 630
 Be strong-backed, brown-handed, upright
 as your pines,
 By the scale of a hemisphere shape your
 designs,
 Be true to yourselves and this new nine-
 teenth age,
 As a statue by Powers, or a picture by Page,
 Plough, sail, forge, build, carve, paint, make
 all over new,
 To your own New-World instincts contrive
 to be true,
 Keep your ears open wide to the Future's
 first call,
 Be whatever you will, but yourselves first
 of all,
 Stand fronting the dawn on Toil's heaven-
 scaling peaks,
 And become my new race of more practical
 Greeks. 640
 Hem! your likeness at present, I shudder
 to tell o't,
 Is that you have your slaves, and the Greek
 had his helot."

* * * * *

Here Miranda¹ came up, and said,
 "Phœbus! you know
 That the infinite Soul has its infinite woe,
 As I ought to know, having lived cheek by
 jowl,
 Since the day I was born, with the Infinite
 Soul;

¹ Margaret Fuller. Lowell wrote to Briggs, while he was at work on the Fable: "I think I shall say nothing about Margaret Fuller (though she offer so fair a target), because she has done me an ill-natured turn. I shall revenge myself amply upon her by writing better. She is a very foolish, conceited woman, who has

I myself introduced, I myself, I alone,
 To my Land's better life authors solely my
 own,
 Who the sad heart of earth on their shoulders
 have taken,
 Whose works sound a depth by Life's quiet
 unshaken, 650
 Such as Shakespeare, for instance, the Bible,
 and Bacon,
 Not to mention my own works; Time's
 nadir is fleet,
 And, as for myself, I'm quite out of conceit—"

"Quite out of conceit! I'm enchanted
 to hear it,"
 Cried Apollo aside. "Who'd have thought
 she was near it?
 To be sure, one is apt to exhaust those
 commodities
 One uses too fast, yet in this case as odd
 it is
 As if Neptune should say to his turbot and
 whittings,
 'I'm as much out of salt as Miranda's own
 writings'
 (Which, as she in her own happy manner
 has said, 660
 Sound a depth, for 'tis one of the functions
 of lead).
 She often has asked me if I could not find
 A place somewhere near me that suited her
 mind;
 I know but a single one vacant, which she
 With her rare talent that way, would fit to
 a T.
 And it would not imply any pause or
 cessation
 In the work she esteems her peculiar voca-
 tion,—

got together a great deal of information, but not enough *knowledge* to save her from being ill-tempered. However, the temptation may be too strong for me. It certainly would have been if she had never said anything about me. Even Maria thinks I ought to give her a line or two." In the end Lowell gave her much more than a line or two—there are some 20 lines concerning her immediately preceding the passage printed above—and scarcely concealed the resentment which animated him. That he realized this is shown by the fact that he asked Briggs, after it was too late, to omit the following four lines:

"There is one thing she owns in her own single right,
 It is native and genuine—namely, her spite;
 Though, when acting as censor, she privately blows
 A censor of vanity 'neath her own nose."

She may enter on duty to-day, if she chooses,
And remain Tiring-woman for life to the
Muses."

* * * * *

"There comes Poe with his raven, like
Barnaby Rudge, 670
Three fifths of him genius and two fifths
sheer fudge,
Who talks like a book of iambs and pen-
tameters,
In a way to make people of common sense
damn meters,
Who has written some things quite the best
of their kind,
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed
out by the mind,
Who— But hey-day! What's this?
Messieurs Mathews and Poe,
You mustn't fling mud-balls at Longfellow
so,
Does it make a man worse that his char-
acter's such
As to make his friends love him (as you
think) too much?
Why, there is not a bard at this moment
alive 680
More willing than he that his fellows should
thrive;
While you are abusing him thus, even now
He would help either one of you out of a
slough;
You may say that he's smooth and all that
till you're hoarse,
But remember that elegance also is force;
After polishing granite as much as you will,
The heart keeps its tough old persistency
still;
Deduct all you can, *that* still keeps you at
bay;
Why, he'll live till men weary of Collins and
Gray.
I'm not over-fond of Greek meters in
English, 690
To me rhyme's a gain, so it be not too jing-
lish,
And your modern hexameter verses are no
more
Like Greek ones than sleek Mr. Pope is like
Homer;
As the roar of the sea to the coo of a pigeon
is,
So, compared to your moderns, sounds old
Melesigenes;

I may be too partial, the reason, perhaps,
o't is
That I've heard the old blind man recite his
own rhapsodies,
And my ear with that music impregnate
may be,
Like the poor exiled shell with the soul of
the sea,
Or as one can't bear Strauss when his nature
is cloven 700
To its deeps within deeps by the stroke of
Beethoven;
But, set that aside, and, 'tis truth that I
speak,
Had Theocritus written in English, not
Greek,
I believe that his exquisite sense would scarce
change a line
In that rare, tender, virgin-like pastoral
Evangeline.
That's not ancient nor modern, its place is
apart
Where time has no sway, in the realm of
pure Art,
'Tis a shrine of retreat from Earth's hubbub
and strife
As quiet and chaste as the author's own life.

* * * * *

"There's Holmes, who is matchless among
you for wit; 710
A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from
which flit
The electrical tingles of hit after hit;
In long poems 'tis painful sometimes, and
invites
A thought of the way the new Telegraph
writes,
Which pricks down its little sharp sentences
spitefully
As if you got more than you'd title to right-
fully,
And you find yourself hoping its wild father
Lightning
Would flame in for a second and give you a
fright'ning.
He has perfect sway of what *I* call a sham
meter,
But many admire it, the English pen-
tameter, 720
And Campbell, I think, wrote most com-
monly worse,
With less nerve, swing, and fire in the same
kind of verse,

Nor e'er achieved aught in't so worthy of
 praise
 As the tribute of Holmes to the grand
Marseillaise.
 You went crazy last year over Bulwer's
 New Timon;—
 Why, if B., to the day of his dying, should
 rhyme on,
 Heaping verses on verses and tomes upon
 tomes,
 He could ne'er reach the best point and vigor
 of Holmes.
 His are just the fine hands, too, to weave
 you a lyric
 Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with
 satyric 730
 In a measure so kindly, you doubt if the
 toes
 That are trodden upon are your own or your
 foes'.

“There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus
 to climb
 With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with
 rhyme,
 He might get on alone, spite of brambles
 and boulders,
 But he can't with that bundle he has on his
 shoulders,
 The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh
 reaching
 Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing
 and preaching;
 His lyre has some chords that would ring
 pretty well,
 But he'd rather by half make a drum of the
 shell, 740
 And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
 At the head of a march to the last new
 Jerusalem.”

* * * * *

Here the critic came in and a thistle
 presented—¹
 From a frown to a smile the god's features
 relented,
 As he stared at his envoy, who, swelling with
 pride,
 To the god's asking look, nothing daunted,
 replied,—

¹ Turn back now to page—goodness only knows
 what,
 And take a fresh hold on the thread of my plot.
 (Lowell's note.)

“You're surprised, I suppose, I was absent
 so long,
 But your godship respecting the lilies was
 wrong;
 I hunted the garden from one end to t'other,
 And got no reward but vexation and
 bother, 750
 Till, tossed out with weeds in a corner to
 wither,
 This one lily I found and made haste to bring
 hither.”

“Did he think I had given him a book to
 review?
 I ought to have known what the fellow
 would do,”
 Muttered Phœbus aside, “for a thistle will
 pass
 Beyond doubt for the queen of all flowers
 with an ass;
 He has chosen in just the same way as he'd
 choose
 His specimens out of the books he reviews;
 And now, as this offers an excellent text,
 I'll give 'em some brief hints on criticism
 next.” 760
 So, musing a moment, he turned to the
 crowd,
 And, clearing his voice, spoke as follows
 aloud:—

“My friends, in the happier days of the
 muse,
 We were luckily free from such things as
 reviews;
 Then naught came between with its fog to
 make clearer
 The heart of the poet to that of his hearer;
 Then the poet brought heaven to the people,
 and they
 Felt that they, too, were poets in hearing
 his lay;
 Then the poet was prophet, the past in his
 soul
 Precreated the future, both parts of one
 whole; 770
 Then for him there was nothing too great or
 too small,
 For one natural deity sanctified all;
 Then the bard owned no clipper and meter of
 moods
 Save the spirit of silence that hovers and
 broods

O'er the seas and the mountains, the rivers
and woods;
He asked not earth's verdict, forgetting the
clods,
His soul soared and sang to an audience of
gods;
'Twas for them that he measured the
thought and the line,
And shaped for their vision the perfect
design,
With as glorious a foresight, a balance as
true, 780
As swung out the worlds in the infinite blue;
Then a glory and greatness invested man's
heart,
The universal, which now stands estranged
and apart,
In the free individual molded, was Art;
Then the forms of the Artist seemed thrilled
with desire
For something as yet unattained, fuller,
higher,
As once with her lips, lifted hands, and eyes
listening,
And her whole upward soul in her coun-
tenance glistening,
Eurydice stood—like a beacon unfired,
Which, once touched with flame, will leap
heav'nward inspired— 790
And waited with answering kindle to mark
The first gleam of Orpheus that pained the
red Dark.
Then painting, song, sculpture did more than
relieve
The need that men feel to create and
believe,
And as, in all beauty, who listens with love
Hears these words oft repeated—'beyond
and above,'
So these seemed to be but the visible sign
Of the grasp of the soul after things more
divine;
They were ladders the Artist erected to
climb
O'er the narrow horizon of space and of
time, 800
And we see there the footsteps by which men
had gained
To the one rapturous glimpse of the never-
attained,
As shepherds could erst sometimes trace in
the sod
The last spurning print of a sky-cleaving
god.

"But now, on the poet's dis-privacied
moods
With *do this* and *do that* the pert critic
intrudes;
While he thinks he's been barely fulfilling
his duty
To interpret 'twixt men and their own sense
of beauty,
And has striven, while others sought honor
or pelf,
To make his kind happy as he was him-
self, 810
He finds he's been guilty of horrid offenses
In all kinds of moods, numbers, genders, and
tenses;
He's been *ob* and *subjective*, what Kettle
calls Pot,
Precisely, at all events, what he ought not,
You have done this, says one judge; *done*
that, says another;
You should have done this, grumbles one;
that, says t'other;
Never mind what he touches, one shrieks
out *Taboo!*
And while he is wondering what he shall do,
Since each suggests opposite topics for song,
They all shout together *you're right!* and
you're wrong! 820
"Nature fits all her children with some-
thing to do,
He who would write and can't write, can
surely review,
Can set up a small booth as critic and sell
us his
Petty conceit and his pettier jealousies;
Thus a lawyer's apprentice, just out of his
teens,
Will do for the Jeffrey of six magazines;
Having read Johnson's lives of the poets half
through,
There's nothing on earth he's not com-
petent to;
He reviews with as much nonchalance as he
whistles,—
He goes through a book and just picks out
the thistles; 830
It matters not whether he blame or com-
mend,
If he's bad as a foe, he's far worse as a
friend:
Let an author but write what's above his
poor scope,
He goes to work gravely and twists up a rope,

And, inviting the world to see punishment
done,
Hangs himself up to bleach in the wind and
the sun;
'Tis delightful to see, when a man comes
along
Who has anything in him peculiar and
strong,
Every cockboat that swims clear its fierce
(pop) gundeck at him,
And make as he passes its ludicrous Peck
at him—" 840

Here Miranda came up and began, "As
to that—"
Apollo at once seized his gloves, cane, and
hat,
And, seeing the place getting rapidly cleared,
I, too, snatched my notes and forthwith
disappeared.

THE WASHERS OF THE SHROUD¹

ALONG a river-side, I know not where,
I walked one night in mystery of dream;
A chill creeps curdling yet beneath my
hair,
To think what chanced me by the pallid
gleam
Of a moon-wraith that waned through
haunted air.

Pale fireflies pulsed within the meadow-
mist
Their halos, wavering thistledowns of light;
The loon, that seemed to mock some goblin
tryst,
Laughed; and the echoes, huddling in
affright,
Like Odin's hounds, fled baying down the
night. 10

¹ Written early in October, 1861. Lowell wrote to Charles Eliot Norton that he composed it in two days' time, though it had been "in his head" before, in order to get it in the issue of the *Atlantic* for November. He added: "I owe it to you, for the hint came from one of those books of Souvestre's you lent me—the Breton legends. . . . I began it as a lyric, but it *would* be too aphoristic for that, and finally flatly refused to sing at any price. So I submitted, took to pentameters, and only hope the thoughts are good enough to be preserved in the ice of the colder and almost glacier-slow measure."

Then all was silent, till there smote my ear
A movement in the stream that checked my
breath:

Was it the slow plash of a wading deer?
But something said, "This water is of Death!
The Sisters wash a shroud,—ill thing to
hear!"

I, looking then, beheld the ancient Three
Known to the Greek's and to the North-
man's creed,

That sit in shadow of the mystic Tree,
Still crooning, as they weave their endless
brede,

One song: "Time was, Time is, and Time
shall be." 20

No wrinkled crones were they, as I had
deemed,

But fair as yesterday, to-day, to-morrow,
To mourner, lover, poet, ever seemed;
Something too high for joy, too deep for
sorrow,

Thrilled in their tones, and from their faces
gleamed.

"Still men and nations reap as they have
strawn,"

So sang they, working at their task the
while;

"The fatal raiment must be cleansed ere
dawn:

For Austria? Italy? the Sea-Queen's isle?
O'er what quenched grandeur must our
shroud be drawn? 30

"Or is it for a younger, fairer corse,
That gathered States like children round his
knees,

That tamed the wave to be his posting-
horse,

Feller of forests, linker of the seas,
Bridge-builder, hammerer, youngest son of
Thor's?

"What make we, murmur'st thou? and
what are we?

When empires must be wound, we bring the
shroud,

The time-old web of the implacable Three:
Is it too coarse for him, the young and proud?
Earth's mightiest deigned to wear it,—Why
not he? 40

"Is there no hope?" I moaned, "so strong,
so fair!
Our Fowler whose proud bird would brook
erewhile
No rival's swoop in all our western air!
Gather the ravens, then, in funeral file
For him, life's morn yet golden in his hair?"

"Leave me not hopeless, ye unpitying
dames!
I see, half seeing. Tell me, ye who scanned
The stars, Earth's elders, still must noblest
aims
Be traced upon oblivious ocean-sands?
Must Hesper join the wailing ghosts of
names?" 50

"When grass-blades stiffen with red battle-
dew,
Ye deem we choose the victor and the slain:
Say, choose we them that shall be leal and
true
To the heart's longing, the high faith of
brain?
Yet there the victory lies, if ye but knew.

"Three roots bear up Dominion: Knowledge,
Will,—
These twain are strong, but stronger yet the
third,—
Obedience,—'tis the great tap-root that still,
Knit round the rock of Duty, is not stirred,
Though Heaven-loosed tempests spend their
utmost skill. 60

"Is the doom sealed for Hesper? 'Tis
not we
Denounce it, but the Law before all time:
The brave makes danger opportunity;
The waverer, paltering with the chance
sublime,
Dwarfs it to peril: which shall Hesper be?"

"Hath he let vultures climb his eagle's seat
To make Jove's bolts purveyors of their
maw?
Hath he the Many's plaudits found more
sweet
Than Wisdom? held Opinion's wind for
Law?
Then let him harken for the doomster's
feet! 70

"Rough are the steps, slow-hewn in flintiest
rock,
States climb to power by; slippery those
with gold
Down which they stumble to eternal mock:
No chafferer's hand shall long the scepter
hold,
Who, given a Fate to shape, would sell the
block.

"We sing old Sagas, songs of weal and woe,
Mystic because too cheaply understood;
Dark sayings are not ours; men hear and
know,
See Evil weak, see strength alone in Good,
Yet hope to stem God's fire with walls of
tow. 80

"Time Was unlocks the riddle of Time Is,
That offers choice of glory or of gloom;
The solver makes Time Shall Be surely his.
But hasten, Sisters! for even now the tomb
Grates its slow hinge and calls from the
abyss."

"But not for him," I cried, "not yet for
him,
Whose large horizon, westering, star by star
Wins from the void to where on Ocean's rim
The sunset shuts the world with golden
bar,
Not yet his thews shall fail, his eye grow
dim! 90

"His shall be larger manhood, save for
those
That walk unblenching through the trial-
fires;
Not suffering, but faint heart, is worst of
woes,
And he no base-horn son of craven sires,
Whose eye need blench confronted with his
foes.

"Tears may be ours, but proud, for those
who win
Death's royal purple in the foeman's lines;
Peace, too, brings tears; and mid the battle-
din,
The wiser ear some text of God divines,
For the sheathed blade may rust with darker
sin. 100

"God, give us peace! not such as lulls to sleep,
But sword on thigh, and brow with purpose knit!

And let our Ship of State to harbor sweep,
Her ports all up, her battle-lanterns lit,
And her leashed thunders gathering for their leap!"

So cried I with clenched hands and passionate pain,
Thinking of dear ones by Potomac's side;
Again the loon laughed mocking, and again
The echoes bayed far down the night and died,
While waking I recalled my wandering brain. 110

THE BIGLOW PAPERS¹ SECOND SERIES

THE COURTIN'

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

¹ This series of *Biglow Papers* was begun in 1862 and was published as a volume in 1866. The several numbers had been printed in the *Atlantic*. To the volume Lowell prefixed a long introduction concerning the Yankee dialect, in the course of which he made the following explanation: "The only attempt I had ever made at anything like a pastoral (if that may be called an attempt which was the result almost of pure accident) was in *The Courtin'*. While the introduction to the First Series was going through the press, I received word from the printer that there was a blank page left which must be filled. I sat down at once and improvised another fictitious 'notice of the press,' in which, because verse would fill up space more cheaply than prose, I inserted an extract from a supposed ballad of Mr. Biglow. I kept no copy of it, and the printer, as directed, cut it off when the gap was filled. Presently I began to receive letters asking for the rest of it. . . . I had none. . . . Afterward, being asked to write it out as an autograph for the Baltimore Sanitary Commission Fair, I added other verses, into some of which I infused a little more sentiment in a homely way, and after a fashion completed it by sketching in the characters and making a connected story. Most likely I have spoiled it, but I shall put it at the end of this Introduction, to answer once for all those kindly importunings."

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in— 10
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her,
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
Fetched back from Concord busted. 20

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the applies she was peelin'.

'T was kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessed cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
Clear grit an' human natur'; 30
None could n't quicker pitch a ton
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He 'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
Hed squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
All is, he could n't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
Ez a south slope in Ap'il. 40

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she 'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upon it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
She seemed to 've gut a new soul, 50
For she felt sartin-sure he 'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
But hern went pity Zekle.

60

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him further,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
"Wal . . . no . . . I come designin'"—
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals acts so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
Comes nateral to women.

70

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t' other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He could n't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call agin";
Says she, "Think likely, Mister":
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
An' . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

80

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood,
An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

90

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

NO. VI. SUNTHIN' IN THE PAS- TORAL LINE

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

JAALAM, 17th May, 1862.

GENTLEMEN,—At the special request of Mr. Biglow, I intended to enclose, together with his own contribution (into which, at my suggestion, he has thrown a little more of pastoral sentiment than usual), some passages from my sermon on the day of the National Fast, from the text, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them," Hebrews, xiii, 3. But I have not leisure sufficient at present for the copying of them, even were I altogether satisfied with the production as it stands. I should prefer, I confess, to contribute the entire discourse to the pages of your respectable miscellany, if it should be found acceptable upon perusal, especially as I find the difficulty in selection of greater magnitude than I had anticipated. What passes without challenge in the fervor of oral delivery, cannot always stand the colder criticism of the closet. I am not so great an enemy of Eloquence as my friend Mr. Biglow would appear to be from some passages in his contribution for the current month. I would not, indeed, hastily suspect him of covertly glancing at myself in his somewhat caustic animadversions, albeit some of the phrases he girds at are not entire strangers to my lips. I am a more hearty admirer of the Puritans than seems now to be the fashion, and believe, that, if they Hebraized a little too much in their speech, they showed remarkable practical sagacity as statesmen and founders. But such phenomena as Puritanism are the results rather of great religious than of merely social convulsions, and do not long survive them. So soon as an earnest conviction has cooled into a phrase, its work is over, and the best that can be done with it is to bury it. *Ite, missa est.* I am inclined to agree with Mr. Biglow that we cannot settle the great political questions which are now presenting themselves to the nation by the opinions of Jeremiah or Ezekiel as to the wants and duties of the Jews in their time, nor do I believe that an entire community with their feelings and views would be practicable or even agreeable at the present day. At the same time I could wish that their habit of subordinating the actual to the moral, the flesh to the spirit, and this world to the other, were more common. They had found out, at least, the great military secret that soul weighs more than body.—But I am suddenly called to a sick-bed in the household of a valued parishioner.

With esteem and respect,

Your obedient servant,

HOMER WILBUR.

ONCE git a smell o' musk into a draw,
An' it clings hold like precerents in law:
Your gra'ma'am put it there,—when, good-
ness knows,—

To jes' this-worldify her Sunday-clo'es;
But the old chist wun't sarve her gran'-
son's wife

(For, 'thout new funnitoor, wut good in life?),
An' so ole clawfoot, from the precinks dread
O' the spare chamber, slinks into the shed,
Where, dim with dust, it fust or last subsides
To holdin' seeds an' fifty things besides; 10
But better days stick fast in heart an' husk,
An' all you keep in 't gits a scent o' musk.

Jes' so with poets: wut they've airly read
Gits kind o' worked into their heart an'
head,

So 's 't they can't seem to write but jest on
sheers

With furrin countries or played-out ideers,
Nor hev a feelin', ef it doos n't smack
O' wut some critter chose to feel 'way back:
This makes 'em talk o' daisies, larks, an'
things,

Ez though we 'd nothin' here that blows an'
sings 20

(Why, I'd give more for one live bobolink
Than a square mile o' larks in printer's
ink),—

This makes 'em think our fust o' May is
May,

Which 't ain't, for all the almanicks can say.

O little city-gals, don't never go it
Blind on the word o' noospaper or poet!
They 're apt to puff, an' May-day seldom
looks

Up in the country ez it doos in books;
They 're no more like than hornets'-nests an'
hives,

Or printed sarmons be to holy lives. 30

I, with my trouses perched on cowhide boots,
Tuggin' my foundered feet out by the roots,
Hev seen ye come to fling on April's hearse
Your muslin nosegays from the milliner's,
Puzzlin' to find dry ground your queen to
choose,

An' dance your throats sore in morocker
shoes:

I 've seen ye an' felt proud, thet, come wut
would,

Our Pilgrim stock wuz pethed with hardi-
hood.

Pleasure doos make us Yankees kind o'
winch,

Ez though 't wuz sunthin' paid for by the
inch; 40

But yit we du contrive to worry thru,
Ef Dooty tells us thet the thing's to du,
An' kerry a hollerday, if we set out,
Ez stiddily ez though 't wuz a redoubt.

I, country-born an' bred, know where to
find

Some blooms thet make the season suit the
mind,

An' seem to metch the doubtin' bluebird's
notes,—

Half-vent'rin' liverworts in furry coats,
Bloodroots, whose rolled-up leaves ef you
oncurl,

Each on 'em 's cradle to a baby-pearl,— 50
But these are jes' Spring's pickets; sure
ez sin,

The rebble frosts 'll try to drive 'em in;
For half our May 's so awfully like May n't,
't would rile a Shaker or an evrige saint;
Though I own up I like our back'ard
springs

Thet kind o' haggel with their greens 'an
things,

An' when you 'most give up, 'uthout more
words

Toss the fields full o' blossoms, leaves, an'
birds:

Thet 's Northun natur', slow an' apt to
doubt,

But when it *doos* git stirred, ther' 's no gin-
out! 60

Fust come the blackbirds clatt'rin' in tall
trees,

An' settlin' things in windy Congresses,—
Queer politicians, though, for I'll be skinned
Ef all on 'em don't head against the wind.

'fore long the trees begin to show belief,—
The maple crimsons to a coral-reef,

Then saffern swarms swing off from all the
willers

So plump they look like yaller caterpillars,
Then gray hossches'nuts leetle hands unfold
Softer 'n a baby's be at three days old: 70

Thet 's robin-redbreast's almanick; he knows
Thet arter this ther' 's only blossom-snows;
So, choosin' out a handy crotch an' spouse,
He goes to plast'rin' his adobe house.

Then seems to come a hitch,—things lag
behind,
Till some fine mornin' Spring makes up her
mind,
An' ez, when snow-swelled rivers cresh their
dams
Heaped-up with ice thet dovetails in an'
jams,
A leak comes spirtin' thru some pin-hole
cleft,
Grows stronger, fercer, tears out right an'
left, 80
Then all the waters bow themselves an'
come,
Suddin, in one gret slope o' shedderin' foam,
Jes' so our Spring gits everythin' in tune
An' gives one leap from Aperl into June:
Then all comes crowdin' in; afore you
think,
Young oak-leaves mist the side-hill woods
with pink;
The catbird in the laylock-bush is loud;
The orchards turn to heaps o' rosy cloud;
Red-cedars blossom tu, though few folks
know it,
An' look all dipt in sunshine like a poet; 90
The lime-trees pile their solid stacks o' shade
An' drows'ly simmer with the bees' sweet
trade;
In ellow-shrouds the flashin' hangbird
clings
An' for the summer vy'ge his hammock
slings;
All down the loose-walled lanes in archin'
bowers
The barb'ry droops its strings o' golden
flowers,
Whose shrinkin' hearts the school-gals love
to try
With pins,—they 'll worry yourn so, boys,
bimeby!
But I don't love your cat'logue style,—do
you?—
Ez ef to sell off Natur' by vendoo; 100
One word with blood in 't 's twice ez good ez
two:
'nuff sed, June's bridesman, poet o' the
year,
Gladness on wings, the bobolink, is here;
Half-hid in tip-top apple-blooms he swings,
Or climbs against the breeze with quiverin'
wings,
Or, givin' way to 't in a mock despair,
Runs down, a brook o' laughter, thru the air.

I ollus feel the sap start in my veins
In Spring, with curus heats an' prickly pains,
Thet drive me, when I git a chance, to
walk 110
Off by myself to hev a privit talk
With a queer critter thet can't seem to 'gree
Along o' me like most folks,—Mister Me.
Ther' 's times when I'm unsoshle ez a stone,
An' sort o' suffercate to be alone,—
I'm crowded jes' to think thet folks are
nigh,
An' can't bear nothin' closer than the sky;
Now the wind 's full ez shifty in the mind
Ez wut it is ou'-doors, ef I ain't blind,
An' sometimes, in the fairest sou'west
weather, 120
My innard vane pints east for weeks to-
gether,
My natur' gits all goose-flesh, an' my sins
Come drizzlin' on my conscience sharp ez
pins:
Wal, et sech times I jes' slip out o' sight
An' take it out in a fair stan'-up fight
With the one cuss I can't lay on the shelf,
The crook'dest stick in all the heap,—
Myself.

'T wuz so las' Sabbath arter meetin'-time:
Findin' my feelin's wouldn't noways rhyme
With nobody's, but off the hendle flew 130
An' took things from an east-wind pint o'
view,
I started off to lose me in the hills
Where the pines be, up back o' 'Siah's
Mills:
Pines, ef you're blue, are the best friends I
know,
They mope an' sigh an' sheer your feelin's
so,—
They hesh the ground beneath so, tu, I
swan,
You half-forgit you've gut a body on.
Ther' 's a small school'us' there where four
roads meet,
The door-steps hollered out by little feet,
An' side-posts carved with names whose
owners grew 140
To gret men, some on 'em, an' deacons, tu;
't ain't used no longer, coz the town hez
gut
A high-school, where they teach the Lord
knows wut:
Three-story larnin' 's pop'lar now; I guess
We thriv' ez wal on jes' two stories less,

For it strikes me ther' 's sech a thing ez
sinnin'

By overloadin' children's underpinnin':
Wal, here it wuz I larned my A B C,
An' it 's a kind o' favorite spot with me.

We 're curus critters: Now ain't jes' the
minute 150

Thet ever fits us easy while we 're in it;
Long ez 't wuz futur', 't would be perfect
bliss,—

Soon ez it's past, *thet* time's wuth ten o'
this;

An' yit there ain't a man thet need be told
Thet Now 's the only bird lays eggs o' gold.
A knee-high lad, I used to plot an' plan
An' think 't wuz life's cap-sheaf to be a man;
Now, gittin' gray, there 's nothin' I enjoy
Like dreamin' back along into a boy:
So the ole school'us' is a place I choose 160
Afore all others, ef I want to muse;
I set down where I used to set, an' git
My boyhood back, an' better things with
it,—

Faith, Hope, an' sunthin', ef it is n't Cherrity,
It 's want o' guile, an' thet 's ez gret a
rerrity,—

While Fancy's cushin', free to Prince and
Clown,

Makes the hard bench ez soft ez milk-
weed-down.

Now, 'fore I knowed, thet Sabbath arter-
noon

When I sot out to tramp myself in tune,
I found me in the school'us' on my seat,
Drummin' the march to No-wheres with
my feet. 171

Thinkin' o' nothin', I 've heerd ole folks say
Is a hard kind o' dooty in its way:
It 's thinkin' everythin' you ever knew,
Or ever hearn, to make your feelin's blue.
I sot there tryin' thet on for a spell:
I thought o' the Rebellion, then o' Hell,
Which some folks tell ye now is jest a metter-
for

(A the'ry, p'raps, it wun't *feel* none the
better for);

I thought o' Reconstruction, wut we'd
win 180

Patchin' our patent self-blow-up agin:
I thought ef this 'ere milkin' o' the wits,
So much a month, warn't givin' Natur'
fits,—

Ef folks warn't druv, findin' their own milk
fail,

To work the cow thet hez an iron tail,
An' ef idees 'thout ripenin' in the pan
Would send up cream to humor ary man:
From this to thet I let my worryin' creep,
Till finally I must ha' fell asleep.

Our lives in sleep are some like streams thet
glide 190

'twixt flesh an' sperrit boundin' on each
side,

Where both shores' shadders kind o' mix
an' mingle

In sunthin' thet ain't jes' like either single;
An' when you cast off moorin's from To-
day,

An' down towards To-morrer drift away,
The imiges thet tengle on the stream
Make a new upside-down'ard world o' dream:
Sometimes they seem like sunrise-streaks an'
warnin's

O' wut 'll be in Heaven on Sabbath-mornin's,
An', mixed right in ez ef jest out o' spite,
Sunthin' thet says your supper ain't gone
right. 201

I 'm gret on dreams, an' often when I wake,
I 've lived so much it makes my mem'ry
ache,

An' can't skurce take a cat-nap in my cheer
'thout hevin' 'em, some good, some bad, all
queer.

Now I wuz settin' where I 'd ben, it seemed,
An' ain't sure yit whether I r'ally dreamed,
Nor, ef I did, how long I might ha' slep',
When I hearn some un stompin' up the step,
An' lookin' round, ef two an' two make
four, 210

I see a Pilgrim Father in the door.
He wore a steeple-hat, tall boots, an' spurs
With rowels to 'em big ez ches'nut-burs,
An' his gret sword behind him sloped away
Long 'z a man's speech thet dunno wut to
say.—

"Ef your name 's Biglow, an' your given-
name

Hosee," sez he, "it 's arter you I came;
I 'm your gret-gran'ther multiplied by
three."—

"My *wut*?" sez I.—"Your gret-gret-gret,"
sez he:

"You would n't ha' never ben here but for
me. 220

Two hundred an' three year ago this May
 The ship I come in sailed up Boston Bay;
 I'd been a cunnle in our Civil War,—
 But wut on airth hev *you* gut up one for?
 Coz we du things in England, 't ain't for
 you
 To git a notion you can du 'em tu:
 I'm told you write in public prints: ef
 true,
 It 's nateral you should know a thing or
 two."—
 "Thet air 's an argymunt I can't endorse,—
 't would prove, coz you wear spurs, you kep'
 a horse: 230
 For brains," sez I, "wutever you may think,
 Ain't boun' to cash the draf's o' pen-an'-
 ink,—
 Though mos' folks write ez ef they hoped
 jes' quickenin'
 The churn would argoo skim-milk into
 thickenin';
 But skim-milk ain't a thing to change its
 view
 O' wut it 's meant for more 'n a smoky flue.
 But du pray tell me, 'fore we funder go,
 How in all Natur' did you come to know
 'bout our affairs," sez I, "in Kingdom-
 Come?"—
 "Wal, I worked round at sperrit-rappin'
 some, 240
 An' danced the tables till their legs wuz
 gone,
 In hopes o' larnin' wut wuz goin' on,"
 Sez he, "but mejums lie so like all-split
 Thet I concluded it wuz best to quit.
 But, come now, ef you wun't confess to
 knowin',
 You 've some conjectures how the thing 's
 a-goin'."—
 "Gran'ther," sez I, "a vane warn't never
 known
 Nor asked to hev a jedgment of its own;
 An' yit, ef 't ain't gut rusty in the jint's,
 It 's safe to trust its say on certin pints:
 It knows the wind's opinions to a T, 241
 An' the wind settles wut the weather 'll
 be."
 "I never thought a scion of our stock
 Could grow the wood to make a weather-
 cock;
 When I wuz younger 'n you, skurce more 'n
 a shaver,
 No airthly wind," sez he, "could make me
 waver!"

(Ez he said this, he clinched his jaw an'
 forehead,
 Hitchin' his belt to bring his sword-hilt
 forrard.)—
 "Jes so it wuz with me," sez I, "I swow,
 When *I* wuz younger 'n wut you see me
 now,— 250
 Nothin' from Adam's fall to Huld'y's
 bonnet,
 Thet I warn't full-cocked with my jedgment
 on it;
 But now I 'm gittin' on in life, I find
 It 's a sight harder to make up my
 mind,—
 Nor I don't often try tu, when events
 Will du it for me free of all expense.
 The moral question 's ollus plain enough,—
 It 's jes' the human-natur' side thet 's
 tough;
 Wut 's best to think may n't puzzle me nor
 you,—
 The pinch comes in decidin' wut to *du*;
 Ef you *read* History, all runs smooth ez
 grease, 261
 Coz there the men ain't nothin' more 'n
 idees,—
 But come to *make* it, ez we must to-day,
 Th' idees hev arms an' legs an' stop the
 way:
 I t's easy fixin' things in facts an' figgers,—
 They can't resist, nor warn't brought up
 with niggers;
 But come to try your the'ry on,—why,
 then
 Your facts an' figgers change to ign'ant
 men
 Actin' ez ugly—" —"Smite 'em hip an'
 thigh!"
 Sez gran'ther, "and let every man-child
 die! 270
 Oh for three weeks o' Crommle an' the
 Lord!
 Up, Isr'el, to your tents an' grind the
 sword!"—
 "Thet kind o' thing worked wal in ole
 Judee,
 But you forgit how long it 's ben A. D.;
 You think thet 's ellerkence,—I call it
 shoddy,
 A thing," sez I, "wun't cover soul nor
 body;
 I like the plain all-wool o' commonsense,
 Thet warms ye now, an' will a twelve month
 hence.

You took to follerin' where the Prophets
 beckoned,
 An', fust you knowed on, back come Charles
 the Second; 280
 Now wut I want 's to hev all *we* gain stick,
 An' not to start Millennium too quick;
 We hain't to punish only, but to keep,
 An' the cure 's gut to go a cent'ry deep."
 "Wal, milk-an'-water ain't the best o'
 glue,"
 Sez he, "an' so you 'll find before you 're
 thru;
 Ef reshness venters sunthin', shilly-shally
 Loses ez often wut 's ten times the vally.
 Thet ex of ourn, when Charles's neck gut
 split,
 Opened a gap thet ain't bridged over yit: 290
 Slav'ry 's your Charles, the Lord hez gin the
 ex—"
 "Our Charles," sez I, "hez gut eight million
 necks.
 The hardest question ain't the black man's
 right,
 The trouble is to 'mancipate the white;
 One 's chained in body an' can be sot free,
 But t' other 's chained in soul to an idee:
 It 's a long job, but we shall worry thru it;
 Ef bagnets fail, the spellin'-book must du
 it."
 "Hosee," sez he, "I think you 're goin' to
 fail:
 The rettlesnake ain't dangerous in the
 tail; 300
 This 'ere rebellion 's nothin but the rattle,—
 You 'll stomp on thet an' think you 've won
 the bettle;
 It 's Slavery thet 's the fangs an' 'thinkin'
 head,
 An' ef you want selvation, cresh it dead,—
 An' cresh it suddin, or you 'll larn by waitin'
 Thet Chance wun't stop to listen to de-
 batin'!"—
 "God's truth!" sez I,—“an' ef I held the
 club,
 An' knowed jes' where to strike,—but there 's
 the rub!”—
 "Strike soon," sez he, "or you 'll be deadly
 ailin',—
 Folks thet 's afeared to fail are sure o' fail-
 in'; 310
 God hates your sneakin' creturs thet believe
 He 'll settle things they run away an' leave!"
 He brought his foot down fercely, ez he spoke,
 An' give me sech a startle thet I woke.

ODE RECITED AT THE HARVARD COMMEMORATION ¹

21 JULY, 1865

I

WEAK-WINGED is song,
 Nor aims at that clear-ethered height
 Whither the brave deed climbs for light:
 We seem to do them wrong,
 Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their hearse
 Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler
 verse,
 Our trivial song to honor those who come
 With ears attuned to strenuous trump and
 drum,
 And shaped in squadron-strophes their de-
 sire,
 Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and
 fire: 10
 Yet sometimes feathered words are strong,
 A gracious memory to buoy up and save
 From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the common
 grave
 Of the unventurous throng.

II

To-day our Reverend Mother welcomes back
 Her wisest Scholars, those who understood
 The deeper teaching of her mystic tome,
 And offered their fresh lives to make it
 good:

¹ Written immediately before the service in commemoration of the Harvard dead in the Civil War (held on the date given above), as Lowell explains in the following passage from a letter written in 1886 to R. W. Gilder: "The passage about Lincoln was not in the Ode as originally recited, but added immediately after. More than eighteen months before, however, I had written about Lincoln in the *North American Review*—an article which pleased him. I *did* divine him earlier than most men of the Brahmin caste. The Ode itself was an improvisation. Two days before the Commemoration I had told my friend Child that it was impossible—that I was dull as a door-mat. But the next day something gave me a jog and the whole thing came out of me with a rush. I sat up all night writing it out clear, and took it on the morning of the day to Child. 'I have something, but don't yet know what it is, or whether it will do. Look at it and tell me.' He went a little way apart with it under an elm-tree in the college yard. He read a passage here and there, brought it back to me, and said, 'Do? I should think so! Don't you be scared.' And I wasn't, but virtue enough had gone out of me to make me weak for a fortnight after."

No lore of Greece or Rome,
 No science peddling with the names of
 things, 20
 Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,
 Can lift our life with wings
 Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many
 waits,
 And lengthen out our dates
 With that clear fame whose memory sings
 In manly hearts to come, and nerves them
 and dilates:
 Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all!
 Not such the trumpet-call
 Of thy diviner mood,
 That could thy sons entice 30
 From happy homes and toils, the fruitful nest
 Of those half-virtues which the world calls
 best,
 Into War's tumult rude;
 But rather far that stern device
 The sponsors chose that round thy cradle
 stood
 In the dim, unventured wood,
 The VERITAS¹ that lurks beneath
 The letter's unprolific sheath,
 Life of whate'er makes life worth living,
 Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal food, 40
 One heavenly thing whereof earth hath the
 giving.

III

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil
 Amid the dust of books to find her,
 Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
 With the cast mantle she hath left behind
 her.
 Many in sad faith sought for her,
 Many with crossed hands sighed for her;
 But these, our brothers, fought for her,
 At life's dear peril wrought for her,
 So loved her that they died for her, 50
 Tasting the raptured fleetness
 Of her divine completeness:
 Their higher instinct knew
 Those love her best who to themselves are
 true,
 And what they dare to dream of, dare to do;
 They followed her and found her
 Where all may hope to find,
 Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,
 But beautiful, with danger's sweetness round
 her.

¹ The word is inscribed on three open books on the seal of Harvard University.

Where faith made whole with deed 60
 Breathes its awakening breath
 Into the lifeless creed,
 They saw her plumed and mailed,
 With sweet, stern face unveiled,
 And all-repaying eyes, look proud on them in
 death.

IV

Our slender life runs rippling by, and glides
 Into the silent hollow of the past;
 What is there that abides
 To make the next age better for the last?
 Is earth too poor to give us 70
 Something to live for here that shall out-
 live us?
 Some more substantial boon
 Than such as flows and ebbs with Fortune's
 fickle moon?
 The little that we see
 From doubt is never free;
 The little that we do
 Is but half-nobly true;
 With our laborious hiving
 What men call treasure, and the gods call
 dross, 79
 Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,
 Only secure in every one's conniving,
 A long account of nothings paid with loss,
 Where we poor puppets, jerked by unseen
 wires,
 After our little hour of strut and rave,
 With all our pasteboard passions and desires,
 Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,
 Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave.
 But stay! no age was e'er degenerate,
 Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,
 For in our likeness still we shape our
 fate. 90
 Ah, there is something here
 Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,
 Something that gives our feeble light
 A high immunity from Night,
 Something that leaps life's narrow bars
 To claim its birthright with the hosts of
 heaven;
 A seed of sunshine that can leaven
 Our earthy dullness with the beams of
 stars,
 And glorify our clay
 With light from fountains elder than the
 Day; 100
 A conscience more divine than we,
 A gladness fed with secret tears,

Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us
face to face. 190

I praise him not; it were too late;
And some innative weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot
wait,

Safe in himself as in a fate.
So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide. 200

Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a
tower,

Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing
man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not
blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first Ameri-
can.

VII

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern
Or only guess some more inspiring goal 210
Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,
Along whose course the flying axles burn
Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier
brood;

Long as below we cannot find
The meed that stills the inexorable mind;
So long this faith to some ideal Good,
Under whatever mortal names it masks,
Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood
That thanks the Fates for their severer
tasks,

Feeling its challenged pulses leap, 220
While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,
And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it
asks,

Shall win man's praise and woman's
love,
Shall be a wisdom that we set above
All other skills and gifts to culture dear,
A virtue round whose forehead we in-
wreath

Laurels that with a living passion breathe
When other crowns grow, while we twine
them, sear.

What brings us thronging these high rites
to pay,
And seal these hours the noblest of our
year, 230
Save that our brothers found this better
way?

VIII

We sit here in the Promised Land
That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
But 'twas they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.
We welcome back our bravest and our
best;—

Ah me! not all! some come not with the
rest,

Who went forth brave and bright as any here!
I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,
But the sad strings complain, 240
And will not please the ear:

I sweep them for a pæan, but they wane
Again and yet again
Into a dirge, and die away, in pain.
In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,
Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf
wraps,

Dark to the triumph which they died to gain:
Fitlier may others greet the living,
For me the past is unforgiving;
I with uncovered head 250
Salute the sacred dead,

Who went, and who return not.—Say not so!
'Tis not the grapes of Canaan that repay,
But the high faith that failed not by the way;
Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave;
No ban of endless night exiles the brave;
And to the saner mind

We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!
For never shall their aureoled presence
lack: 260

I see them muster in a gleaming row,
With ever-youthful brows that nobler show;
We find in our dull road their shining track;
In every nobler mood

We feel the orient of their spirit glow,
Part of our life's unalterable good,
Of all our saintlier aspiration;

They come transfigured back,
Secure from change in their high-hearted
ways,

Beautiful evermore, and with the rays 270
Of morn on their white Shields of Expecta-
tion!

IX

But is there hope to save
 Even this ethereal essence from the grave?
 What ever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle wrong
 Save a few clarion names, or golden threads
 of song?

Before my musing eye
 The mighty ones of old sweep by,
 Disvoicèd now and insubstantial things,
 As noisy once as we: poor ghosts of kings,
 Shadows of empire wholly gone to dust, 280
 And many races, nameless long ago,
 To darkness driven by that imperious gust
 Of ever-rushing Time that here doth blow:
 O visionary world, condition strange,
 Where naught abiding is but only Change,
 Where the deep-bolted stars themselves still
 shift and range!

Shall we to more continuance make pre-
 tense?
 Renown builds tombs; a life-estate is Wit;
 And, bit by bit,
 The cunning years steal all from us but
 woe; 290
 Leaves are we, whose decays no harvest
 sow.

But, when we vanish hence,
 Shall they lie forceless in the dark below,
 Save to make green their little length of
 sods,

Or deepen pansies for a year or two,
 Who now to us are shining-sweet as gods?
 Was dying all they had the skill to do?
 That were not fruitless: but the Soul resents
 Such short-lived service, as if blind events
 Ruled without her, or earth could so en-
 dure; 300

She claims a more divine investiture
 Of longer tenure than Fame's airy rents;
 Whate'er she touches doth her nature share;
 Her inspiration haunts the ennobled air,
 Gives eyes to mountains blind,

Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the wind,
 And her clear trump sings succor everywhere
 By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful mind;
 For soul inherits all that soul could dare:

Yea, Manhood hath a wider span 310
 And larger privilege of life than man.
 The single deed, the private sacrifice,
 So radiant now through proudly-hidden tears
 Is covered up erelong from mortal eyes
 With thoughtless drift of the deciduous
 years;

But that high privilege that makes all men
 peers,

That leap of heart whereby a people rise
 Up to a noble anger's height,
 And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink,
 but grow more bright,

That swift validity in noble veins, 320
 Of choosing danger and disdaining shame,
 Of being set on flame

By the pure fire that flies all contact base,
 But wraps its chosen with angelic might,
 These are imperishable gains,
 Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,
 These hold great futures in their lusty reins
 And certify to earth a new imperial race.

X

Who now shall sneer?
 Who dare again to say we trace 330
 Our lines to a plebeian race?
 Roundhead and Cavalier!

Dumb are those names erewhile in battle
 loud;

Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,
 They flit across the ear:
 That is best blood that hath most iron in't,
 To edge resolve with, pouring without stint
 For what makes manhood dear.

Tell us not of Plantagenets,
 Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin bloods
 crawl 340

Down from some victor in a border-brawl!
 How poor their outworn coronets,
 Matched with one leaf of that plain civic
 wreath

Our brave for honor's blazon shall bequeath,
 Through whose desert a rescued Nation
 sets

Her heel on treason, and the trumpet hears
 Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen ears
 With vain resentments and more vain re-
 grets!

XI

Not in anger, not in pride,
 Pure from passion's mixture rude, 350
 Ever to base earth allied,
 But with far-heard gratitude,
 Still with heart and voice renewed,
 To heroes living and dear martyrs dead,
 The strain should close that consecrates our
 brave.

Lift the heart and lift the head!
 Lofty be its mood and grave,
 Not without a martial ring,
 Not without a prouder tread
 And a peal of exultation: 360
 Little right has he to sing
 Through whose heart in such an hour
 Beats no march of conscious power,
 Sweeps no tumult of elation!
 'Tis no Man we celebrate,
 By his country's victories great,
 A hero half, and half the whim of Fate,
 But the pith and marrow of a Nation
 Drawing force from all her men,
 Highest, humblest, weakest, all, 370
 For her time of need, and then
 Pulsing it again through them,
 Till the basest can no longer cower,
 Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,
 Touched but in passing by her mantle-hem.
 Come back, then, noble pride, for 'tis her
 dower!
 How could poet ever tower,
 If his passions, hopes, and fears,
 If his triumphs and his tears,
 Kept not measure with his people? 380
 Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds and
 waves!
 Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking
 steeple!
 Banners, advance with triumph, bend your
 staves!
 And from every mountain-peak
 Let beacon-fire to answering beacon
 speak,
 Katahdin tell Monadnock, Whiteface he,
 And so leap on in light from sea to sea,
 Till the glad news be sent
 Across a kindling continent,
 Making earth feel more firm and air breathe
 braver: 390
 "Be proud! for she is saved, and all have
 helped to save her!
 She that lifts up the manhood of the
 poor,
 She of the open soul and open door,
 With room about her hearth for all man-
 kind!
 The fire is dreadful in her eyes no more;
 From her bold front the helm she doth
 unbind,
 Sends all her handmaid armies back to
 spin,
 And bids her navies, that so lately hurled

Their crashing battle, hold their thun-
 ders in,
 Swimming like birds of calm along the
 unharmful shore. 400
 No challenge sends she to the elder world,
 That looked askance and hated; a light
 scorn
 Plays o'er her mouth, as round her
 mighty knees
 She calls her children back, and waits
 the morn
 Of nobler day, enthroned between her sub-
 ject seas."

XII

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found
 release!
 Thy God, in these distempered days,
 Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His
 ways,
 And through thine enemies hath wrought thy
 peace!
 Bow down in prayer and praise! 410
 No poorest in thy borders but may now
 Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised
 brow.
 O Beautiful! my Country! ours once more!
 Smoothing thy gold of war-disheveled hair
 O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
 And letting thy set lips,
 Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
 The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
 What words divine of lover or of poet
 Could tell our love and make thee know
 it, 420
 Among the Nations bright beyond compare?
 What were our lives without thee?
 What all our lives to save thee?
 We reck not what we gave thee;
 We will not dare to doubt thee,
 But ask whatever else, and we will dare!

AN EMBER PICTURE ¹

How strange are the freaks of memory!
 The lessons of life we forget,
 While a trifle, a trick of color,
 In the wonderful web is set,—
 Set by some mordant of fancy,
 And, spite of the wear and tear
 Of time or distance or trouble,
 Insists on its right to be there.

¹ Written in 1867.

A chance had brought us together;
 Our talk was of matters-of-course; 10
 We were nothing, one to the other,
 But a short half-hour's resource.

We spoke of French acting and actors,
 And their easy, natural way:
 Of the weather, for it was raining
 As we drove home from the play.

We debated the social nothings
 We bore ourselves so to discuss;
 The thunderous rumors of battle 20
 Were silent the while for us.

Arrived at her door, we left her
 With a drippingly hurried adieu,
 And our wheels went crunching the gravel
 Of the oak-darkened avenue.

As we drove away through the shadow,
 The candle she held in the door
 From rain-varnished tree-trunk to tree-trunk
 Flashed fainter, and flashed no more;—

Flashed fainter, then wholly faded
 Before we had passed the wood; 30
 But the light of the face behind it
 Went with me and stayed for good.

The vision of scarce a moment,
 And hardly marked at the time,
 It comes unbidden to haunt me,
 Like a scrap of ballad-rhyme.

Had she beauty? Well, not what they call so;
 You may find a thousand as fair;
 And yet there's her face in my memory
 With no special claim to be there. 40

As I sit sometimes in the twilight,
 And call back to life in the coals
 Old faces and hopes and fancies
 Long buried (good rest to their souls!),

Her face shines out in the embers;
 I see her holding the light,
 And hear the crunch of the gravel
 And the sweep of the rain that night.

'Tis a face that can never grow older,
 That never can part with its gleam, 50
 'Tis a gracious possession forever,
 For is it not all a dream?

LEAVES FROM MY JOURNAL IN ITALY AND ELSEWHERE¹

IV. A FEW BITS OF ROMAN MOSAIC

BYRON hit the white, which he often shot very wide of in his Italian Guide Book, when he called Rome "my country." But it is a feeling which comes to one slowly, and is absorbed into one's system during a long residence. Perhaps one does not feel it till one has gone away, as things always seem fairer when we look back at them, and it is out of that inaccessible tower of the past that Longing leans and beckons. However it be, Fancy gets a rude shock at entering Rome, which it takes her a great while to get over. She has gradually made herself believe that she is approaching a city of the dead, and has seen nothing on the road from Civita Vecchia to disturb that theory. Milestones, with "Via Aurelia" carved upon them, have confirmed it. It is eighteen hundred years ago with her, and on the dial of time the shadow has not yet trembled over the line that marks the beginning of the first century. She arrives at the gate, and a dirty, blue man, with a cocked hat and a white sword-belt, asks for her passport. Then another man, as like the first as one spoon is like its fellow, and having, like him, the look of being run in a mold, tells her that she must go to the custom-house. It is as if a ghost, who had scarcely recovered from the jar of hearing Charon say, "I'll trouble you for your obolus, if you please," should have his port-manteau seized by the Stygian tide-waiters to be searched. Is there anything, then, contraband of death? asks poor Fancy of herself.

But it is the misfortune (or the safeguard) of the English mind that Fancy is always an outlaw, liable to be laid by the heels wherever Constable Common Sense can catch her. She submits quietly as the postilion cries, "*Yee-ee!*" cracks his whip, and the rattle over the pavement begins, struggles a moment when the pillars of the colonnade stalk ghostly by in the moonlight, and finally gives up all for

¹ First published in *Graham's Magazine* in 1854, the fruit of a period of about 15 months spent by Lowell and his wife in Europe in 1851-1852. The *Journal* is printed in 4 parts, the three preceding the one given above being entitled: *At Sea*, *In the Mediterranean*, and *Italy*.

lost when she sees Bernini's angels polking on their pedestals along the sides of the Ponte Sant' Angelo with the emblems of the Passion in their arms.

You are in Rome, of course; the *sbirro*¹ said so, the *doganiere*² bowed it, and the postilion swore it; but it is a Rome of modern houses, muddy streets, dingy *caffès*, cigar-smokers, and French soldiers, the manifest junior of Florence. And yet full of anachronisms, for in a little while you pass the column of Antoninus, find the *Dogana*³ in an ancient temple whose furrowed pillars show through the recent plaster, and feel as if you saw the statue of Minerva in a Paris bonnet. You are driven to a hotel where all the barbarian languages are spoken in one wild conglomerate by the *Commissionnaire*, have your dinner wholly in French, and wake the next morning dreaming of the Tenth Legion, to see a regiment of *Chasseurs de Vincennes* trotting by.

For a few days one undergoes a tremendous recoil. Other places have a distinct meaning. London is the visible throne of King Stock; Versailles is the apotheosis of one of Louis XIV's cast periwigs; Florence and Pisa are cities of the Middle Ages; but Rome seems to be a parody upon itself. The ticket that admits you to see the starting of the horses at carnival has S. P. Q. R. at the top of it, and you give the *custode* a paul for showing you the wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus. The *Senatus* seems to be a score or so of elderly gentlemen in scarlet, and the *Populusque Romanus* a swarm of nasty friars.

But there is something more than mere earth in the spot where great deeds have been done. The surveyor cannot give the true dimensions of Marathon or Lexington, for they are not reducible to square acres. Dead glory and greatness leave ghosts behind them, and departed empire has a metempsychosis, if nothing else has. Its spirit haunts the grave, and waits, and waits till at last it finds a body to its mind, slips into it, and historians moralize on the fluctuation of human affairs. By and by, perhaps, enough observations will have been recorded to assure us that these recurrences are firmamental, and historionomers will have meas-

ured accurately the sidereal years of races. When that is once done, events will move with the quiet of an orrery, and nations will consent to their peridynamis and apodynamis with planetary composure.

Be this as it may, you become gradually aware of the presence of this imperial ghost among the Roman ruins. You receive hints and startles of it through the senses first, as the horse always shies at the apparition before the rider can see it. Then, little by little, you become assured of it, and seem to hear the brush of its mantle through some hall of Caracalla's baths, or one of those other solitudes of Rome. And those solitudes are without a parallel; for it is not the mere absence of man, but the sense of his departure, that makes a profound loneliness. Musing upon them, you cannot but feel the shadow of that disembodied empire, and, remembering how the foundations of the Capitol were laid where a human head was turned up, you are impelled to prophesy that the Idea of Rome will incarnate itself again as soon as an Italian brain is found large enough to hold it, and to give unity to those discordant members.

But, though I intend to observe no regular pattern in my Roman mosaic, which will resemble more what one finds in his pockets after a walk,—a pagan cube or two from the palaces of the Cæsars, a few Byzantine bits, given with many shrugs of secrecy by a lay-brother at San Paolo *fuori le mura*,⁴ and a few more (quite as ancient) from the manufactory at the Vatican,—it seems natural to begin what one has to say of Rome with something about St. Peter's; for the saint sits at the gate here as well as in Paradise.

It is very common for people to say that they are disappointed in the first sight of St. Peter's; and one hears much the same about Niagara. I cannot help thinking that the fault is in themselves; and that if the church and the cataract were in the habit of giving away their thoughts with that rash generosity which characterizes tourists, they might perhaps say of their visitors, "Well, if *you* are those Men of whom we have heard so much, we are a little disappointed, to tell the truth!" The refined tourist expects somewhat too much when he takes it for

¹ Policeman.

² Custom-house officer.

³ Custom-bureau.

⁴ Beyond the walls (of the city).

granted that St. Peter's will at once decorate him with the order of imagination, just as Victoria knights an alderman when he presents an address. Or perhaps he has been getting up a little architecture on the road from Florence, and is discomfited because he does not know whether he *ought* to be pleased or not, which is very much as if he should wait to be told whether it was fresh water or salt which makes the exhaustless grace of Niagara's emerald curve, before he benignly consented to approve. It would be wiser, perhaps, for him to consider whether, if Michael Angelo had had the building of *him*, his own personal style would not have been more impressive.

It is not to be doubted that minds are of as many different orders as cathedrals, and that the Gothic imagination is vexed and discommoded in the vain endeavor to flatten its pinnacles, and fit itself into the round Roman arches. But if it be impossible for a man to like everything, it is quite possible for him to avoid being driven mad by what does not please him; nay, it is the imperative duty of a wise man to find out what that secret is which makes a thing pleasing to another. In approaching St. Peter's, one must take his Protestant shoes off his feet, and leave them behind him, in the Piazza Rusticucci. Otherwise the great Basilica, with those outstretching colonnades of Bramante, will seem to be a bloated spider lying in wait for him, the poor heretic fly. As he lifts the heavy leathern flapper over the door, and is discharged into the interior by its impetuous recoil, let him disburthen his mind altogether of stone and mortar, and think only that he is standing before the throne of a dynasty which, even in its decay, is the most powerful the world ever saw. Mason-work is all very well in itself, but it has nothing to do with the affair at present in hand.

Suppose that a man in pouring down a glass of claret could drink the South of France, that he could so disintegrate the wine by the force of imagination as to taste in it all the clustered beauty and bloom of the grape, all the dance and song and sun-burnt jollity of the vintage. Or suppose that in eating bread he could transubstantiate it with the tender blade of spring, the gleam-flitted corn-ocean of summer, the royal

autumn, with its golden beard, and the merry funerals of harvest. This is what the great poets do for us, we cannot tell how, with their fatally-chosen words, crowding the happy veins of language again with all the life and meaning and music that had been dribbling away from them since Adam. And this is what the Roman Church does for religion, feeding the soul not with the essential religious sentiment, not with a drop or two of the tincture of worship, but making us feel one by one all those original elements of which worship is composed; not bringing the end to us, but making us pass over and feel beneath our feet all the golden rounds of the ladder by which the climbing generations have reached that end; not handing us dryly a dead and extinguished Q. E. D., but letting it rather declare itself by the glory with which it interfuses the incense-clouds of wonder and aspiration and beauty in which it is veiled. The secret of her power is typified in the mystery of the Real Presence. She is the only church that has been loyal to the heart and soul of man, that has clung to her faith in the imagination, and that would not give over her symbols and images and sacred vessels to the perilous keeping of the iconoclast Understanding. She has never lost sight of the truth, that the product human nature is composed of the sum of flesh and spirit, and has accordingly regarded both this world and the next as the constituents of that other world which we possess by faith. She knows that poor Panza, the body, has his kitchen longings and visions, as well as Quixote, the soul, his ethereal, and has wit enough to supply him with the visible, tangible raw material of imagination. She is the only poet among the churches, and, while Protestantism is unrolling a pocket surveyor's-plan, takes her votary to the pinnacle of her temple, and shows him meadow, upland, and tillage, cloudy heaps of forest clasped with the river's jeweled arm, hillsides white with the perpetual snow of flocks, and, beyond all, the interminable heave of the unknown ocean. Her empire may be traced upon the map by the boundaries of races; the understanding is her great foe; and it is the people whose vocabulary was incomplete till they had invented the archword Humbug that defies her. With that leaden bullet John Bull can bring down Sentiment when she flies her

highest. And the more the pity for John Bull. One of these days some one whose eyes are sharp enough will read in the *Times* a standing advertisement, "Lost, strayed, or stolen from the farmyard of the subscriber the valuable horse Pegasus. Probably has on him part of a new plough-harness, as that is also missing. A suitable reward, etc. J. BULL."

Protestantism reverses the poetical process I have spoken of above, and gives not even the bread of life, but instead of it the alcohol, or distilled intellectual result. This was very well so long as Protestantism continued to protest; for enthusiasm sublimates the understanding into imagination. But now that she also has become an establishment, she begins to perceive that she made a blunder in trusting herself to the intellect alone. She is beginning to feel her way back again, as one notices in Puseyism, and other such hints. One is put upon reflection when one sees burly Englishmen, who dine on beef and porter every day, marching proudly through St. Peter's on Palm Sunday, with those frightfully artificial palm-branches in their hands. Romanism wisely provides for the childish in men.

Therefore I say again, that one must lay aside his Protestantism in order to have a true feeling of St. Peter's. Here in Rome is the laboratory of that mysterious enchantress, who has known so well how to adapt herself to all the wants, or, if you will, the weaknesses of human nature, making the retirement of the convent-cell a merit to the solitary, the scourge or the fast a piety to the ascetic, the enjoyment of pomp and music and incense a religious act in the sensual, and furnishing for the very soul itself a *confidante* in that ear of the dumb confessional, where it may securely disburthen itself of its sins and sorrows. And the dome of St. Peter's is the magic circle within which she works her most potent incantations. I confess that I could not enter it alone without a kind of awe.

But, setting entirely aside the effect of this church upon the imagination, it is wonderful, if one consider it only materially. Michael Angelo created a new world in which everything was colossal, and it might seem that he built this as a fit temple for those gigantic figures with which he peopled it to worship in. Here his Moses should be high-priest,

the service should be chanted by his prophets and sibyls, and those great pagans should be brought hither from San Lorenzo in Florence, to receive baptism.

However unsatisfactory in other matters, statistics are of service here. I have seen a refined tourist who entered, Murray in hand, sternly resolved to have St. Peter's look small, brought to terms at once by being told that the canopy over the high altar (looking very like a four-post bedstead) was ninety-eight feet high. If he still obstinates himself, he is finished by being made to measure one of the marble *putti*,¹ which look like rather stoutish babies, and are found to be six feet, every sculptor's son of them. This ceremony is the more interesting, as it enables him to satisfy the guide of his proficiency in the Italian tongue by calling them *putty* at every convenient opportunity. Otherwise both he and his assistant terrify each other into mutual unintelligibility with that *lingua franca* of the English-speaking traveler, which is supposed to bear some remote affinity to the French language, of which both parties are as ignorant as an American Ambassador.

Murray gives all these little statistical nudges to the Anglo-Saxon imagination; but he knows that its finest nerves are in the pocket, and accordingly ends by telling you how much the church cost. I forget how much it is; but it cannot be more, I fancy, than the English national debt multiplied into itself three hundred and sixty-five times. If the pilgrim, honestly anxious for a sensation, will work out this little sum, he will be sure to receive all that enlargement of the imaginative faculty which arithmetic can give him. Perhaps the most dilating fact, after all, is that this architectural world has also a separate atmosphere, distinct from that of Rome by some ten degrees, and unvarying through the year.

I think that, on the whole, Jonathan gets ready to be pleased with St. Peter's sooner than Bull. Accustomed to our lath and plaster expedients for churches, the portable sentry-boxes of Zion, mere solidity and permanence are pleasurable in themselves; and if he get grandeur also, he has Gospel measure. Besides, it is easy for Jonathan to travel. He is one drop of a fluid mass, who

¹ Boys.

knows where his home is to-day, but can make no guess of where it may be to-morrow. Even in a form of government he only takes lodgings for the night, and is ready to pay his bill and be off in the morning. He should take his motto from Bishop Golias's "*Mihi est propositum in tabernâ mori*,"¹ though not in the sufstic sense of that misunderstood Churchman. But Bull can seldom be said to travel at all, since the first step of a true traveler is out of himself. He plays cricket and hunts foxes on the Campagna, makes entries in his betting-book while the Pope is giving his benediction, and points out Lord Calico to you awfully during the Sistine *Miserere*. If he let his beard grow, it always has a startled air, as if it suddenly remembered its treason to Sheffield, and only makes him look more English than ever. A masquerade is impossible to him, and his fancy balls are the solemnest facts in the world. Accordingly, he enters St. Peter's with the dome of St. Paul's drawn tight over his eyes, like a criminal's cap, and ready for instant execution rather than confess that the English Wren had not a stronger wing than the Italian Angel. I like this in Bull, and it renders him the pleasantest of traveling-companions; for he makes you take England along with you, and thus you have two countries at once. And one must not forget in an Italian inn that it is to Bull he owes the clean napkins and sheets, and the privilege of his morning bath. Nor should Bull himself fail to remember that he ate with his fingers till the Italian gave him a fork.

Browning has given the best picture of St. Peter's on a festival-day, sketching it with a few verses in his large style. And doubtless it is the scene of the grandest spectacles which the world can see in these latter days. Those Easter pomps, where the antique world marches visibly before you in gilded mail and crimson doublet, refresh the eyes, and are good so long as they continue to be merely spectacle. But if one think for a moment of the servant of the servants of the Lord in cloth of gold, borne on men's shoulders, or of the children receiving the blessing of their Holy Father, with a regiment of French soldiers to protect the father from the children, it becomes a little sad.

If one would feel the full meaning of those ceremonials, however, let him consider the coincidences between the Romish and the Buddhist forms of worship, and remembering that the Pope is the direct heir, through the Pontifex Maximus, of rites that were ancient when the Etruscans were modern, he will look with a feeling deeper than curiosity upon forms which record the earliest conquests of the Invisible, the first triumphs of mind over muscle.

To me the noon silence and solitude of St. Peter's were most impressive, when the sunlight, made visible by the mist of the ever-burning lamps in which it was entangled, hovered under the dome like the holy dove goldenly descending. Very grand also is the twilight, when all outlines melt into mysterious vastness, and the arches expand and lose themselves in the deepening shadow. Then, standing in the desert transept, you hear the far-off vespers swell and die like low breathings of the sea on some conjectured shore.

As the sky is supposed to scatter its golden star-pollen once every year in meteoric showers, so the dome of St. Peter's has its annual efflorescence of fire. This illumination is the great show of Papal Rome. Just after sunset, I stood upon the Trinità dei Monti and saw the little drops of pale light creeping downward from the cross and trickling over the dome. Then, as the sky darkened behind, it seemed as if the setting sun had lodged upon the horizon and there burned out, the fire still clinging to his massy ribs. And when the change from the silver to the golden illumination came, it was as if the breeze had fanned the embers into flame again.

Bitten with the Anglo-Saxon gadfly that drives us all to disenchant artifice, and see the springs that fix it on, I walked down to get a nearer look. My next glimpse was from the bridge of Sant' Angelo; but there was no time nor space for pause. Foot-passengers crowding hither and thither, as they heard the shout of *Avanti!* from the mile of coachmen behind, dragoon-horses curtsying backward just where there were most women and children to be flattened, and the dome drawing all eyes and thoughts the wrong way, made a hubbub to be got out of at any desperate hazard. Besides, one could not

¹ I intend to die in a tavern.

help feeling nervously hurried; for it seemed quite plain to everybody that this starry apparition must be as momentary as it was wonderful, and that we should find it vanished when we reached the piazza. But suddenly you stand in front of it, and see the soft travertine of the front suffused with a tremulous, glooming glow, a mildened glory, as if the building breathed, and so transmuted its shadow into soft pulses of light.

After wondering long enough, I went back to the Pincio, and watched it for an hour longer. But I did not wish to see it go out. It seemed better to go home and leave it still trembling, so that I could fancy a kind of permanence in it, and half believe I should find it there again some lucky evening. Before leaving it altogether, I went away to cool my eyes with darkness, and came back several times; and every time it was a new miracle, the more so that it was a human piece of faëry-work. Beautiful as fire is in itself, I suspect that part of the pleasure is metaphysical, and that the sense of playing with an element which can be so terrible adds to the zest of the spectacle. And then fire is not the least degraded by it, because it is not utilized. If beauty were in use, the factory would add a grace to the river, and we should turn from the fire-writing on the wall of heaven to look at a message printed by the magnetic telegraph. There may be a beauty in the use itself; but utilization is always downward, and it is this feeling that makes Schiller's Pegasus in yoke so universally pleasing. So long as the curse of work clings to man, he will see beauty only in play. The capital of the most frugal commonwealth in the world burns up five thousand dollars a year in gunpowder, and nobody murmurs. Provident Judas wished to utilize the ointment, but the Teacher would rather that it should be wasted in poem.

The best lesson in æsthetics I ever got (and, like most good lessons, it fell from the lips of no regular professor) was from an Irishman on the day the Nymph Cochituate was formally introduced to the people of Boston. I made one with other rustics in the streets, admiring the dignitaries in coaches with as much Christian charity as is consistent with an elbow in the pit of one's stomach and a heel on that toe which is your only inheritance from two excellent grandfathers. Among

other allegorical phenomena, there came along what I should have called a hay-cart, if I had not known it was a triumphal car, filled with that fairest variety of mortal grass which with us is apt to spindle so soon into a somewhat sapless womanhood. Thirty-odd young maidens in white gowns, with blue sashes and pink wreaths of French crape, represented the United States. (How shall we limit our number, by the way, if ever Utah be admitted?) The ship, the printing-press, even the wondrous train of express-wagons, and other solid bits of civic fantasy, had left my Hibernian neighbor unmoved. But this brought him down. Turning to me, as the most appreciative public for the moment, with face of as much delight as if his head had been broken, he cried, "Now this is *raly* beautiful! Tothally regyardless uv expinse!" Methought my shirt-sleeved lecturer on the Beautiful had hit at least one nail full on the head. Voltaire but epigrammatized the same thought when he said, *Le superflu, chose très-nécessaire*.

As for the ceremonies of the Church, one need not waste time in seeing many of them. There is a dreary sameness in them, and one can take an hour here and an hour there, as it pleases him, just as sure of finding the same pattern as he would be in the first or last yard of a roll of printed cotton. For myself, I do not like to go and look with mere curiosity at what is sacred and solemn to others. To how many these Roman shows are sacred, I cannot guess; but certainly the Romans do not value them much. I walked out to the grotto of Egeria on Easter Sunday, that I might not be tempted down to St. Peter's to see the mockery of Pio Nono's benediction. It is certainly Christian, for he blesses them that curse him, and does all the good which the waving of his fingers can do to people who would use him despitefully if they had the chance. I told an Italian servant she might have the day; but she said she did not care for it.

"But," urged I, "will you not go to receive the blessing of the Holy Father?"

"No, sir."

"Do you not wish it?"

"Not in the least; *his* blessing would do me no good. If I get the blessing of Heaven, it will serve my turn."

There were three families of foreigners in our house, and I believe none of the Italian servants went to St. Peter's that day. Yet they commonly speak kindly of Pius. I have heard the same phrase from several Italians of the working-class. "He is a good man," they said, "but ill-led."

What one sees in the streets of Rome is worth more than what one sees in the churches. The churches themselves are generally ugly. St. Peter's has crushed all the life out of architectural genius, and all the modern churches look as if they were swelling themselves in imitation of the great Basilica. There is a clumsy magnificence about them, and their heaviness oppresses. Their marble incrustations look like a kind of architectural elephantiasis, and the parts are puffy with a dropsical want of proportion. There is none of the spring and soar which one may see even in the Lombard churches, and a Roman column standing near one of them, slim and gentlemanlike, satirizes silently their tawdry *parvenuism*. Attempts at mere bigness are ridiculous in a city where the Colosseum still yawns in crater-like ruin, and where Michael Angelo made a noble church out of a single room in Diocletian's baths.

Shall I confess it? Michael Angelo seems to me, in his angry reaction against sentimental beauty, to have mistaken bulk and brawn for the antithesis of feebleness. He is the apostle of the exaggerated, the Victor Hugo of painting and sculpture. I have a feeling that rivalry was a more powerful motive with him than love of art, that he had the conscious intention to be original, which seldom leads to anything better than being extravagant. The show of muscle proves strength, not power; and force for mere force's sake in art makes one think of Milo caught in his own log. This is my second thought, and strikes me as perhaps somewhat niggardly toward one in whom you cannot help feeling there was so vast a possibility. And then his Eve, his David, his Sibyls, his Prophets, his Sonnets! Well, I take it all back, and come round to St. Peter's again just to hint that I doubt about domes. In Rome they are so much the fashion that I felt as if they were the *goiter* of architecture. Generally they look heavy. Those on St. Mark's in Venice are the only light ones I ever saw, and they look almost airy, like

tents puffed out with wind. I suppose one must be satisfied with the interior effect, which is certainly noble in St. Peter's. But for impressiveness both within and without there is nothing like a Gothic cathedral for me, nothing that crowns a city so nobly, or makes such an island of twilight silence in the midst of its noonday clamors.

Now as to what one sees in the streets, the beggars are certainly the first things that draw the eye. Beggary is an institution here. The Church has sanctified it by the establishment of mendicant orders, and indeed it is the natural result of a social system where the non-producing class makes not only the laws, but the ideas. The beggars of Rome go far toward proving the diversity of origin in mankind, for on them surely the curse of Adam never fell. It is easier to fancy that Adam *Vaurien*, the first tenant of the Fool's Paradise, after sucking his thumbs for a thousand years, took to wife Eve *Faniente*, and became the progenitor of this race, to whom also he left a calendar in which three hundred and sixty-five days in the year were made feasts, sacred from all secular labor. Accordingly, they not merely do nothing, but they do it assiduously and almost with religious fervor. I have seen ancient members of this sect as constant at their accustomed street-corner as the bit of broken column on which they sat; and when a man does this in rainy weather, as rainy weather is in Rome, he has the spirit of a fanatic and martyr.

It is not that the Italians are a lazy people. On the contrary, I am satisfied that they are industrious so far as they are allowed to be. But, as I said before, when a Roman does nothing, he does it in the high Roman fashion. A friend of mine was having one of his rooms arranged for a private theater, and sent for a person who was said to be an expert in the business to do it for him. After a day's trial, he was satisfied that his lieutenant was rather a hindrance than a help, and resolved to dismiss him.

"What is your charge for your day's services?"

"Two scudi, sir."

"Two scudi! Five pauls would be too much. You have done nothing but stand with your hands in your pockets and get in the way of other people."

"Lordship is perfectly right; but *that* is my way of working."

It is impossible for a stranger to say who may *not* beg in Rome. It seems to be a sudden madness that may seize any one at the sight of a foreigner. You see a very respectable-looking person in the street, and it is odds but, as you pass him, his hat comes off, his whole figure suddenly dilapidates itself, assuming a tremble of professional weakness, and you hear the everlasting *qualche cosa per carità!* You are in doubt whether to drop a bajoccho into the next cardinal's hat which offers you its sacred cavity in answer to your salute. You begin to believe that the hat was invented for the sole purpose of engulfing coppers, and that its highest type is the great *Triregno* itself, into which the pence of Peter rattle.

But you soon learn to distinguish the established beggars, and to the three professions elsewhere considered liberal you add a fourth for this latitude,—mendicancy. Its professors look upon themselves as a kind of guild which ought to be protected by the government. I fell into talk with a woman who begged of me in the Colosseum. Among other things she complained that the government did not at all consider the poor.

"Where is the government that does?" I said.

"*Eh già!* Excellency; but this government lets beggars from the country come into Rome, which is a great injury to the trade of us born Romans. There is Beppo, for example; he is a man of property in his own town, and has a dinner of three courses every day. He has portioned two daughters with three thousand scudi each, and left Rome during the time of the Republic with the rest of the nobility."

At first, one is shocked and pained at the exhibition of deformities in the street. But by and by he comes to look upon them with little more emotion than is excited by seeing the tools of any other trade. The melancholy of the beggars is purely a matter of business; and they look upon their maims as Fortunatus purses, which will always give them money. A withered arm they present to you as a highwayman would his pistol; a *goiter* is a life-annuity; a St. Vitus dance is as good as an engagement as *prima ballerina*

at the Apollo; and to have no legs at all is to stand on the best footing with fortune. They are a merry race, on the whole, and quick-witted, like the rest of their countrymen. I believe the regular fee for a beggar is a *quattrino*, about a quarter of a cent; but they expect more of foreigners. A friend of mine once gave one of these tiny coins to an old woman; she delicately expressed her resentment by exclaiming, "Thanks, *signoria*. God will reward *even* you!"

A begging friar came to me one day with a subscription for repairing his convent. "Ah, but I am a heretic," said I. "Undoubtedly," with a shrug, implying a respectful acknowledgment of a foreigner's right to choose warm and dry lodgings in the other world as well as in this, "but your money is perfectly orthodox."

Another favorite way of doing nothing is to excavate the Forum. I think the *Fanientes* like this all the better, because it seems a kind of satire upon work, as the witches parody the Christian offices of devotion at their Sabbath. A score or so of old men in voluminous cloaks shift the earth from one side of a large pit to the other, in a manner so leisurely that it is positive repose to look at them. The most bigoted anti-Fourierist might acknowledge this to be attractive industry.

One conscript father trails a small barrow up to another, who stands leaning on a long spade. Arriving, he fumbles for his snuff-box, and offers it deliberately to his friend. Each takes an ample pinch, and both seat themselves to await the result. If one should sneeze, he receives the *Felicità!* of the other; and, after allowing the titillation to subside, he replies, *Grazia!* Then follows a little conversation, and then they prepare to load. But it occurs to the barrow-driver that this is a good opportunity to fill and light his pipe; and to do so conveniently he needs his barrow to sit upon. He draws a few whiffs, and a little more conversation takes place. The barrow is now ready; but first the wielder of the spade will fill *his* pipe also. This done, more whiffs and more conversation. Then a spoonful of earth is thrown into the barrow, and it starts on its return. But midway it meets an empty barrow, and both stop to go through the snuff-box ceremonial once more, and to discuss whatever new thing has

occurred in the excavation since their last encounter. And so it goes on all day.

As I see more of material antiquity, I begin to suspect that my interest in it is mostly factitious. The relations of races to the physical world (only to be studied fruitfully on the spot) do not excite in me an interest at all proportionate to that I feel in their influence on the moral advance of mankind, which one may as easily trace in his own library as on the spot. The only useful remark I remember to have made here is, that, the situation of Rome being far less strong than that of any city of the Etruscan league, it must have been built where it is for purposes of commerce. It is the most defensible point near the mouth of the Tiber. It is only as rival trades-folk that Rome and Carthage had any comprehensible cause of quarrel. It is only as a commercial people that we can understand the early tendency of the Romans toward democracy. As for antiquity, after reading history, one is haunted by a discomfiting suspicion that the names so painfully deciphered in hieroglyphic or arrow-head inscriptions are only so many more Smiths and Browns masking it in unknown tongues. Moreover, if we Yankees are twitted with not knowing the difference between *big* and *great*, may not those of us who have learned it turn round on many a monument over here with the same reproach? I confess I am beginning to sympathize with a countryman of ours from Michigan, who asked our Minister to direct him to a specimen ruin and a specimen gallery, that he might see and be rid of them once for all. I saw three young Englishmen going through the Vatican by catalogue and number, the other day, in a fashion which John Bull is apt to consider exclusively American. "Number 300!" says the one with catalogue and pencil, "have you seen it?" "Yes," answer his two comrades, and, checking it off, he goes on with Number 301. Having witnessed the unavailing agonies of many Anglo-Saxons from both sides of the Atlantic in their effort to have the correct sensation before many hideous examples of antique bad taste, my heart warmed toward my business-like British cousins, who were doing their æsthetics in this thrifty auctioneer fashion. Our cart-before-horse education,

which makes us more familiar with the history and literature of Greeks and Romans than with those of our own ancestry (though there is nothing in ancient art to match Shakespeare or a Gothic minster), makes us the gulls of what we call classical antiquity. Europe were worth visiting, if only to be rid of this one old man of the sea. In sculpture, to be sure, they have us on the hip.

I am not ashamed to confess a singular sympathy with what are known as the Middle Ages. I cannot help thinking that few periods have left behind them such traces of inventiveness and power. Nothing is more tiresome than the sameness of modern cities; and it has often struck me that this must also have been true of those ancient ones in which Greek architecture or its derivatives prevailed,—true at least as respects public buildings. But medieval towns, especially in Italy, even when only fifty miles asunder, have an individuality of character as marked as that of trees. Nor is it merely this originality that attracts me, but likewise the sense that, however old, they are nearer to me in being modern and Christian. Far enough away in the past to be picturesque, they are still so near through sympathies of thought and belief as to be more companionable. I find it harder to bridge over the gulf of Paganism than of centuries. Apart from any difference in the men, I had a far deeper emotion when I stood on the *Sasso di Dante*,¹ than at Horace's Sabine farm or by the tomb of Virgil. The latter, indeed, interested me chiefly by its association with comparatively modern legend; and one of the buildings I am most glad to have seen in Rome is the Bear Inn, where Montaigne lodged on his arrival.

I think it must have been for some such reason that I liked my Florentine better than my Roman walks, though I am vastly more contented with merely being in Rome. Florence is more noisy; indeed, I think it the noisiest town I was ever in. What with the continual jangling of its bells, the rattle of Austrian drums, and the street-cries, *Ancora mi raccapriccia*.² The Italians are a vociferous people, and most so among them the Florentines. Walking through a back street one day, I saw an old woman higgling with a peripatetic dealer, who, at every interval

¹ Tomb of Dante.

² I still am horrified.

afforded him by the remarks of his veteran antagonist, would tip his head on one side, and shout, with a kind of wondering enthusiasm, as if he could hardly trust the evidence of his own senses to such loveliness, *O, che bellezza! che belle-e-zza!* The two had been contending as obstinately as the Greeks and Trojans over the body of Patroclus, and I was curious to know what was the object of so much desire on the one side and admiration on the other. It was a half-dozen of weazeny baked pears, beggarly remnant of the day's traffic. Another time I stopped before a stall, debating whether to buy some fine-looking peaches. Before I had made up my mind, the vender, a stout fellow, with a voice like a prize-bull of Bashan, opened a mouth round and large as the muzzle of a blunderbuss, and let fly into my ear the following pertinent observation: "*Belle pesche! belle pe-e-esche!*" (*crescendo*). I stared at him in stunned bewilderment; but, seeing that he had reloaded and was about to fire again, took to my heels, the exploded syllables rattling after me like so many buck-shot. A single turnip is argument enough with them till midnight; nay, I have heard a ruffian yelling over a covered basket, which, I am convinced, was empty, and only carried as an excuse for his stupendous vocalism. It never struck me before what a quiet people Americans are.

Of the pleasant places within easy walk of Rome, I prefer the garden of the Villa Albani, as being most Italian. One does not go to Italy for examples of Price on the Picturesque. Compared with landscape-gardening, it is Racine to Shakespeare, I grant; but it has its own charm, nevertheless. I like the balustraded terraces, the sun-proof laurel walks, the vases and statues. It is only in such a climate that it does not seem inhuman to thrust a naked statue out of doors. Not to speak of their incongruity, how dreary do those white figures look at Fountains Abbey in that shrewd Yorkshire atmosphere! To put them there shows the same bad taste that led Prince Polonia, as Thackeray calls him, to build an artificial ruin within a mile of Rome. But I doubt if the Italian garden will bear transplantation. Farther north, or under a less constant sunshine, it is but half-hardy at the best. Within the city, the garden of the French Academy is my favorite

retreat, because little frequented; and there is an arbor there in which I have read comfortably (sitting where the sun could reach me) in January. By the way, there is something very agreeable in the way these people have of making a kind of fireside of the sunshine. With us it is either too hot or too cool, or we are too busy. But, on the other hand, they have no such thing as a chimney-corner.

Of course I haunt the collections of art faithfully; but my favorite gallery, after all, is the street. There I always find something entertaining, at least. The other day, on my way to the Colonna Palace, I passed the Fountain of Trevi, from which the water is now shut off on account of repairs to the aqueduct. A scanty rill of soapsudsy liquid still trickled from one of the conduits, and, seeing a crowd, I stopped to find out what nothing or other had gathered it. One charm of Rome is that nobody has anything in particular to do, or, if he has, can always stop doing it on the slightest pretext. I found that some eels had been discovered, and a very vivacious hunt was going on, the chief Nimrods being boys. I happened to be the first to see a huge eel wriggling from the mouth of a pipe, and pointed him out. Two lads at once rushed upon him. One essayed the capture with his naked hands, the other, more provident, had armed himself with a rag of woolen cloth with which to maintain his grip more securely. Hardly had this latter arrested his slippery prize, when a ragged rascal, watching his opportunity, snatched it away, and instantly secured it by thrusting the head into his mouth, and closing on it a set of teeth like an ivory vice. But alas for ill-got gain! Rob Roy's

Good old plan,
That he should take who has the power,
And he should keep who can,

did not serve here. There is scarce a square rood in Rome without one or more stately cocked hats in it, emblems of authority and police. I saw the flash of the snow-white cross-belts, gleaming through that dingy crowd like the *panache*¹ of Henri Quatre at Ivry, I saw the mad plunge of the canvas-shielded head-piece, sacred and terrible as that of Gessler; and while the greedy throng

¹ Plume.

were dancing about the anguillicept, each taking his chance twitch at the undulating object of all wishes, the captor dodging his head hither and thither (vulnerable, like Achilles, only in his 'eel, as a Cockney tourist would say), a pair of broad blue shoulders parted the assailants as a ship's bows part a wave, a pair of blue arms, terminating in gloves of Berlin thread, were stretched forth, not in benediction, one hand grasped the slippery Briseis by the waist, the other bestowed a cuff on the jaw-bone of Achilles, which loosened (rather by its authority than its physical force) the hitherto refractory incisors, a snuffy bandanna was produced, the prisoner was deposited in this temporary watch-house, and the cocked hat sailed majestically away with the property thus sequestered for the benefit of the state.

*Gaudeant anguilla si mortuus sit homo ille,
Qui, quasi morte reas, excruciat eas!*¹

If you have got through that last sentence without stopping for breath, you are fit to begin on the Homer of Chapman, who, both as translator and author, has the longest wind (especially for a comparison), without being long-winded, of all writers I know anything of, not excepting Jeremy Taylor.

THOREAU²

WHAT contemporary, if he was in the fighting period of his life (since Nature sets limits about her conscription for spiritual fields, as the state does in physical warfare), will ever forget what was somewhat vaguely called the "Transcendental Movement" of thirty years ago? Apparently set astir by Carlyle's essays on the "Signs of the Times," and on "History," the final and more immediate impulse seemed to be given by *Sartor*

¹ Eels would rejoice if that man should die who tormented them as if they were condemned to death!

² First published in *North American Review*, 1865. W. C. Brownell, speaking of Lowell's reading (*American Prose Masters*), says: "He read because he liked to—not, as a rule, one guesses, as specific preparation for work of his own. When he did, it did not always bring him good luck. He says that he expressly read over again, seriatim, all of Thoreau's works before writing of him, and certainly he did so to small purpose." The essay is a brilliant example of Lowell's manner of writing, but, though not without value to students of Thoreau, it sheds light rather upon its author than upon its subject.

Resartus. At least the republication in Boston of that wonderful Abraham à Sancta Clara³ sermon on Falstaff's text of the miserable forked radish⁴ gave the signal for a sudden mental and moral mutiny. *Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile!*⁵ was shouted on all hands with every variety of emphasis, and by voices of every conceivable pitch, representing the three sexes of men, women, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagues. The nameless eagle of the tree Ygdrasil was about to sit at last, and wild-eyed enthusiasts rushed from all sides, each eager to thrust under the mystic bird that chalk egg from which the new and fairer Creation was to be hatched in due time. *Redeunt Saturnia regna*,⁶—so far was certain, though in what shape, or by what methods, was still a matter of debate. Every possible form of intellectual and physical dyspepsia brought forth its gospel. Bran had its prophets, and the presartorial simplicity of Adam its martyrs, tailored impromptu from the tar-pot by incensed neighbors, and sent forth to illustrate the "feathered Mercury," as defined by Webster and Worcester. Plainness of speech was carried to a pitch that would have taken away the breath of George Fox; and even swearing had its evangelists, who answered a simple inquiry after their health with an elaborate ingenuity of imprecation that might have been honorably mentioned by Marlborough in general orders. Everybody had a mission (with a capital M) to attend to everybody-else's business. No brain but had its private maggot, which must have found pitifully short commons sometimes. Not a few impecunious zealots abjured the use of money (unless earned by other people), professing to live on the internal revenues of the spirit. Some had an assurance of instant millennium so soon as hooks and eyes should be substituted for buttons. Communities were established where everything was to be common but common-sense. Men renounced their old gods, and hesitated only whether to bestow their furloughed allegiance on Thor or Budh. Conventions were held for

³ Augustinian monk and eloquent preacher (1644-1709).

⁴ In *Henry IV*, Part 2, Act III, Sc. ii.

⁵ Behold now is the acceptable time.

⁶ The reign of Saturn (*i.e.*, a new Golden Age) returns.

every hitherto inconceivable purpose. The belated gift of tongues, as among the Fifth Monarchy men, spread like a contagion, rendering its victims incomprehensible to all Christian men; whether equally so to the most distant possible heathen or not was unexperimented, though many would have subscribed liberally that a fair trial might be made. It was the pentecost of Shinar. The day of utterances reproduced the day of rebuses and anagrams, and there was nothing so simple that uncial letters and the style of Diphilus the Labyrinth could not turn it into a riddle. Many foreign revolutionists out of work added to the general misunderstanding their contribution of broken English in every most ingenious form of fracture. All stood ready at a moment's notice to reform everything but themselves. The general motto was:—

And we'll *talk* with them, too,
And take upon's the mystery of things
As if we were God's spies.

Nature is always kind enough to give even her clouds a humorous lining. I have barely hinted at the comic side of the affair, for the material was endless. This was the whistle and trailing fuse of the shell, but there was a very solid and serious kernel, full of the most deadly explosiveness. Thoughtful men divined it, but the generality suspected nothing. The word "transcendental" then was the maid of all work for those who could not think, as "Pre-Raphaelite" has been more recently for people of the same limited housekeeping. The truth is, that there was a much nearer metaphysical relation and a much more distant æsthetic and literary relation between Carlyle and the Apostles of the Newness, as they were called in New England, than has commonly been supposed. Both represented the reaction and revolt against *Philisterei*, a renewal of the old battle begun in modern times by Erasmus and Reuchlin, and continued by Lessing, Goethe, and, in a far narrower sense, by Heine in Germany, and of which Fielding, Sterne, and Wordsworth in different ways have been the leaders in England. It was simply a struggle for fresh air, in which, if the windows could not be opened, there was danger that panes would be broken, though painted with images of saints and martyrs.

Light, colored by these reverend effigies, was none the more respirable for being picturesque. There is only one thing better than tradition, and that is the original and eternal life out of which all tradition takes its rise. It was this life which the reformers demanded, with more or less clearness of consciousness and expression, life in politics, life in literature, life in religion. Of what use to import a gospel from Judæa, if we leave behind the soul that made it possible, the God who keeps it forever real and present? Surely Abana and Pharpar *are* better than Jordon, if a living faith be mixed with those waters and none with these.

Scotch Presbyterianism as a motive of spiritual progress was dead; New England Puritanism was in like manner dead; in other words, Protestantism had made its fortune and no longer protested; but till Carlyle spoke out in the Old World and Emerson in the New, no one had dared to proclaim, *Le roi est mort: vive le roi!* The meaning of which proclamation was essentially this: the vital spirit has long since departed out of this form once so kingly, and the great seal has been in commission long enough; but meanwhile the soul of man, from which all power emanates and to which it reverts, still survives in undiminished royalty; God still survives, little as you gentlemen of the Commission seem to be aware of it,—nay, will possibly outlive the whole of you, incredible as it may appear. The truth is, that both Scotch Presbyterianism and New England Puritanism made their new avatar in Carlyle and Emerson, the heralds of their formal decease, and the tendency of the one toward Authority and of the other toward Independency might have been prophesied by whoever had studied history. The necessity was not so much in the men as in the principles they represented and the traditions which overruled them. The Puritanism of the past found its unwilling poet in Hawthorne, the rarest creative imagination of the century, the rarest in some ideal respects since Shakespeare; but the Puritanism that cannot die, the Puritanism that made New England what it is, and is destined to make America what it should be, found its voice in Emerson. Though holding himself aloof from all active partnership in movements

of reform, he has been the sleeping partner who has supplied a great part of their capital.

The artistic range of Emerson is narrow, as every well-read critic must feel at once; and so is that of Æschylus, so is that of Dante, so is that of Montaigne, so is that of Schiller, so is that of nearly every one except Shakespeare; but there is a gauge of height no less than of breadth, of individuality as well as of comprehensiveness, and, above all, there is the standard of genetic power, the test of the masculine as distinguished from the receptive minds. There are staminate plants in literature, that make no fine show of fruit, but without whose pollen, quintessence of fructifying gold, the garden had been barren. Emerson's mind is emphatically one of these, and there is no man to whom our æsthetic culture owes so much. The Puritan revolt had made us ecclesiastically and the Revolution politically independent, but we were still socially and intellectually moored to English thought, till Emerson cut the cable and gave us a chance at the dangers and the glories of blue water. No man young enough to have felt it can forget or cease to be grateful for the mental and moral *nudge* which he received from the writings of his high-minded and brave-spirited countryman. That we agree with him, or that he always agrees with himself, is aside from the question; but that he arouses in us something that we are the better for having awakened, whether that something be of opposition or assent, that he speaks always to what is highest and least selfish in us, few Americans of the generation younger than his own would be disposed to deny. His oration before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge, some thirty years ago, was an event without any former parallel in our literary annals, a scene to be always treasured in the memory for its picturesqueness and its inspiration. What crowded and breathless aisles, what windows clustering with eager heads, what enthusiasm of approval, what grim silence of foregone dissent! It was our Yankee version of a lecture by Abelard, our Harvard parallel to the last public appearances of Schelling.

I said that the Transcendental Movement was the protestant spirit of Puritanism

seeking a new outlet and an escape from forms and creeds which compressed rather than expressed it. In its motives, its preaching, and its results, it differed radically from the doctrine of Carlyle. The Scotchman, with all his genius, and his humor gigantesque as that of Rabelais, has grown shriller and shriller with years, degenerating sometimes into a common scold, and emptying very unsavory vials of wrath on the head of the sturdy British Socrates of worldly common-sense. The teaching of Emerson tended much more exclusively to self-culture and the independent development of the individual man. It seemed to many almost Pythagorean in its voluntary seclusion from commonwealth affairs. Both Carlyle and Emerson were disciples of Goethe, but Emerson in a far truer sense; and while the one, from his bias toward the eccentric, has degenerated more and more into mannerism, the other has clarified steadily toward perfection of style,—exquisite fineness of material, unobtrusive lowness of tone and simplicity of fashion, the most high-bred garb of expression. Whatever may be said of his thought, nothing can be finer than the delicious limpidness of his phrase. If it was ever questionable whether democracy could develop a gentleman, the problem has been affirmatively solved at last. Carlyle, in his cynicism and his admiration of force in and for itself, has become at last positively inhuman; Emerson, reverencing strength, seeking the highest outcome of the individual, has found that society and politics are also main elements in the attainment of the desired end, and has drawn steadily manward and worldward. The two men represent respectively those grand personifications in the drama of Æschylus, *Bía* and *Kράτος*.¹

Among the pistillate plants kindled to fruitage by the Emersonian pollen, Thoreau is thus far the most remarkable; and it is something eminently fitting that his posthumous works should be offered us by Emerson, for they are strawberries from his own garden. A singular mixture of varieties, indeed, there is;—alpine, some of them, with the flavor of rare mountain air; others wood, tasting of sunny roadside banks or

¹ Strength and Force (*Prometheus Bound*).

shy openings in the forest; and not a few seedlings swollen hugely by culture, but lacking the fine natural aroma of the more modest kinds. Strange books these are of his, and interesting in many ways,—instructive chiefly as showing how considerable a crop may be raised on a comparatively narrow close of mind, and how much a man may make of his life if he will assiduously follow it, though perhaps never truly finding it at last.

I have just been renewing my recollection of Mr. Thoreau's writings, and have read through his six volumes in the order of their production. I shall try to give an adequate report of their impression upon me both as critic and as mere reader. He seems to me to have been a man with so high a conceit of himself that he accepted without questioning, and insisted on our accepting, his defects and weaknesses of character as virtues and powers peculiar to himself. Was he indolent, he finds none of the activities which attract or employ the rest of mankind worthy of him. Was he wanting in the qualities that make success, it is success that is contemptible, and not himself that lacks persistency and purpose. Was he poor, money was unmixed evil. Did his life seem a selfish one, he condemns doing good as one of the weakest of superstitions. To be of use was with him the most killing bait of the wily tempter Uselessness. He had no faculty of generalization from outside of himself, or at least no experience which would supply the material of such, and he makes his own whim the law, his own range the horizon of the universe. He condemns a world, the hollowness of whose satisfactions he had never had the means of testing, and we recognize Apemantus behind the mask of Timon.¹ He had little active imagination; of the receptive he had much. His appreciation is of the highest quality; his critical power, from want of continuity of mind, very limited and inadequate. He somewhere cites a simile from Ossian, as an example of the superiority of the old poetry to the new, though, even were the historic evidence less convincing, the sentimental melancholy of those poems should be conclusive of their modernness. He had none

of the artistic mastery which controls a great work to the serene balance of completeness, but exquisite mechanical skill in the shaping of sentences and paragraphs, or (more rarely) short bits of verse for the expression of a detached thought, sentiment, or image. His works give one the feeling of a sky full of stars,—something impressive and exhilarating certainly, something high overhead and freckled thickly with spots of isolated brightness; but whether these have any mutual relation with each other, or have any concern with our mundane matters, is for the most part matter of conjecture,—astrology as yet, and not astronomy.

It is curious, considering what Thoreau afterwards became, that he was not by nature an observer. He only saw the things he looked for, and was less poet than naturalist. Till he built his Walden shanty, he did not know that the hickory grew in Concord. Till he went to Maine, he had never seen phosphorescent wood, a phenomenon early familiar to most country boys. At forty he speaks of the seeding of the pine as a new discovery, though one should have thought that its gold-dust of blowing pollen might have earlier drawn his eye. Neither his attention nor his genius was of the spontaneous kind. He discovered nothing. He thought everything a discovery of his own, from moonlight to the planting of acorns and nuts by squirrels. This is a defect in his character, but one of his chief charms as a writer. Everything grows fresh under his hand. He delved in his mind and nature; he planted them with all manner of native and foreign seeds, and reaped assiduously. He was not merely solitary, he would be isolated, and succeeded at last in almost persuading himself that he was autochthonous. He valued everything in proportion as he fancied it to be exclusively his own. He complains in *Walden* that there is no one in Concord with whom he could talk of Oriental literature, though the man was living within two miles of his hut who had introduced him to it. This intellectual selfishness becomes sometimes almost painful in reading him. He lacked that generosity of "communication" which Johnson admired in Burke. De Quincey tells us that Wordsworth was impatient when any one else

¹ See Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*.

spoke of mountains, as if he had a peculiar property in them. And we can readily understand why it should be so: no one is satisfied with another's appreciation of his mistress. But Thoreau seems to have prized a lofty way of thinking (often we should be inclined to call it a remote one) not so much because it was good in itself as because he wished few to share it with him. It seems now and then as if he did not seek to lure others up "above our lower region of turmoil," but to leave his own name cut on the mountain peak as the first climber. This itch of originality infects his thought and style. To be misty is not to be mystic. He turns commonplaces end for end, and fancies it makes something new of them. As we walk down Park Street,¹ our eye is caught by Dr. Winship's dumb-bells, one of which bears an inscription testifying that it is the heaviest ever put up at arm's length by any athlete; and in reading Mr. Thoreau's books we cannot help feeling as if he sometimes invited our attention to a particular sophism or paradox as the biggest yet maintained by any single writer. He seeks, at all risks, for perversity of thought, and revives the age of *conceits* while he fancies himself going back to a pre-classical nature. "A day," he says, "passed in the society of those Greek sages, such as described in the Banquet of Xenophon, would not be comparable with the dry wit of decayed cranberry-vines and the fresh Attic salt of the moss-beds." It is not so much the True that he loves as the Out-of-the-Way. As the Brazen Age shows itself in other men by exaggeration of phrase, so in him by extravagance of statement. He wishes always to trump your suit and to *ruff* when you least expect it. Do you love Nature because she is beautiful? He will find a better argument in her ugliness. Are you tired of the artificial man? He instantly dresses you up an ideal in a Penobscot Indian, and attributes to this creature of his otherwise-mindedness as peculiarities things that are common to all woodsmen, white or red, and this simply because he has not studied the pale-faced variety.

This notion of an absolute originality, as if one could have a patent-right in it, is an

absurdity. A man cannot escape in thought, any more than he can in language, from the past and the present. As no one ever invents a word, and yet language somehow grows by general contribution and necessity, so it is with thought. Mr. Thoreau seems to me to insist in public on going back to flint and steel, when there is a match-box in his pocket which he knows very well how to use at a pinch. Originality consists in power of digesting and assimilating thoughts, so that they become part of our life and substance. Montaigne, for example, is one of the most original of authors, though he helped himself to ideas in every direction. But they turn to blood and coloring in his style, and give a freshness of complexion that is forever charming. In Thoreau much seems yet to be foreign and unassimilated, showing itself in symptoms of indigestion. A preacher-up of Nature, we now and then detect under the surly and stoic garb something of the sophist and the sentimentalizer. I am far from implying that this was conscious on his part. But it is much easier for a man to impose on himself when he measures only with himself. A greater familiarity with ordinary men would have done Thoreau good, by showing him how many fine qualities are common to the race. The radical vice of his theory of life was that he confounded physical with spiritual remoteness from men. A man is far enough withdrawn from his fellows if he keep himself clear of their weaknesses. He is not so truly withdrawn as exiled, if he refuse to share in their strength. "Solitude," says Cowley, "can be well fitted and set right but upon a very few persons. They must have enough knowledge of the world to see the vanity of it, and enough virtue to despise all vanity." It is a morbid self-consciousness that pronounces the world of men empty and worthless before trying it, the instinctive evasion of one who is sensible of some innate weakness, and retorts the accusation of it before any has made it but himself. To a healthy mind, the world is a constant challenge of opportunity. Mr. Thoreau had not a healthy mind, or he would not have been so fond of prescribing. His whole life was a search for the doctor. The old mystics had a wiser sense of what the world was worth.

¹ In Boston.

They ordained a severe apprenticeship to law, and even ceremonial, in order to the gaining of freedom and mastery over these. Seven years of service for Rachel were to be rewarded at last with Leah. Seven other years of faithfulness with her were to win them at last the true bride of their souls. Active Life was with them the only path to the Contemplative.

Thoreau had no humor, and this implies that he was a sorry logician. Himself an artist in rhetoric, he confounds thought with style when he undertakes to speak of the latter. He was forever talking of getting away from the world, but he must be always near enough to it, nay, to the Concord corner of it, to feel the impression he makes there. He verifies the shrewd remark of Sainte-Beuve, "*On touche encore à son temps et très-fort, même quand on le repousse.*"¹ This egotism of his is a Stylites pillar after all, a seclusion which keeps him in the public eye. The dignity of man is an excellent thing, but therefore to hold one's self too sacred and precious is the reverse of excellent. There is something delightfully absurd in six volumes addressed to a world of such "vulgar fellows" as Thoreau affirmed his fellowmen to be. I once had a glimpse of a genuine solitary who spent his winters one hundred and fifty miles beyond all human communication, and there dwelt with his rifle as his only confidant. Compared with this, the shanty on Walden Pond has something the air, it must be confessed, of the Hermitage of La Chevrette.² I do not believe that the way to a true cosmopolitanism carries one into the woods or the society of musquashes. Perhaps the narrowest provincialism is that of Self; that of Kleinwinkel³ is nothing to it. The natural man, like the singing birds, comes out of the forest as inevitably as the natural bear and the wildcat stick there. To seek to be natural implies a consciousness that forbids all naturalness forever. It is as easy—and no easier—to be natural in a *salon* as in a swamp, if one do not aim at it,

for what we call unnaturalness always has its spring in a man's thinking too much about himself. "It is impossible," said Turgot, "for a vulgar man to be simple."

I look upon a great deal of the modern sentimentalism about Nature as a mark of disease. It is one more symptom of the general liver-complaint. To a man of wholesome constitution the wilderness is well enough for a mood or a vacation, but not for a habit of life. Those who have most loudly advertised their passion for seclusion and their intimacy with nature, from Petrarch down, have been mostly sentimentalists, unreal men, misanthropes on the spindle side, solacing an uneasy suspicion of themselves by professing contempt for their kind. They make demands on the world in advance proportioned to their inward measure of their own merit, and are angry that the world pays only by the visible measure of performance. It is true of Rousseau, the modern founder of the sect, true of Saint Pierre, his intellectual child, and of Châteaubriand, his grandchild, the inventor, we might almost say, of the primitive forest, and who first was touched by the solemn falling of a tree from natural decay in the windless silence of the woods. It is a very shallow view that affirms trees and rocks to be healthy, and cannot see that men in communities are just as true to the laws of their organization and destiny; that can tolerate the puffin and the fox, but not the fool and the knave; that would shun politics because of its demagogues, and snuff up the stench of the obscene fungus. The divine life of Nature is more wonderful, more various, more sublime in man than in any other of her works, and the wisdom that is gained by commerce with men, as Montaigne and Shakespeare gained it, or with one's own soul among men, as Dante, is the most delightful, as it is the most precious, of all. In outward nature it is still man that interests us, and we care far less for the things seen than the way in which they are seen by poetic eyes like Wordsworth's or Thoreau's, and the reflections they cast there. To hear the to-do that is often made over the simple fact that a man sees the image of himself in the outward world, one is reminded of a savage when he for the first time catches a glimpse

¹ One is closely related to one's time even when one rejects it.

² The cottage which Mme. d'Épinay erected for Rousseau in the garden of her château, near Montmorency.

³ Little corner.

of himself in a looking-glass. "Venerable child of Nature," we are tempted to say, "to whose science in the invention of the tobacco-pipe, to whose art in the tattooing of thine undegenerate hide not yet enslaved by tailors, we are slowly striving to climb back, the miracle thou beholdest is sold in my unhappy country for a shilling!" If matters go on as they have done, and everybody must needs blab of all the favors that have been done him by roadside and river-brink and woodland walk, as if to kiss and tell were no longer treachery, it will be a positive refreshment to meet a man who is as superbly indifferent to Nature as she is to him. By and by we shall have John Smith, of No. -12 -12th Street, advertising that he is not the J. S. who saw a cow-lily on Thursday last, as he never saw one in his life, would not see one if he could, and is prepared to prove an alibi on the day in question.

Solitary communion with Nature does not seem to have been sanitary or sweetening in its influence on Thoreau's character. On the contrary, his letters show him more cynical as he grew older. While he studied with respectful attention the minks and woodchucks, his neighbors, he looked with utter contempt on the august drama of destiny of which his country was the scene, and on which the curtain had already risen. He was converting us back to a state of nature "so eloquently," as Voltaire said of Rousseau, "that he almost persuaded us to go on all fours," while the wiser fates were making it possible for us to walk erect for the first time. Had he conversed more with his fellows, his sympathies would have widened with the assurance that his peculiar genius had more appreciation, and his writings a larger circle of readers, or at least a warmer one, than he dreamed of. We have the highest testimony¹ to the natural sweetness, sincerity, and nobleness of his temper, and in his books an equally irrefragable one to the rare quality of his mind. He was not a strong thinker, but a sensitive feeler. Yet his mind strikes us as cold and wintry in its purity. A light snow has fallen everywhere in which he seems to

come on the track of the shier sensations that would elsewhere leave no trace. We think greater compression would have done more for his fame. A feeling of sameness comes over us as we read so much. Trifles are recorded with an over-minute punctuality and conscientiousness of detail. He registers the state of his personal thermometer thirteen times a day. We cannot help thinking sometimes of the man who

Watches, starves, freezes, and sweats
To learn but catechisms and alphabets
Of uninteresting things, matters of fact,

and sometimes of the saying of the Persian poet, that "when the owl would boast, he boasts of catching mice at the edge of a hole." We could readily part with some of his affectations. It was well enough for Pythagoras to say, once for all, "When I was Euphorbus at the siege of Troy"; not so well for Thoreau to travesty it into "When I was a shepherd on the plains of Assyria." A naïve thing said over again is anything but naïve. But with every exception, there is no writing comparable with Thoreau's in kind, that is comparable with it in degree where it is best; where it disengages itself, that is, from the tangled roots and dead leaves of a second-hand Orientalism, and runs limpid and smooth and broadening as it runs, a mirror for whatever is grand and lovely in both worlds.

George Sand says neatly, that "Art is not a study of positive reality" (*actuality* were the fitter word), "but a seeking after ideal truth." It would be doing very inadequate justice to Thoreau if we left it to be inferred that this ideal element did not exist in him, and that too in larger proportion, if less obtrusive, than his nature-worship. He took nature as the mountain-path to an ideal world. If the path wind a good deal, if he record too faithfully every trip over a root, if he botanize somewhat wearisomely, he gives us now and then superb outlooks from some jutting crag, and brings us out at last into an illimitable ether, where the breathing is not difficult for those who have any true touch of the climbing spirit. His shanty-life was a mere impossibility, so far as his own

¹ Mr. Emerson, in the Biographical Sketch prefixed to the *Excursions*. (Lowell's note.)

conception of it goes, as an entire independency of mankind. The tub of Diogenes had a sounder bottom. Thoreau's experiment actually presupposed all that complicated civilization which it theoretically abjured. He squatted on another man's land; he borrows an ax; his boards, his nails, his bricks, his mortar, his books, his lamp, his fish-hooks, his plough, his hoe, all turn state's evidence against him as an accomplice in the sin of that artificial civilization which rendered it possible that such a person as Henry D. Thoreau should exist at all. *Magnis tamen excidit ausis*.¹ His aim was a noble and a useful one, in the direction of "plain living and high thinking." It was a practical sermon on Emerson's text that "things are in the saddle and ride mankind," an attempt to solve Carlyle's problem (condensed from Johnson) of "lessening your denominator." His whole life was a rebuke of the waste and aimlessness of our American luxury, which is an abject enslavement to tawdry upholstery. He had "fine translunary things" in him. His better style as a writer is in keeping with the simplicity and purity of his life. We have said that his range was narrow, but to be a master is to be a master. He had caught his English at its living source, among the poets and prose-writers of its best days; his literature was extensive and recondite; his quotations are always nuggets of the purest ore: there are sentences of his as perfect as anything in the language, and thoughts as clearly crystallized; his metaphors and images are always fresh from the soil; he had watched Nature like a detective who is to go upon the stand; as we read him, it seems as if all-out-of-doors had kept a diary and become its own Montaigne; we look at the landscape as in a Claude Lorraine glass; compared with his, all other books of similar aim, even White's *Selborne*, seem dry as a country clergyman's meteorological journal in an old almanac. He belongs with Donne and Browne and Novalis; if not with the originally creative men, with the scarcely smaller class who are peculiar, and whose leaves shed their invisible thought-seed like ferns.

¹ Though he dared great things, nevertheless he died.

ON A CERTAIN CONDESCENSION IN FOREIGNERS²

WALKING one day toward the Village,³ as we used to call it in the good old days, when almost every dweller in the town had been born in it, I was enjoying that delicious sense of disenthralment from the actual which the deepening twilight brings with it, giving as it does a sort of obscure novelty to things familiar. The coolness, the hush, broken only by the distant bleat of some belated goat, querulous to be disburthened of her milky load, the few faint stars, more guessed as yet than seen, the sense that the coming dark would so soon fold me in the secure privacy of its disguise,—all things combined in a result as near absolute peace as can be hoped for by a man who knows that there is a writ out against him in the hands of the printer's devil. For the moment, I was enjoying the blessed privilege of thinking without being called on to stand and deliver what I thought to the small public who are good enough to take any interest therein. I love old ways, and the path I was walking felt kindly to the feet it had known for almost fifty years. How many fleeting impressions it had shared with me! How many times I had lingered to study the shadows of the leaves mezzotinted upon the turf that edged it by the moon, of the bare boughs etched with a touch beyond Rembrandt by the same unconscious artist on the smooth page of snow! If I turned round, through dusky tree-gaps came the first twinkle of evening lamps in the dear old homestead. On Corey's hill I could see these tiny pharoses of love and home and sweet domestic thoughts flash out one by one across the blackening salt-meadow between. How much has not kerosene added to the cheerfulness of our evening landscape! A pair of night-herons flapped heavily over me toward the hidden river. The war was ended. I might walk townward without that aching dread of bulletins that had darkened the July sunshine and twice made the scarlet leaves of October seem stained with blood. I remembered with a pang, half-proud,

² First published in 1869.

³ Cambridge.

half-painful, how, so many years ago, I had walked over the same path and felt round my finger the soft pressure of a little hand that was one day to harden with faithful grip of saber. On how many paths, leading to how many homes where proud Memory does all she can to fill up the fireside gaps with shining shapes, must not men be walking in just such pensive mood as I? Ah, young heroes, safe in immortal youth as those of Homer, you at least carried your ideal hence untarnished! It is locked for you beyond moth or rust in the treasure-chamber of Death.

Is not a country, I thought, that has had such as they in it, that could give such as they a brave joy in dying for it, worth something, then? And as I felt more and more the soothing magic of evening's cool palm upon my temples, as my fancy came home from its reverie, and my senses, with reawakened curiosity, ran to the front windows again from the viewless closet of abstraction, and felt a strange charm in finding the old tree and shabby fence still there under the travesty of falling night, nay, were conscious of an unsuspected newness in familiar stars and the fading outlines of hills my earliest horizon, I was conscious of an immortal soul, and could not but rejoice in the unwaning goodness of the world into which I had been born without any merit of my own. I thought of dear Henry Vaughan's rainbow, "Still young and fine!" I remembered people who had to go over to the Alps to learn what the divine silence of snow was, who must run to Italy before they were conscious of the miracle wrought every day under their very noses by the sunset, who must call upon the Berkshire hills to teach them what a painter autumn was, while close at hand the Fresh Pond meadows made all oriels cheap with hues that showed as if a sunset-cloud had been wrecked among their maples. One might be worse off than even in America, I thought. There are some things so elastic that even the heavy roller of democracy cannot flatten them altogether down. The mind can weave itself warmly in the cocoon of its own thoughts and dwell a hermit anywhere. A country without traditions, without ennobling associations, a scramble of *parvenus*, with a horrible consciousness of shoddy

running through politics, manners, art, literature, nay, religion itself? I confess, it did not seem so to me there in that illimitable quiet, that serene self-possession of nature, where Collins might have brooded his *Ode to Evening*, or where those verses on Solitude in Dodsley's Collection, that Hawthorne liked so much, might have been composed. Traditions? Granting that we had none, all that is worth having in them is the common property of the soul,—an estate in gavelkind for all the sons of Adam,—and, moreover, if a man cannot stand on his two feet (the prime quality of whoever has left any tradition behind him), were it not better for him to be honest about it at once, and go down on all fours? And for associations, if one have not the wit to make them for himself out of native earth, no ready-made ones of other men will avail much. Lexington is none the worse to me for not being in Greece, nor Gettysburg that its name is not Marathon. "Blessed old fields," I was just exclaiming to myself, like one of Mrs. Radcliffe's heroes, "dear acres, innocently secure from history, which these eyes first beheld, may you be also those to which they shall at last slowly darken!" when I was interrupted by a voice which asked me in German whether I was the Herr Professor, Doctor, So-and-so? The "Doctor" was by brevet or vaticination, to make the grade easier to my pocket.

One feels so intimately assured that one is made up, in part, of shreds and leavings of the past, in part of the interpolations of other people, that an honest man would be slow in saying *yes* to such a question. But "my name is So-and-so" is a safe answer, and I gave it. While I had been romancing with myself, the street-lamps had been lighted, and it was under one of these detectives that have robbed the Old Road of its privilege of sanctuary after nightfall that I was ambushed by my foe. The inexorable villain had taken my description, it appears, that I might have the less chance to escape him. Dr. Holmes tells us that we change our substance, not every seven years, as was once believed, but with every breath we draw. Why had I not the wit to avail myself of the subterfuge, and, like Peter, to renounce my identity, especially, as in certain moods of mind, I have

often more than doubted of it myself? When a man is, as it were, his own front-door, and is thus knocked at, why may he not assume the right of that sacred wood to make every house a castle, by denying himself to all visitations? I was truly not at home when the question was put to me, but had to recall myself from all out-of-doors, and to piece my self-consciousness hastily together as well as I could before I answered it.

I knew perfectly well what was coming. It is seldom that debtors or good Samaritans waylay people under gas-lamps in order to force money upon them, so far as I have seen or heard. I was also aware, from considerable experience, that every foreigner is persuaded that, by doing this country the favor of coming to it, he has laid every native thereof under an obligation, pecuniary or other, as the case may be, whose discharge he is entitled to on demand duly made in person or by letter. Too much learning (of this kind) had made me mad in the provincial sense of the word. I had begun life with the theory of giving something to every beggar that came along, though sure of never finding a native-born countryman among them. In a small way, I was resolved to emulate Hatem Tai's tent, with its three hundred and sixty-five entrances, one for every day in the year,—I know not whether he was astronomer enough to add another for leap-years. The beggars were a kind of German-silver aristocracy; not real plate, to be sure, but better than nothing. Where everybody was overworked, they supplied the comfortable equipoise of absolute leisure, so æsthetically needful. Besides, I was but too conscious of a vagrant fiber in myself, which too often thrilled me in my solitary walks with the temptation to wander on into infinite space, and by a single spasm of resolution to emancipate myself from the drudgery of prosaic serfdom to respectability and the regular course of things. This prompting has been at times my familiar demon, and I could not but feel a kind of respectful sympathy for men who had dared what I had only sketched out to myself as a splendid possibility. For seven years I helped maintain one heroic man on an imaginary journey to Portland,—as fine an example as I have

ever known of hopeless loyalty to an ideal. I assisted another so long in a fruitless attempt to reach Mecklenburg-Schwerin, that at last we grinned in each other's faces when we met, like a couple of augurs. He was possessed by this harmless mania as some are by the North Pole, and I shall never forget his look of regretful compassion (as for one who was sacrificing his higher life to the fleshpots of Egypt) when I at last advised him somewhat strenuously to go to the D——, whither the road was so much traveled that he could not miss it. General Banks, in his noble zeal for the honor of his country, would confer on the Secretary of State the power of imprisoning, in case of war, all these seekers of the unattainable, thus by a stroke of the pen annihilating the single poetic element in our humdrum life. Alas! not everybody has the genius to be a Bobbin-Boy, or doubtless all these also would have chosen that more prosperous line of life! But moralists, sociologists, political economists, and taxes have slowly convinced me that my beggarly sympathies were a sin against society. Especially was the Buckle doctrine of averages (so flattering to our free-will) persuasive with me; for as there must be in every year a certain number who would bestow an alms on these abridged editions of the Wandering Jew, the withdrawal of my quota could make no possible difference, since some destined proxy must always step forward to fill my gap. Just so many misdirected letters every year and no more! Would it were as easy to reckon up the number of men on whose backs fate has written the wrong address, so that they arrive by mistake in Congress and other places where they do not belong! May not these wanderers of whom I speak have been sent into the world without any proper address at all? Where is our Dead-Letter Office for such? And if wiser social arrangements should furnish us with something of the sort, fancy (horrible thought!) how many a workingman's friend (a kind of industry in which the labor is light and the wages heavy) would be sent thither because not called for in the office where he at present lies!

But I am leaving my new acquaintance too long under the lamp-post. The same

Gano which had betrayed me to him revealed to me a well-set young man of about half my own age, as well dressed, so far as I could see, as I was, and with every natural qualification for getting his own livelihood as good, if not better, than my own. He had been reduced to the painful necessity of calling upon me by a series of crosses beginning with the Baden Revolution (for which, I own, he seemed rather young,—but perhaps he referred to a kind of revolution practiced every season at Baden-Baden), continued by repeated failures in business, for amounts which must convince me of his entire respectability, and ending with our Civil War. During the latter, he had served with distinction as a soldier, taking a main part in every important battle, with a rapid list of which he favored me, and no doubt would have admitted that, impartial as Jonathan Wild's great ancestor, he had been on both sides, had I baited him with a few hints of conservative opinions on a subject so distressing to a gentleman wishing to profit by one's sympathy and unhappily doubtful as to which way it might lean. For all these reasons, and, as he seemed to imply, for his merit in consenting to be born in Germany, he considered himself my natural creditor to the extent of five dollars, which he would handsomely consent to accept in greenbacks, though he preferred specie. The offer was certainly a generous one, and the claim presented with an assurance that carried conviction. But, unhappily, I had been led to remark a curious natural phenomenon. If I was ever weak enough to give anything to a petitioner of whatever nationality, it always rained decayed compatriots of his for a month after. *Post hoc ergo propter hoc* may not always be safe logic, but here I seemed to perceive a natural connection of cause and effect. Now, a few days before I had been so tickled with a paper (professedly written by a benevolent American clergyman) certifying that the bearer, a hard-working German, had long "sofered with rheumatic paints in his limbs," that, after copying the passage into my note-book, I thought it but fair to pay a trifling *honorarium* to the author. I had pulled the string of the shower-bath! It had been running shipwrecked sailors for some time,

but forthwith it began to pour Teutons, redolent of *lager-bier*. I could not help associating the apparition of my new friend with this series of otherwise unaccountable phenomena. I accordingly made up my mind to deny the debt, and modestly did so, pleading a native bias toward impecuniosity to the full as strong as his own. He took a high tone with me at once, such as an honest man would naturally take with a confessed repudiator. He even brought down his proud stomach so far as to join himself to me for the rest of my townward walk, that he might give me his views of the American people, and thus inclusively of myself.

I know not whether it is because I am pigeon-livered and lack gall,¹ or whether it is from an overmastering sense of drollery, but I am apt to submit to such bastings with a patience which afterwards surprises me, being not without my share of warmth in the blood. Perhaps it is because I so often meet with young persons who know vastly more than I do, and especially with so many foreigners whose knowledge of this country is superior to my own. However it may be, I listened for some time with tolerable composure as my self-appointed lecturer gave me in detail his opinions of my country and its people. America, he informed me, was without arts, science, literature, culture, or any native hope of supplying them. We were a people wholly given to money-getting, and who, having got it, knew no other use for it than to hold it fast. I am fain to confess that I felt a sensible itching of the biceps, and that my fingers closed with such a grip as he had just informed me was one of the effects of our unhappy climate. But happening just then to be where I could avoid temptation by dodging down a by-street, I hastily left him to finish his diatribe to the lamp-post, which could stand it better than I. That young man will never know how near he came to being assaulted by a respectable gentleman of middle age, at the corner of Church Street. I have never felt quite satisfied that I did all my duty by him in not knocking him down. But perhaps he might have knocked *me* down, and then?

¹ See *Hamlet*, Act II, Sc. ii.

The capacity of indignation makes an essential part of the outfit of every honest man, but I am inclined to doubt whether he is a wise one who allows himself to act upon its first hints. It should be rather, I suspect, a *latent* heat in the blood, which makes itself felt in character, a steady reserve for the brain, warming the ovum of thought to life, rather than cooking it by a too hasty enthusiasm in reaching the boiling point. As my pulse gradually fell back to its normal beat, I reflected that I had been uncomfortably near making a fool of myself,—a handy salve of euphuism for our vanity, though it does not always make a just allowance to Nature for her share in the business. What possible claim had my Teutonic friend to rob me of my composure? I am not, I think, specially thin-skinned as to other people's opinions of myself, having, as I conceive, later and fuller intelligence on that point than anybody else can give me. Life is continually weighing us in very sensitive scales, and telling every one of us precisely what his real weight is to the last grain of dust. Whoever at fifty does not rate himself quite as low as most of his acquaintance would be likely to put him, must be either a fool or a great man, and I humbly disclaim being either. But if I was not smarting in person from any scattering shot of my late companion's commination, why should I grow hot at any implication of my country therein? Surely *her* shoulders are broad enough, if yours or mine are not, to bear up under a considerable avalanche of this kind. It is the bit of truth in every slander, the hint of likeness in every caricature, that makes us smart. "Art thou *there*, old Truepenny?"¹ How did your blade know its way so well to that one loose rivet in our armor? I wondered whether Americans were over-sensitive in this respect, whether they were more touchy than other folks. On the whole, I thought we were not. Plutarch, who at least had studied philosophy, if he had not mastered it, could not stomach something Herodotus had said of Bœotia, and devoted an essay to showing up the delightful old traveler's malice and ill-breeding. French editors leave out of

Montaigne's *Travels* some remarks of his about France, for reasons best known to themselves. Pachydermatous Deutschland, covered with trophies from every field of letters, still winces under that question which Père Bouhours put two centuries ago, *Si un Allemand peut être bel-esprit?*² John Bull grew apoplectic with angry amazement at the audacious persiflage of Pückler-Muskau. To be sure, he was a prince,—but that was not all of it, for a chance phrase of gentle Hawthorne sent a spasm through all the journals of England. Then this tenderness is not peculiar to *us*? Console yourself, dear man and brother, whatever else you may be sure of, be sure at least of this, that you are dreadfully like other people. Human nature has a much greater genius for sameness than for originality, or the world would be at a sad pass shortly. The surprising thing is that men have such a taste for this somewhat musty flavor, that an Englishman, for example, should feel himself defrauded, nay, even outraged, when he comes over here and finds a people speaking what he admits to be something like English, and yet so very different from (or, as he would say, to) those he left at home. Nothing, I am sure, equals *my* thankfulness when I meet an Englishman who is *not* like every other, or, I may add, an American of the same odd turn.

Certainly it is no shame to a man that he should be as nice about his country as about his sweetheart, and who ever heard even the friendliest appreciation of that unexpressive she that did not seem to fall infinitely short? Yet it would hardly be wise to hold every one an enemy who could not see her with our own enchanted eyes. It seems to be the common opinion of foreigners that Americans are *too* tender upon this point. Perhaps we are; and if so, there must be a reason for it. Have we had fair play? Could the eyes of what is called Good Society (though it is so seldom true either to the adjective or noun) look upon a nation of democrats with any chance of receiving an undistorted image? Were not those, moreover, who found in the old order of things an earthly paradise,

¹ See *Hamlet*, Act I, Sc. v.

² If a German can be a man of wit?

paying them quarterly dividends for the wisdom of their ancestors, with the punctuality of the seasons, unconsciously bribed to misunderstand if not to misrepresent us? Whether at war or at peace, there we were, a standing menace to all earthly paradises of that kind, fatal underminers of the very credit on which the dividends were based, all the more hateful and terrible that our destructive agency was so insidious, working invisible in the elements, as it seemed, active while they slept, and coming upon them in the darkness like an armed man. *Could* Laius have the proper feelings of a father toward Œdipus, announced as his destined destroyer by infallible oracles, and felt to be such by every conscious fiber of his soul? For more than a century the Dutch were the laughing-stock of polite Europe. They were butter-firkins, swillers of beer and schnaps, and their *vrouws* from whom Holbein painted the all-but loveliest of Madonnas, Rembrandt the graceful girl who sits immortal on his knee in Dresden, and Rubens his abounding goddesses, were the synonyms of clumsy vulgarity.¹ Even so late as Irving the ships of the greatest navigators in the world were represented as sailing equally well stern-foremost. That the aristocratic Venetians should have

Riveted with gigantic piles

Thorough the center their new-catchèd miles,

was heroic. But the far more marvelous achievement of the Dutch in the same kind was ludicrous even to republican Marvell. Meanwhile, during that very century of scorn, they were the best artists, sailors, merchants, bankers, printers, scholars, jurisconsults, and statesmen in Europe, and the genius of Motley has revealed them to us, earning a right to themselves by the most heroic struggle in human annals. But, alas! they were not merely simple burghers who had fairly made themselves High Mightinesses, and could treat on equal terms with anointed kings, but their com-

monwealth carried in its bosom the germs of democracy. They even unmuzzled, at least after dark, that dreadful mastiff, the Press, whose scent is, or ought to be, so keen for wolves in sheep's clothing and for certain other animals in lions' skins. They made fun of Sacred Majesty, and, what was worse, managed uncommonly well without it. In an age when periwigs made so large a part of the natural dignity of man, people with such a turn of mind were dangerous. How could they seem other than vulgar and hateful?

In the natural course of things we succeeded to this unenviable position of general butt. The Dutch had thriven under it pretty well, and there was hope that we could at least contrive to worry along. And we certainly did in a very redoubtable fashion. Perhaps we deserved some of the sarcasm more than our Dutch predecessors in office. We had nothing to boast of in arts or letters, and were given to bragging overmuch of our merely material prosperity, due quite as much to the virtue of our continent as to our own. There was some truth in Carlyle's sneer, after all. Till we had succeeded in some higher way than this, we had only the success of physical growth. Our greatness, like that of enormous Russia, was greatness on the map,—barbarian mass only; but had we gone down, like that other Atlantis, in some vast cataclysm, we should have covered but a pin's point on the chart of memory, compared with those ideal spaces occupied by tiny Attica and cramped England. At the same time, our critics somewhat too easily forgot that material must make ready the foundation for ideal triumphs, that the arts have no chance in poor countries. But it must be allowed that democracy stood for a great deal in our shortcoming. The *Edinburgh Review* never would have thought of asking, "Who reads a Russian book?"² and England was satisfied with iron from Sweden without being impertinently inquisitive after her painters and statuaries. Was it that they expected too much from the mere miracle of Freedom? Is it not the highest

¹ "The great artists probably did not figure in [Lowell's] selected list of great men, which besides was further contracted to include mainly the poets—the poets and Abraham Lincoln, one might say. He is not even at the pains to keep their nationality in mind and—in *On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners*—makes Holbein and Rubens fellow-countrymen of Rembrandt." (W. C. Brownell, *American Prose Masters*.)

² "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue?"—Sydney Smith, in the issue of the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1820.

art of a Republic to make men of flesh and blood, and not the marble ideals of such? It may be fairly doubted whether we have produced this higher type of man yet. Perhaps it is the collective, not the individual, humanity that is to have a chance of nobler development among us. We shall see. We have a vast amount of imported ignorance, and, still worse, of native ready-made knowledge, to digest before even the preliminaries of such a consummation can be arranged. We have got to learn that statesmanship is the most complicated of all arts, and to come back to the apprenticeship-system too hastily abandoned. At present, we trust a man with making constitutions on less proof of competence than we should demand before we gave him our shoe to patch. We have nearly reached the limit of the reaction from the old notion, which paid too much regard to birth and station as qualifications for office, and have touched the extreme point in the opposite direction, putting the highest of human functions up at auction to be bid for by any creature capable of going upright on two legs. In some places, we have arrived at a point at which civil society is no longer possible, and already another reaction has begun, not backwards to the old system, but toward fitness either from natural aptitude or special training. But will it always be safe to let evils work their own cure by becoming unendurable? Every one of them leaves its taint in the constitution of the body-politic, each in itself, perhaps, trifling, yet all together powerful for evil.

But whatever we might do or leave undone, we were not genteel, and it was uncomfortable to be continually reminded that, though we should boast that we were the Great West till we were black in the face, it did not bring us an inch nearer to the world's West-End.¹ That sacred enclosure of respectability was tabooed to us. The Holy Alliance did not inscribe us on its visiting-list. The Old World of wigs and orders and liveries would shop with us, but we must ring at the area-bell, and not venture to awaken the more august clamors of the knocker. Our manners, it must be granted, had none of those graces that

stamp the caste of Vere de Vere, in whatever museum of British antiquities they may be hidden. In short, we were vulgar.

This was one of those horribly vague accusations, the victim of which has no defense. An umbrella is of no avail against a Scotch mist. It envelops you, it penetrates at every pore, it wets you through without seeming to wet you at all. Vulgarity is an eighth deadly sin, added to the list in these latter days, and worse than all the others put together, since it perils your salvation in *this* world,—far the more important of the two in the minds of most men. It profits nothing to draw nice distinctions between essential and conventional, for the convention in this case *is* the essence, and you may break every command of the decalogue with perfect good-breeding, nay, if you are adroit, without losing caste. We, indeed, had it not to lose, for we had never gained it. "*How* am I vulgar?" asks the culprit, shudderingly. "Because thou art not like unto Us," answers Lucifer, Son of the Morning, and there is no more to be said. The god of this world may be a fallen angel, but he has us *there!* We were as clean,—so far as my observation goes, I think we were cleaner, morally and physically, than the English, and therefore, of course, than everybody else. But we did not pronounce the diphthong *ou* as they did, and we said *eether* and not *eyther*, following therein the fashion of our ancestors, who unhappily could bring over no English better than Shakespeare's; and we did not stammer as they had learned to do from the courtiers, who in this way flattered the Hanoverian king, a foreigner among the people he had come to reign over. Worse than all, we might have the noblest ideas and the finest sentiments in the world, but we vented them through that organ by which men are led rather than leaders, though some physiologists would persuade us that Nature furnishes her captains with a fine handle to their faces that Opportunity may get a good purchase on them for dragging them to the front.

This state of things was so painful that excellent people were not wanting who gave their whole genius to reproducing here the original Bull, whether by gaiters, the cut of their whiskers, by a factitious brutality

¹ Fashionable quarter of London.

in their tone, or by an accent that was forever tripping and falling flat over the tangled roots of our common tongue. Martyrs to a false ideal, it never occurred to them that nothing is more hateful to gods and men than a second-rate Englishman, and for the very reason that this planet never produced a more splendid creature than the first-rate one, witness Shakespeare and the Indian Mutiny. Witness that truly sublime self-abnegation of those prisoners lately among the bandits of Greece, where average men gave an example of quiet fortitude for which all the stoicism of antiquity can show no match. Witness the wreck of the Birkenhead, an example of disciplined heroism, perhaps the most precious, as the rarest, of all. If we could contrive to be not too unobtrusively our simple selves, we should be the most delightful of human beings, and the most original; whereas, when the plating of Anglicism rubs off, as it always will in points that come to much wear, we are liable to very unpleasing conjectures about the quality of the metal underneath. Perhaps one reason why the average Briton spreads himself here with such an easy air of superiority may be owing to the fact that he meets with so many bad imitations as to conclude himself the only real thing in a wilderness of shams. He fancies himself moving through an endless Bloomsbury, where his mere apparition confers honor as an avatar of the court-end of the universe. Not a Bull of them all but is persuaded he bears Europa upon his back. This is the sort of fellow whose patronage is so divertingly insufferable. Thank Heaven he is not the only specimen of cater-cousinship from the dear old Mother Island that is shown to us! Among genuine things, I know nothing more genuine than the better men whose limbs were made in England. So manly-tender, so brave, so true, so warranted to wear, they make us proud to feel that blood is thicker than water.

But it is not merely the Englishman; every European candidly admits in himself some right of primogeniture in respect of us, and pats this shaggy continent on the back with a lively sense of generous unbending. The German who plays the bass-viol has a well-founded contempt, which

he is not always nice in concealing, for a country so few of whose children ever take that noble instrument between their knees. His cousin, the Ph.D. from Göttingen, cannot help despising a people who do not grow loud and red over Aryans and Turanians, and are indifferent about their descent from either. The Frenchman feels an easy mastery in speaking his mother tongue, and attributes it to some native superiority of parts that lifts him high above us barbarians of the West. The Italian *prima donna* sweeps a curtsy of careless pity to the over-facile pit which unsexes her with the *bravo!* innocently meant to show a familiarity with foreign usage. But all without exception make no secret of regarding us as the goose bound to deliver them a golden egg in return for *their* cackle. Such men as Agassiz, Guyot, and Goldwin Smith come with gifts in their hands; but since it is commonly European failures who bring hither their remarkable gifts and acquirements, this view of the case is sometimes just the least bit in the world provoking. To think what a delicious seclusion of contempt we enjoyed till California and our own ostentatious *parvenus*, flinging gold away in Europe that might have endowed libraries at home, gave us the ill repute of riches! What a shabby downfall from the Arcadia which the French officers of our Revolutionary War fancied they saw here through Rousseau-tinted spectacles! Something of Arcadia there really was, something of the Old Age; and that divine provincialism were cheaply repurchased could we have it back again in exchange for the tawdry upholstery that has taken its place.

For some reason or other, the European has rarely been able to see America except in caricature. Would the first Review of the world have printed the *niaiseries* of M. Maurice Sand as a picture of society in any civilized country? M. Sand, to be sure, has inherited nothing of his famous mother's literary outfit, except the pseudonym. But since the conductors of the *Revue* could not have published his story because it was clever, they must have thought it valuable for its truth. As true as the last-century Englishman's picture of Jean Crapaud! We do not ask to be sprinkled with rosewater, but may perhaps

fairly protest against being drenched with the rinsings of an unclean imagination. The next time the *Revue* allows such ill-bred persons to throw their slops out of its first-floor windows, let it honestly preface the discharge with a *gare l'eau!*¹ that we may run from under in season. And M. Duvergier de Hauranne, who knows how to be entertaining! I know that *le Français est plutôt indiscret que confiant*,² and the pen slides too easily when indiscretions will fetch so much a page; but should we not have been *tant-soit-peu*³ more cautious had we been writing about people on the other side of the Channel? But then it is a fact in the natural history of the American long familiar to Europeans, that he abhors privacy, knows not the meaning of reserve, lives in hotels because of their greater publicity, and is never so pleased as when his domestic affairs (if he may be said to have any) are paraded in the newspapers. Barnum, it is well known, represents perfectly the average national sentiment in this respect. However it be, we are not treated like other people, or perhaps I should say like people who are ever likely to be met with in society.

Is it in the climate? Either I have a false notion of European manners, or else the atmosphere affects them strangely when exported hither. Perhaps they suffer from the sea-voyage like some of the more delicate wines. During our Civil War an English gentleman of the highest description was kind enough to call upon me, mainly, as it seemed, to inform me how entirely he sympathized with the Confederates, and how sure he felt that we could never subdue them,—“they were the *gentlemen* of the country, you know.” Another, the first greetings hardly over, asked me how I accounted for the universal meagerness of my countrymen. To a thinner man than I, or from a stouter man than he, the question *might* have been offensive. The Marquis of Hartington⁴ wore a secession badge

at a public ball in New York. In a civilized country he might have been roughly handled; but here, where the *bienséances* are not so well understood, of course nobody minded it. A French traveler told me he had been a good deal in the British colonies, and had been astonished to see how soon the people became Americanized. He added, with delightful *bonhomie*, and as if he were sure it would charm me, that “they even began to talk through their noses, just like you!” I was naturally ravished with this testimony to the assimilating power of democracy, and could only reply that I hoped they would never adopt our democratic patent-method of seeming to settle one’s honest debts, for they would find it paying through the nose in the long-run. I am a man of the New World, and do not know precisely the present fashion of May-Fair, but I have a kind of feeling that if an American (*mutato nomine, de te* is always frightfully possible) were to do this kind of thing under a European roof, it would induce some disagreeable reflections as to the ethical results of democracy. I read the other day in print the remark of a British tourist who had eaten large quantities of our salt, such as it is (I grant it has not the European savor), that the Americans were hospitable, no doubt, but that it was partly because they longed for foreign visitors to relieve the tedium of their dead-level existence, and partly from ostentation. What shall we do? Shall we close our doors? Not I, for one, if I should so have forfeited the friendship of L. S.,⁵ most lovable of men. He somehow seems to find us human, at least, and so did Clough, whose poetry will one of these days, perhaps, be found to have been the best utterance in verse of this generation. And T. H.,⁶ the mere grasp of whose manly hand carries with it the pledge of frankness and friendship, of an abiding simplicity of nature as affecting as it is rare!

The fine old Tory aversion of former times was not hard to bear. There was something

¹ Beware of the water.

² The Frenchman is rather indiscreet than presumptuous.

³ Ever so little.

⁴ One of Mr. Lincoln’s neatest strokes of humor was his treatment of this gentleman when a laudable curiosity induced him to be presented to the President of

the Broken Bubble. Mr. Lincoln persisted in calling him Mr. Partington. Surely the refinement of good-breeding could go no further. Giving the young man his real name (already notorious in the newspapers) would have made his visit an insult. Had Henri IV done this, it would have been famous. (Lowell’s note.)

⁵ Leslie Stephen.

⁶ Thomas Hughes.

even refreshing in it, as in a northeaster to a hardy temperament. When a British parson, traveling in Newfoundland while the slash of our separation was still raw, after prophesying a glorious future for an island that continued to dry its fish under the ægis of Saint George, glances disdainfully over his spectacles in parting at the U. S. A., and forebodes for them a "speedy relapse into barbarism," now that they have madly cut themselves off from the humanizing influences of Britain, I smile with barbarian self-conceit. But this kind of thing became by degrees an unpleasant anachronism. For meanwhile the young giant was growing, was beginning indeed to feel tight in his clothes, was obliged to let in a gore here and there in Texas, in California, in New Mexico, in Alaska, and had the scissors and needle and thread ready for Canada when the time came. His shadow loomed like a Brocken-specter over against Europe,—the shadow of what they were coming to, that was the unpleasant part of it. Even in such misty image as they had of him, it was painfully evident that his clothes were not of any cut hitherto fashionable, nor conceivable by a Bond Street tailor,—and this in an age, too, when everything depends upon clothes, when, if we do not keep up appearances, the seeming-solid frame of this universe, nay, your very God, would slump into himself, like a mockery king of snow, being nothing, after all, but a prevailing mode, a make-believe of believing. From this moment the young giant assumed the respectable aspect of a phenomenon, to be got rid of if possible, but at any rate as legitimate a subject of human study as the glacial period or the silurian what-d'ye-call-ems. If the man of the primeval drift-heaps be so absorbingly interesting, why not the man of the drift that is just beginning, of the drift into whose irresistible current we are just being sucked whether we will or no? If I were in their place, I confess I should not be frightened. Man has survived so much, and contrived to be comfortable on this planet after surviving so much! I am something of a protestant in matters of government also, and am willing to get rid of vestments and ceremonies and to come down to bare benches, if only faith in God take the place of a general agreement to profess confidence in ritual and

sham. Every mortal man of us holds stock in the only public debt that is absolutely sure of payment, and that is the debt of the Maker of this Universe to the Universe he has made. I have no notion of selling out my shares in a panic.

It was something to have advanced even to the dignity of a phenomenon, and yet I do not know that the relation of the individual American to the individual European was bettered by it; and that, after all, must adjust itself comfortably before there can be a right understanding between the two. We had been a desert, we became a museum. People came hither for scientific and not social ends. The very cockney could not complete his education without taking a vacant stare at us in passing. But the sociologists (I think they call themselves so) were the hardest to bear. There was no escape. I have even known a professor of this fearful science to come disguised in petticoats. We were cross-examined as a chemist cross-examines a new substance. Human? yes, all the elements are present, though abnormally combined. Civilized? Hm! that needs a stricter assay. No entomologist could take a more friendly interest in a strange bug. After a few such experiences, I, for one, have felt as if I were merely one of those horrid things preserved in spirits (and very bad spirits, too) in a cabinet. I was not the fellow-being of these explorers: I was a curiosity; I was a *specimen*. Hath not an American organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions even as a European hath? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? I will not keep on with Shylock to his next question but one.

Till after our Civil War it never seemed to enter the head of any foreigner, especially of any Englishman, that an American had what could be called a country, except as a place to eat, sleep, and trade in. Then it seemed to strike them suddenly. "By Jove, you know, fellahs don't fight like that for a shop-till!" No, I rather think not. To Americans America is something more than a promise and an expectation. It has a past and traditions of its own. A descent from men who sacrificed everything and came hither, not to better their fortunes, but to plant their idea in virgin soil, should be a good pedigree. There was never colony save

this that went forth, not to seek gold, but God. Is it not as well to have sprung from such as these as from some burly beggar who came over with Wilhelmus Conquestor, unless, indeed, a line grow better as it runs farther away from stalwart ancestors? And for our history, it is dry enough, no doubt, in the books, but, for all that, is of a kind that tells in the blood. I have admitted that Carlyle's sneer had a show of truth in it. But what does he himself, like a true Scot, admire in the Hohenzollerns? First of all, that they were *canny*, a thrifty, forehanded race. Next, that they made a good fight from generation to generation with the chaos around them. That is precisely the battle which the English race on this continent has been pushing doughtily forward for two centuries and a half. Doughtily and silently, for you cannot hear in Europe "that crash, the death-song of the perfect tree," that has been going on here from sturdy father to sturdy son, and making this continent habitable for the weaker Old World breed that has swarmed to it during the last half-century. If ever men did a good stroke of work on this planet, it was the forefathers of those whom you are wondering whether it would not be prudent to acknowledge as far-off cousins. Alas, man of genius, to whom we owe so much, could you see nothing more than the burning of a foul chimney in that clash of Michael and Satan which flamed up under your very eyes?

Before our war we were to Europe but a huge mob of adventurers and shopkeepers. Leigh Hunt expressed it well enough when he said that he could never think of America without seeing a gigantic counter stretched all along the seaboard. And Leigh Hunt, without knowing it, had been more than half Americanized, too! Feudalism had by degrees made commerce, the great civilizer, contemptible. But a tradesman with sword on thigh and very prompt of stroke was not only redoubtable, he had become respectable also. Few people, I suspect, alluded twice to a needle in Sir John Hawkwood's presence, after that doughty fighter had exchanged it for a more dangerous tool of the same metal. Democracy had been hitherto only a ludicrous effort to reverse the laws of nature by thrusting Cleon into the place of Pericles. But a democracy that could fight for an abstraction, whose members held life and

goods cheap compared with that larger life which we call country, was not merely unheard-of, but portentous. It was the nightmare of the Old World taking upon itself flesh and blood, turning out to be substance and not dream. Since the Norman crusader clanged down upon the throne of the *porphyro-geniti*, carefully-draped appearances had never received such a shock, had never been so rudely called on to produce their titles to the empire of the world. Authority has had its periods not unlike those of geology, and at last comes Man claiming kingship in right of his mere manhood. The world of the Saurians might be in some respects more picturesque, but the march of events is inexorable, and that world is bygone.

The young giant had certainly got out of long-clothes. He had become the *enfant terrible* of the human household. It was not and will not be easy for the world (especially for our British cousins) to look upon us as grown up. The youngest of nations, its people must also be young and to be treated accordingly, was the syllogism,—as if libraries did not make all nations equally old in all those respects, at least, where age is an advantage and not a defect. Youth, no doubt, has its good qualities, as people feel who are losing it, but boyishness is another thing. We had been somewhat boyish as a nation, a little loud, a little pushing, a little braggart. But might it not partly have been because we felt that we had certain claims to respect that were not admitted? The war which established our position as a vigorous nationality has also sobered us. A nation, like a man, cannot look death in the eye for four years without some strange reflections, without arriving at some clearer consciousness of the stuff it is made of, without some great moral change. Such a change, or the beginning of it, no observant person can fail to see here. Our thought and our politics, our bearing as a people, are assuming a manlier tone. We have been compelled to see what was weak in democracy as well as what was strong. We have begun obscurely to recognize that things do not go of themselves, and that popular government is not in itself a panacea, is no better than any other form except as the virtue and wisdom of the people make it so, and that when men undertake to do their own kingship, they enter upon the

dangers and responsibilities as well as the privileges of the function. Above all, it looks as if we were on the way to be persuaded that no government can be carried on by declamation. It is noticeable also that facility of communication has made the best English and French thought far more directly operative here than ever before. Without being Europeanized, our discussion of important questions in statesmanship, in political economy, in æsthetics, is taking a broader scope and a higher tone. It had certainly been provincial, one might almost say local, to a very unpleasant extent. Perhaps our experience in soldiership has taught us to value training more than we have been popularly wont. We may possibly come to the conclusion, one of these days, that self-made men may not be always equally skillful in the manufacture of wisdom, may not be divinely commissioned to fabricate the higher qualities of opinion on all possible topics of human interest.

So long as we continue to be the most common-schooled and the least cultivated people in the world, I suppose we must consent to endure this condescending manner of foreigners toward us. The more friendly they mean to be, the more ludicrously prominent it becomes. They can never appreciate the immense amount of silent work that has been done here, making this continent slowly fit for the abode of man, and which will demonstrate itself, let us hope, in the character of the people. Outsiders can only be expected to judge a nation by the amount it has contributed to the civilization of the world; the amount, that is, that can be seen and handled. A great place in history can only be achieved by competitive examinations, nay, by a long course of them. How much new thought have we contributed to the common stock? Till that question can be triumphantly answered, or needs no answer, we must continue to be simply interesting as an experiment, to be studied as a problem, and not respected as an attained result or an accomplished solution. Perhaps, as I have hinted, their patronizing manner toward us is the fair result of their failing to see here anything more than a poor imitation, a plaster-cast of Europe. And are they not partly right? If the tone of the uncultivated American has too often the arrogance of the

barbarian, is not that of the cultivated as often vulgarly apologetic? In the America they meet with is there the simplicity, the manliness, the absence of sham, the sincere human nature, the sensitiveness to duty and implied obligation, that in any way distinguishes us from what our orators call "the effete civilization of the Old World"? Is there a politician among us daring enough (except a Dana here and there) to risk his future on the chance of our keeping our word with the exactness of superstitious communities like England? Is it certain that we shall be ashamed of a bankruptcy of honor, if we can only keep the letter of our bond? I hope we shall be able to answer all these questions with a frank *yes*. At any rate, we would advise our visitors that we are not merely curious creatures, but belong to the family of man, and that, as individuals, we are not to be always subjected to the competitive examination above mentioned, even if we acknowledged their competence as an examining board. Above all, we beg them to remember that America is not to us, as to them, a mere object of external interest to be discussed and analyzed, but *in us*, part of our very marrow. Let them not suppose that we conceive of ourselves as exiles from the graces and amenities of an older date than we, though very much at home in a state of things not yet all it might be or should be, but which we mean to make so, and which we find both wholesome and pleasant for men (though perhaps not for *dilettanti*) to live in. "The full tide of human existence" may be felt here as keenly as Johnson felt it at Charing Cross, and in a larger sense. I know one person who is singular enough to think Cambridge the very best spot on the habitable globe. "Doubtless God *could* have made a better, but doubtless he never did."

It will take England a great while to get over her airs of patronage toward us, or even passably to conceal them. She cannot help confounding the people with the country, and regarding us as lusty juveniles. She has a conviction that whatever good there is in us is wholly English, when the truth is that we are worth nothing except so far as we have disinfected ourselves of Anglicism. She is especially condescending just now, and lavishes sugar-plums on us as if we had not outgrown them. I am no believer in sudden

conversions, especially in sudden conversions to a favorable opinion of people who have just proved you to be mistaken in judgment and therefore unwise in policy. I never blamed her for not wishing well to democracy,—how should she?—but Alabamas are not wishes. Let her not be too hasty in believing Mr. Reverdy Johnson's pleasant words. Though there is no thoughtful man in America who would not consider a war with England the greatest of calamities, yet the feeling toward her here is very far from cordial, whatever our Minister may say in the effusion that comes after ample dining. Mr. Adams, with his famous "My Lord, this means war," perfectly represented his country. Justly or not, we have a feeling that we have been wronged, not merely insulted. The only sure way of bringing about a healthy relation between the two countries is for Englishmen to clear their minds of the notion that we are always to be treated as a kind of inferior and deported Englishman whose nature they perfectly understand, and whose back they accordingly stroke the wrong way of the fur with amazing perseverance. Let them learn to treat us naturally on our merits as human beings, as they would a German or a Frenchman, and

not as if we were a kind of counterfeit Briton whose crime appeared in every shade of difference, and before long there would come that right feeling which we naturally call a good understanding. The common blood, and still more the common language, are fatal instruments of misapprehension. Let them give up *trying* to understand us, still more thinking that they do, and acting in various absurd ways as the necessary consequence, for they will never arrive at that devoutly-to-be-wished consummation, till they learn to look at us as we are and not as they suppose us to be. Dear old long-estranged mother-in-law, it is a great many years since we parted. Since 1660, when you married again, you have been a step-mother to us. Put on your spectacles, dear madam. Yes, we *have* grown, and changed likewise. You would not let us darken your doors, if you could help it. We know that perfectly well. But pray, when we look to be treated as men, don't shake that rattle in our faces, nor talk baby to us any longer.

Do, child, go to it grandam, child;
Give grandam kingdom, and it grandam will
Give it a plum, a cherry, and a fig!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809-1865)

On 20 December, 1859, Lincoln sent to a correspondent a brief sketch of his life. "I was born," he wrote, "February 12, 1809, in Hardin [now La Rue] County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. . . . My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Kentucky about 1781 or 1782, where a year or two later he was killed by the Indians, not in battle, but by stealth. . . . His ancestors, who were Quakers, went to Virginia from Berks County, Pennsylvania. . . . My father . . . grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year. . . . There I grew up. . . . There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course, when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the rule of three, but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education, I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

"I was raised to farm work, which I continued till I was twenty-two. At twenty-one I came to Illinois, Macon County. Then I got to New Salem, at that time in Sangamon, now in Menard County, where I remained a year as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came the Black Hawk War; and I was elected a captain of volunteers, a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since. I went the campaign, was elated, ran for the legislature the same year (1832), and was beaten—the only time I have ever been beaten by the people. The next and three succeeding biennial elections I was elected to the legislature. I was not a candidate afterward. During this legislative period I had studied law, and removed to Springfield to practice it. In 1846 I was once elected to the lower House of Congress. Was not a candidate for re-election. From 1849 to 1854, both inclusive, practiced law more assiduously than ever before. . . . I was losing interest in politics when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused me again."

Here Lincoln's sketch ends. He had, in 1842, married Mary Todd. In 1854 he was again elected to the State Legislature. In the following year he was an unsuccessful candidate for the office of U. S. Senator. He was nominated for the same office by the new Republican party in 1858, and in his speech of acceptance declared: "'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other." There followed the celebrated series of debates between Lincoln and the rival candidate, Stephen A. Douglas. In those debates Lincoln was not at his best, but he did succeed in the immensely difficult task of holding his own against his accomplished opponent. In the election he was defeated, and he was hurt by the defeat, but he had through his speeches made himself nationally known. In 1860 he was nominated by the Republicans for the Presidency, and was elected. He was re-elected in 1864, only to be killed by John Wilkes Booth six weeks after his inauguration. He died on the morning of 15 April, 1865.

Lincoln was not precocious. Neither in youth nor in early manhood did he exhibit any signs of unusual capacity, and he always remained a slow thinker. Only in some moral traits and in a quality of persistence which fitfully showed itself did his earlier life in any way foreshadow his later development. The latter quality significantly appears, and with it one secret of the power of his later writings, in a habit of his childhood which he thus described: "When a mere child I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way I could not understand. I do not think I ever got angry at anything else in my life; but that always disturbed my temper, and has ever since. I can remember going to my little bedroom, after hearing the neighbors talk of an evening with my father, and spending no small part of the night walking up and down trying to make out what was the exact meaning of some of their, to me, dark sayings. I could not sleep when I got on such a hunt for an idea until I had caught it; and when I thought I had got it, I was not satisfied until I had put it in language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy to comprehend. This was a kind of passion with me, and it has stuck by me; for I am never easy now, when I am handling a thought, till I have bounded it north, and bounded it south, and bounded it east, and bounded it west." On this foundation, his mind nourished by the reading of only a very few books—at first chiefly the Bible, and later also Shakespeare—Lincoln built the great structure of his final style. His use of words curiously parallels his

career. His writings exhibit a slow and fitful growth from commonplace beginnings to a final mastery which enabled him to produce a few pieces which are recognized as classics of the English language wherever that language is spoken or read.

It was not, however, merely by conscious effort after clarity that this result was accomplished; for it was not accomplished until Lincoln's actions were dominated by a profound moral conviction. That conviction may not have been wholly unmixed with personal ambition; but, nevertheless, it did slowly become Lincoln's sincere and deep conviction that the Union must be preserved without slavery because the South and its sympathizers had come to represent a theory which exalted the rights of capital, of property, above the rights of men—a theory which denied the principles of the Declaration of Independence and led towards tyranny and oppression, and which, if not repudiated and crushed, would inevitably end in subjecting Americans everywhere to the unscrupulous and corrupt rule of the money-changers who had invaded the temple of freedom. It was because they sought to revive the principles of Jefferson and Madison against the inhuman specter of capital corrupting men that the leaders of Lincoln's party called it Republican. And when Lincoln was put to the test of waging war in defense of his conviction he rose to a selflessness which, even for isolated moments, the fewest of men ever attain. After Stanton, who once called Lincoln "the original gorilla," had become a member of his cabinet, he told a visitor that the President was a damned fool. Lincoln was informed of this, and replied: "If Stanton said I was a damned fool, then I must be one, for he is nearly always right and generally says what he means." The importance of a single incident of this kind should not be exaggerated, but it was characteristic, and it shows in a small way not only the selflessness to which Lincoln could rise but also, in the charitable understanding which it exhibits, another secret of Lincoln's greatness as man and writer;—he had a strange knowledge of the human heart.

COOPER UNION SPEECH¹

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW-CITIZENS OF NEW YORK: The facts with which I shall deal this evening are mainly old and familiar; nor is there anything new in the general use I shall make of them. If there shall be any novelty, it will be in the mode of presenting the facts, and the inferences and observations following that presentation. In his speech last autumn at Columbus, Ohio, as reported in the *New York Times*, Senator Douglas said:

"Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now."

¹ In the autumn of 1859 Henry Ward Beecher and the Young Men's Republican Union invited Lincoln to make an address in Brooklyn at the Plymouth Church. It was only after his acceptance and after his arrival, several months later, in New York that he learned that he was to speak at Cooper Union. He then feared that his address was not well adapted to the audience he would have, and he carefully revised it. It was delivered on 27 February, 1860, and made a deep impression. It is a masterly statement of Lincoln's political position, and some have regarded it as the greatest of his addresses made before he became President. At any rate it was as the result of this address that Lincoln became a serious presidential possibility.

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I fully indorse this, and I adopt it as a text for this discourse. I so adopt it because it furnishes a precise and an agreed starting-point for a discussion between Republicans and that wing of the Democracy headed by Senator Douglas. It simply leaves the inquiry: What was the understanding those fathers had of the question mentioned?

* * * * *

What is the question which, according to the text, those fathers understood "just as well, and even better, than we do now"?

It is this: Does the proper division of local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbid our Federal Government to control as to slavery in our Federal Territories?

Upon this, Senator Douglas holds the affirmative, and Republicans the negative. This affirmation and denial form an issue; and this issue—this question—is precisely what the text declares our fathers understood "better than we."

* * * * *

It is surely safe to assume that the thirty-nine framers of the original Constitution, and the seventy-six members of the Congress which framed the amendments thereto, taken together, do certainly include those who may be fairly called "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." And so assuming, I defy any man to show

that any one of them ever, in his whole life, declared that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. I go a step further. I defy anyone to show that any living man in the whole world ever did, prior to the beginning of the present century (and I might almost say prior to the beginning of the last half of the present century), declare that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. To those who now so declare I give not only "our fathers who framed the government under which we live," but with them all other living men within the century in which it was framed, among whom to search, and they shall not be able to find the evidence of a single man agreeing with them.

Now, and here, let me guard a little against being misunderstood. I do not mean to say we are bound to follow implicitly in whatever our fathers did. To do so would be to discard all the lights of current experience—to reject all progress, all improvement. What I do say is that if we would supplant the opinions and policy of our fathers in any case, we should do so upon evidence so conclusive, and arguments so clear, that even their great authority, fairly considered and weighed, cannot stand; and most surely not in a case whereof we ourselves declare they understood the question better than we.

If any man at this day sincerely believes that a proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbids the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories, he is right to say so, and to enforce his position by all truthful evidence and fair argument which he can. But he has no right to mislead others who have less access to history, and less leisure to study it, into the false belief that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" were of the same opinion—thus substituting falsehood and deception for truthful evidence and fair argument. If any man at this day sincerely believes "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" used

and applied principles, in other cases, which ought to have led them to understand that a proper division of local from Federal authority, or some part of the Constitution, forbids the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories, he is right to say so. But he should, at the same time, brave the responsibility of declaring that, in his opinion, he understands their principles better than they did themselves; and especially should he not shirk that responsibility by asserting that they "understood the question just as well, and even better, than we do now."

But enough! Let all who believe that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now," speak as they spoke, and act as they acted upon it. This is all Republicans ask—all Republicans desire—in relation to slavery. As those fathers marked it, so let it be again marked, as an evil not to be extended, but to be tolerated and protected only because of and so far as its actual presence among us makes that toleration and protection a necessity. Let all the guaranties those fathers give it be not grudgingly, but fully and fairly, maintained. For this Republicans contend, and with this, so far as I know or believe, they will be content.

And now, if they would listen—as I suppose they will not—I would address a few words to the Southern people.

I would say to them: You consider yourselves a reasonable and a just people; and I consider that in the general qualities of reason and justice you are not inferior to any other people. Still, when you speak of us Republicans, you do so only to denounce us as reptiles, or, at the best, as no better than outlaws. You will grant a hearing to pirates or murderers, but nothing like it to "Black Republicans." In all your contentions with one another, each of you deems an unconditional condemnation of "Black Republicanism" as the first thing to be attended to. Indeed, such condemnation of us seems to be an indispensable prerequisite—license, so to speak—among you to be admitted or permitted to speak at all. Now can you or not be prevailed upon to pause and to consider whether this is quite just to us, or even to

yourselves? Bring forward your charges and specifications, and then be patient long enough to hear us deny or justify.

You say we are sectional. We deny it. That makes an issue; and the burden of proof is upon you. You produce your proof; and what is it? Why, that our party has no existence in your section—gets no votes in your section. The fact is substantially true; but does it prove the issue? If it does, then in case we should, without change of principle, begin to get votes in your section, we should thereby cease to be sectional. You cannot escape this conclusion; and yet, are you willing to abide by it? If you are, you will probably soon find that we have ceased to be sectional, for we shall get votes in your section this very year. You will then begin to discover, as the truth plainly is, that your proof does not touch the issue. The fact that we get no votes in your section is a fact of your making, and not of ours. And if there be fault in that fact, that fault is primarily yours, and remains so until you show that we repel you by some wrong principle or practice. If we do repel you by any wrong principle or practice, the fault is ours; but this brings you to where you ought to have started—to a discussion of the right or wrong of our principle. If our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section for the benefit of ours, or for any other object, then our principle, and we with it, are sectional, and are justly opposed and denounced as such. Meet us, then, on the question of whether our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section; and so meet us as if it were possible that something may be said on our side. Do you accept the challenge? No! Then you really believe that the principle which “our fathers who framed the government under which we live” thought so clearly right as to adopt it, and indorse it again and again, upon their official oaths, is in fact so clearly wrong as to demand your condemnation without a moment’s consideration.

Some of you delight to flaunt in our faces the warning against sectional parties given by Washington in his Farewell Address. Less than eight years before Washington gave that warning, he had, as President of the United States, approved and signed an act of Congress enforcing the prohibition of

slavery in the Northwestern Territory, which act embodied the policy of the government upon that subject up to and at the very moment he penned that warning; and about one year after he penned it, he wrote Lafayette that he considered that prohibition a wise measure, expressing in the same connection his hope that we should at some time have a confederacy of free states.

Bearing this in mind, and seeing that sectionalism has since arisen upon this same subject, is that warning a weapon in your hands against us, or in our hands against you? Could Washington himself speak, would he cast the blame of that sectionalism upon us, who sustain his policy, or upon you, who repudiate it? We respect that warning of Washington, and we commend it to you, together with his example pointing to the right application of it.

But you say you are conservative—eminently conservative—while we are revolutionary, destructive, or something of the sort. What is conservatism? Is it not adherence to the old and tried, against the new and untried? We stick to, contend for, the identical old policy on the point in controversy which was adopted by “our fathers who framed the government under which we live”; while you with one accord reject, and scout, and spit upon that old policy, and insist upon substituting something new. True, you disagree among yourselves as to what that substitute shall be. You are divided on new propositions and plans, but you are unanimous in rejecting and denouncing the old policy of the fathers. Some of you are for reviving the foreign slave-trade; some for a congressional slave-code for the Territories; some for Congress forbidding the Territories to prohibit slavery within their limits; some for maintaining slavery in the Territories through the judiciary; some for the “gur-reat pur-rinciple” that “if one man would enslave another, no third man should object,” fantastically called “popular sovereignty”; but never a man among you is in favor of Federal prohibition of slavery in Federal Territories, according to the practice of “our fathers who framed the government under which we live.” Not one of all your various plans can show a precedent or an advocate in the century within which our government originated. Consider, then,

whether your claim of conservatism for yourselves, and your charge of destructiveness against us, are based on the most clear and stable foundations.

Again, you say we have made the slavery question more prominent than it formerly was. We deny it. We admit that it is more prominent, but we deny that we made it so. It was not we, but you, who discarded the old policy of the fathers. We resisted, and still resist, your innovation; and thence comes the greater prominence of the question. Would you have that question reduced to its former proportions? Go back to that old policy. What has been will be again, under the same conditions. If you would have the peace of the old times, readopt the precepts and policy of the old times.

You charge that we stir up insurrections among your slaves. We deny it; and what is your proof? Harper's Ferry! John Brown!¹ John Brown was no Republican; and you have failed to implicate a single Republican in his Harper's Ferry enterprise. If any member of our party is guilty in that matter, you know it, or you do not know it. If you do know it, you are inexcusable for not designating the man and proving the fact. If you do not know it, you are inexcusable for asserting it, and especially for persisting in the assertion after you have tried and failed to make the proof. You need not be told that persisting in a charge which one does not know to be true, is simply malicious slander.

Some of you admit that no Republican designedly aided or encouraged the Harper's Ferry affair, but still insist that our doctrines and declarations necessarily lead to such results. We do not believe it. We know we hold no doctrine, and make no declaration, which were not held to and made by "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." You never dealt fairly by us in relation to this affair. When it occurred, some important state elections were near at hand, and you were in evident glee with the belief that, by charging the blame upon us, you could get an advantage of us in those elections. The elections came,

and your expectations were not quite fulfilled. Every Republican man knew that, as to himself at least, your charge was a slander, and he was not much inclined by it to cast his vote in your favor. Republican doctrines and declarations are accompanied with a continual protest against any interference with your slaves, or with you about your slaves. Surely, this does not encourage them to revolt. True, we do, in common with "our fathers who framed the government under which we live," declare our belief that slavery is wrong; but the slaves do not hear us declare even this. For anything we say or do, the slaves would scarcely know there is a Republican party. I believe they would not, in fact, generally know it but for your misrepresentations of us in their hearing. In your political contests among yourselves, each faction charges the other with sympathy with Black Republicanism; and then, to give point to the charge, defines Black Republicanism to simply be insurrection, blood, and thunder among the slaves.

Slave insurrections are no more common now than they were before the Republican party was organized. What induced the Southampton insurrection,² twenty-eight years ago, in which at least three times as many lives were lost as at Harper's Ferry? You can scarcely stretch your very elastic fancy to the conclusion that Southampton was "got up by Black Republicanism." In the present state of things in the United States, I do not think a general, or even a very extensive, slave insurrection is possible. The indispensable concert of action cannot be attained. The slaves have no means of rapid communication; nor can incendiary freemen, black or white, supply it. The explosive materials are everywhere in parcels; but there neither are, nor can be supplied, the indispensable connecting trains.

Much is said by Southern people about the affection of slaves for their masters and mistresses; and a part of it, at least, is true. A plot for an uprising could scarcely be devised and communicated to twenty individuals before some one of them, to save the

¹ John Brown's seizure of the arsenal at Harper's Ferry occurred on the night of 16 October, 1859. He was captured on 18 October, and executed on 2 December.

² It took place under the leadership of Nat Turner in 1831 at Southampton, Virginia, and resulted in the death of over 60 people, mostly women and children. In the South it was regarded as the outcome of abolitionist propaganda.

life of a favorite master or mistress, would divulge it. This is the rule; and the slave revolution in Haiti¹ was not an exception to it, but a case occurring under peculiar circumstances. The gunpowder plot of British history, though not connected with slaves, was more in point. In that case, only about twenty were admitted to the secret; and yet one of them, in his anxiety to save a friend, betrayed the plot to that friend, and, by consequence, averted the calamity. Occasional poisonings from the kitchen, and open or stealthy assassinations in the field, and local revolts extending to a score or so, will continue to occur as the natural results of slavery; but no general insurrection of slaves, as I think, can happen in this country for a long time. Whoever much fears, or much hopes, for such an event, will be alike disappointed.

In the language of Mr. Jefferson, uttered many years ago, "It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation peaceably, and in such slow degrees, as that the evil will wear off insensibly; and their places be, *pari passu*, filled up by free white laborers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up."

Mr. Jefferson did not mean to say, nor do I, that the power of emancipation is in the Federal Government. He spoke of Virginia; and, as to the power of emancipation, I speak of the slaveholding states only. The Federal Government, however, as we insist, has the power of restraining the extension of the institution—the power to insure that a slave insurrection shall never occur on any American soil which is now free from slavery.

John Brown's effort was peculiar. It was not a slave insurrection. It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves, in which the slaves refused to participate. In fact, it was so absurd that the slaves, with all their ignorance, saw plainly enough it could not succeed. That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts, related in history, at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends

in little else than his own execution. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon, and John Brown's attempt at Harper's Ferry, were, in their philosophy, precisely the same. The eagerness to cast blame on old England in the one case, and on New England in the other, does not disprove the sameness of the two things.

And how much would it avail you, if you could, by the use of John Brown, Helper's book,² and the like, break up the Republican organization? Human action can be modified to some extent, but human nature cannot be changed. There is a judgment and a feeling against slavery in this nation, which cast at least a million and a half of votes. You cannot destroy that judgment and feeling—that sentiment—by breaking up the political organization which rallies around it. You can scarcely scatter and disperse an army which has been formed into order in the face of your heaviest fire; but if you could, how much would you gain by forcing the sentiment which created it out of the peaceful channel of the ballot box into some other channel? What would that other channel probably be? Would the number of John Browns be lessened or enlarged by the operation?

But you will break up the Union rather than submit to a denial of your constitutional rights.

That has a somewhat reckless sound; but it would be palliated, if not fully justified, were we proposing, by the mere force of numbers, to deprive you of some right plainly written down in the Constitution. But we are proposing no such thing.

When you make these declarations you have a specific and well-understood allusion to an assumed constitutional right of yours to take slaves into the Federal Territories, and to hold them there as property. But no such right is specifically written in the Constitution. That instrument is literally silent about any such right. We, on the contrary, deny that such a right has any existence in the Constitution, even by implication.

Your purpose, then, plainly stated, is that

² H. R. Helper, of North Carolina, author of *The Impending Crisis in the South*, 1857. In it he sought to trace the economic distress of the South to slavery by contrasting with each other the slave and free states.

¹ Led by Toussaint L'Ouverture. It began in 1791.

you will destroy the government, unless you be allowed to construe and force the Constitution as you please, on all points in dispute between you and us. You will rule or ruin in all events.

This, plainly stated, is your language. Perhaps you will say the Supreme Court has decided the disputed constitutional question in your favor. Not quite so. But waiving the lawyer's distinction between dictum and decision, the court has decided the question for you in a sort of way. The court has substantially said it is your constitutional right to take slaves into the Federal Territories, and to hold them there as property. When I say the decision was made in a sort of way, I mean it was made in a divided court, by a bare majority of the judges, and they not quite agreeing with one another in the reasons for making it; that it is so made as that its avowed supporters disagree with one another about its meaning, and that it was mainly based upon a mistaken statement of fact—the statement in the opinion that “the right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution.”

An inspection of the Constitution will show that the right of property in a slave is not “distinctly and expressly affirmed” in it. Bear in mind, the judges do not pledge their judicial opinion that such right is impliedly affirmed in the Constitution; but they pledge their veracity that it is “distinctly and expressly” affirmed there—“distinctly,” that is, not mingled with anything else—“expressly,” that is, in words meaning just that, without the aid of any inference, and susceptible of no other meaning.

If they had only pledged their judicial opinion that such right is affirmed in the instrument by implication, it would be open to others to show that neither the word “slave” nor “slavery” is to be found in the Constitution, nor the word “property” even, in any connection with language alluding to the things slave, or slavery; and that wherever in that instrument the slave is alluded to, he is called a “person”; and wherever his master's legal right in relation to him is alluded to, it is spoken of as “service or labor which may be due”—as a debt payable in service or labor. Also it would be open to show, by contemporaneous his-

tory, that this mode of alluding to slaves and slavery, instead of speaking of them, was employed on purpose to exclude from the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man.

To show all this is easy and certain.

When this obvious mistake of the judges shall be brought to their notice, is it not reasonable to expect that they will withdraw the mistaken statement, and reconsider the conclusion based upon it?

And then it is to be remembered that “our fathers who framed the government under which we live”—the men who made the Constitution—decided this same constitutional question in our favor long ago: decided it without division among themselves when making the decision; without division among themselves about the meaning of it after it was made, and, so far as any evidence is left, without basing it upon any mistaken statement of facts.

Under all these circumstances, do you really feel yourselves justified to break up this government unless such a court decision as yours is shall be at once submitted to as a conclusive and final rule of political action? But you will not abide the election of a Republican President! In that supposed event, you say, you will destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us! That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, “Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!”

To be sure, what the robber demanded of me—my money—was my own; and I had a clear right to keep it; but it was no more my own than my vote is my own; and the threat of death to me, to extort my money, and the threat of destruction to the Union, to extort my vote, can scarcely be distinguished in principle.

A few words now to Republicans. It is exceedingly desirable that all parts of this great confederacy shall be at peace, and in harmony one with another. Let us Republicans do our part to have it so. Even though much provoked, let us do nothing through passion and ill temper. Even though the Southern people will not so much as listen to us, let us calmly consider their demands, and yield to them if, in our deliberate view

of our duty, we possibly can. Judging by all they say and do, and by the subject and nature of their controversy with us, let us determine, if we can, what will satisfy them.

Will they be satisfied if the Territories be unconditionally surrendered to them? We know they will not. In all their present complaints against us, the Territories are scarcely mentioned. Invasions and insurrections are the rage now. Will it satisfy them if, in the future, we have nothing to do with invasions and insurrections? We know it will not. We so know, because we know we never had anything to do with invasions and insurrections; and yet this total abstaining does not exempt us from the charge and the denunciation.

The question recurs, What will satisfy them? Simply this: we must not only let them alone, but we must somehow convince them that we do let them alone. This, we know by experience, is no easy task. We have been so trying to convince them from the very beginning of our organization, but with no success. In all our platforms and speeches we have constantly protested our purpose to let them alone; but this has had no tendency to convince them. Alike unavailing to convince them is the fact that they have never detected a man of us in any attempt to disturb them.

These natural and apparently adequate means all failing, what will convince them? This, and this only: cease to call slavery wrong, and join them in calling it right. And this must be done thoroughly—done in acts as well as in words. Silence will not be tolerated—we must place ourselves avowedly with them. Senator Douglas's new sedition law must be enacted and enforced, suppressing all declarations that slavery is wrong, whether made in politics, in presses, in pulpits, or in private. We must arrest and return their fugitive slaves with greedy pleasure. We must pull down our free-state constitutions. The whole atmosphere must be disinfected from all taint of opposition to slavery, before they will cease to believe that all their troubles proceed from us.

I am quite aware they do not state their case precisely in this way. Most of them would probably say to us, "Let us alone; do nothing to us, and say what you please about slavery." But we do let them alone—

have never disturbed them—so that, after all, it is what we say which dissatisfies them. They will continue to accuse us of doing, until we cease saying.

I am also aware they have not as yet in terms demanded the overthrow of our free-state constitutions. Yet those constitutions declare the wrong of slavery with more solemn emphasis than do all other sayings against it; and when all these other sayings shall have been silenced, the overthrow of these constitutions will be demanded, and nothing be left to resist the demand. It is nothing to the contrary that they do not demand the whole of this just now. Demanding what they do, and for the reason they do, they can voluntarily stop nowhere short of this consummation. Holding, as they do, that slavery is morally right and socially elevating, they cannot cease to demand a full national recognition of it as a legal right and a social blessing.

Nor can we justifiably withhold this on any ground save our conviction that slavery is wrong. If slavery is right, all words, acts, laws, and constitutions against it are themselves wrong, and should be silenced and swept away. If it is right, we cannot justly object to its nationality—its universality; if it is wrong, they cannot justly insist upon its extension—its enlargement. All they ask we could readily grant, if we thought slavery right; all we ask they could as readily grant, if they thought it wrong. Their thinking it right and our thinking it wrong is the precise fact upon which depends the whole controversy. Thinking it right, as they do, they are not to blame for desiring its full recognition as being right; but thinking it wrong, as we do, can we yield to them? Can we cast our votes with their view, and against our own? In view of our moral, social, and political responsibilities, can we do this?

Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the national Territories, and to overrun us here in these free states? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously

plied and belabored—contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong: vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man; such as a policy of “don’t care” on a question about which all true men do care; such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance; such as invocations to Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said and undo what Washington did.

Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government, nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it.

MESSAGE TO CONGRESS IN SPECIAL SESSION ¹

FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: Having been convened on an extraordinary occasion, as authorized by the Constitution, your attention is not called to any ordinary subject of legislation.

At the beginning of the present presidential term, four months ago, the functions of the Federal Government were found to be generally suspended within the several states of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Florida, excepting only those of the Post Office Department.

Within these states all the forts, arsenals, dockyards, custom-houses, and the like, including the movable and stationary property in and about them, had been seized, and were held in open hostility to this government, excepting only Forts Pickens, Taylor, and Jefferson, on and near the Florida coast, and Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. The forts thus seized had been

put in improved condition, new ones had been built, and armed forces had been organized and were organizing, all avowedly with the same hostile purpose.

The forts remaining in the possession of the Federal Government in and near these states were either besieged or menaced by warlike preparations, and especially Fort Sumter was nearly surrounded by well-protected hostile batteries, with guns equal in quality to the best of its own, and outnumbering the latter as perhaps ten to one. A disproportionate share of the Federal muskets and rifles had somehow found their way into these states, and had been seized to be used against the government. Accumulations of the public revenue lying within them had been seized for the same object. The navy was scattered in distant seas, leaving but a very small part of it within immediate reach of the government. Officers of the Federal army and navy had resigned in great numbers; and of those resigning a large proportion had taken up arms against the government. Simultaneously, and in connection with all this, the purpose to sever the Federal Union was openly avowed. In accordance with this purpose, an ordinance had been adopted in each of these states, declaring the states respectively to be separated from the National Union. A formula for instituting a combined government of these states had been promulgated; and this illegal organization, in the character of confederate states, was already invoking recognition, aid, and intervention from foreign powers.

Finding this condition of things, and believing it to be an imperative duty upon the incoming Executive to prevent, if possible, the consummation of such attempt to destroy the Federal Union, a choice of means to that end became indispensable. This choice was made and was declared in the inaugural address. The policy chosen looked to the exhaustion of all peaceful measures before a resort to any stronger ones. It sought only to hold the public places and property not already wrested from the government, and to collect the revenue, relying for the rest on time, discussion, and the ballot-box. It promised a continuance of the mails at government expense, to the very people who were resisting the government; and it gave repeated pledges against any disturbance to

¹ On 15 April, 1861, Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to suppress “unlawful combinations” in the states which had seceded. At the same time he summoned the Congress to meet in special session on 4 July, and on that day he communicated to its members the above message. It has been termed, rather oddly, a partisan state-paper, but even those who so regard it concede its brilliancy. It is the classic statement of the Union position in the war.

any of the people, or any of their rights. Of all that which a President might constitutionally and justifiably do in such a case, everything was forborne without which it was believed possible to keep the government on foot.

On the 5th of March (the present incumbent's first full day in office), a letter of Major Anderson, commanding at Fort Sumter, written on the 28th of February and received at the War Department on the 4th of March, was by that department placed in his hands. This letter expressed the professional opinion of the writer that reënforcements could not be thrown into that fort within the time for his relief, rendered necessary by the limited supply of provisions, and with a view of holding possession of the same, with a force of less than twenty thousand good and well-disciplined men. This opinion was concurred in by all the officers of his command, and their memoranda on the subject were made inclosures of Major Anderson's letter. The whole was immediately laid before Lieutenant-General Scott, who at once concurred with Major Anderson in opinion. On reflection, however, he took full time, consulting with other officers, both of the army and the navy, and at the end of four days came reluctantly but decidedly to the same conclusion as before. He also stated at the same time that no such sufficient force was then at the control of the government, or could be raised and brought to the ground within the time when the provisions in the fort would be exhausted. In a purely military point of view, this reduced the duty of the administration in the case to the mere matter of getting the garrison safely out of the fort.

It is believed, however, that to so abandon that position, under the circumstances, would be utterly ruinous; that the necessity under which it was to be done would not be fully understood; that by many it would be construed as a part of a voluntary policy; that at home it would discourage friends of the Union, embolden its adversaries, and go far to insure to the latter a recognition abroad; that, in fact, it would be our national destruction consummated. This could not be allowed. Starvation was not yet upon the garrison, and ere it would be reached, Fort Pickens might be reënforced. This last would be a clear indication of policy, and would better

enable the country to accept the evacuation of Fort Sumter as a military necessity. An order was at once directed to be sent for the landing of the troops from the steamship *Brooklyn* into Fort Pickens. This order could not go by land, but must take the longer and slower route by sea. The first return news from the order was received just one week before the fall of Fort Sumter. The news itself was that the officer commanding the *Sabine*, to which vessel the troops had been transferred from the *Brooklyn*, acting upon some quasi armistice of the late administration (and of the existence of which the present administration, up to the time the order was dispatched, had only too vague and uncertain rumors to fix attention), had refused to land the troops. To now reënforce Fort Pickens before a crisis would be reached at Fort Sumter was impossible—rendered so by the near exhaustion of provisions in the latter-named fort. In precaution against such a conjuncture, the government had, a few days before, commenced preparing an expedition as well adapted as might be to relieve Fort Sumter, which expedition was intended to be ultimately used, or not, according to circumstances. The strongest anticipated case for using it was now presented, and it was resolved to send it forward. As had been intended in this contingency, it was also resolved to notify the Governor of South Carolina that he might expect an attempt would be made to provision the fort; and that, if the attempt should not be resisted, there would be no effort to throw in men, arms, or ammunition, without further notice, or in case of an attack upon the fort. This notice was accordingly given; whereupon the fort was attacked and bombarded to its fall, without even awaiting the arrival of the provisioning expedition.

It is thus seen that the assault upon and reduction of Fort Sumter was in no sense a matter of self-defense on the part of the assailants. They well knew that the garrison in the fort could by no possibility commit aggression upon them. They knew—they were expressly notified—that the giving of bread to a few brave and hungry men of the garrison was all which would on that occasion be attempted, unless themselves, by resisting so much, should provoke more. They knew that this government desired to keep

the garrison in the fort, not to assail them, but merely to maintain visible possession, and thus to preserve the Union from actual and immediate dissolution—trusting, as hereinbefore stated, to time, discussion, and the ballot-box for final adjustment; and they assailed and reduced the fort for precisely the reverse object—to drive out the visible authority of the Federal Union, and thus force it to immediate dissolution. That this was their object the Executive well understood; and having said to them in the inaugural address, “You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors,” he took pains not only to keep this declaration good, but also to keep the case so free from the power of ingenious sophistry that the world should not be able to misunderstand it. By the affair at Fort Sumter, with its surrounding circumstances, that point was reached. Then and thereby the assailants of the government began the conflict of arms, without a gun in sight or in expectancy to return their fire, save only the few in the fort sent to that harbor years before for their own protection, and still ready to give that protection in whatever was lawful. In this act, discarding all else, they have forced upon the country the distinct issue, “immediate dissolution or blood.”

And this issue embraces more than the fate of the United States. It presents to the whole family of man the question whether a constitutional republic or democracy—a government of the people by the same people—can or cannot maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes. It presents the question whether discontented individuals, too few in number to control administration according to organic law in any case, can always, upon the pretenses made in this case, or on any other pretenses, or arbitrarily without any pretense, break up their government, and thus practically put an end to free government upon the earth. It forces us to ask: “Is there, in all republics, this inherent and fatal weakness?” “Must a government, of necessity, be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence?”

So viewing the issue, no choice was left but to call out the war power of the government; and so to resist force employed for its destruction, by force for its preservation.

The call was made, and the response of the country was most gratifying, surpassing in unanimity and spirit the most sanguine expectation. Yet none of the states commonly called slave states, except Delaware, gave a regiment through regular state organization. A few regiments have been organized within some others of those states by individual enterprise, and received into the government service. Of course the seceded states, so called (and to which Texas had been joined about the time of the inauguration), gave no troops to the cause of the Union. The border states, so called, were not uniform in their action, some of them being almost for the Union, while in others—as Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas—the Union sentiment was nearly repressed and silenced. The course taken in Virginia was the most remarkable—perhaps the most important. A convention elected by the people of that state to consider the very question of disrupting the Federal Union was in session at the capital of Virginia when Fort Sumter fell. To this body the people had chosen a large majority of professed Union men. Almost immediately after the fall of Sumter, many members of that majority went over to the original disunion minority, and with them adopted an ordinance for withdrawing the state from the Union. Whether this change was wrought by their great approval of the assault upon Sumter or their great resentment at the government’s resistance to that assault is not definitely known. Although they submitted the ordinance for ratification to a vote of the people, to be taken on a day then somewhat more than a month distant, the convention and the legislature (which was also in session at the same time and place), with leading men of the state not members of either, immediately commenced acting as if the state were already out of the Union. They pushed military preparations vigorously forward all over the state. They seized the United States armory at Harper’s Ferry, and the navy-yard at Gosport, near Norfolk. They received—perhaps invited—into their state large bodies of troops, with their warlike appointments, from the so-called seceded states. They formally entered into a treaty of temporary alliance and co-operation with the so-called “Confederate

States," and sent members to their congress at Montgomery. And, finally, they permitted the insurrectionary government to be transferred to their capital at Richmond.

The people of Virginia have thus allowed this giant insurrection to make its nest within her borders; and this government has no choice left but to deal with it where it finds it. And it has the less regret as the loyal citizens have, in due form, claimed its protection. Those loyal citizens this government is bound to recognize and protect, as being Virginia.

In the border states, so called—in fact, the Middle States—there are those who favor a policy which they call "armed neutrality"; that is, an arming of those states to prevent the Union forces passing one way, or the disunion the other, over their soil. This would be disunion completed. Figuratively speaking, it would be the building of an impassable wall along the line of separation—and yet not quite an impassable one, for under the guise of neutrality it would tie the hands of Union men and freely pass supplies from among them to the insurrectionists, which it could not do as an open enemy. At a stroke it would take all the trouble off the hands of secession, except only what proceeds from the external blockade. It would do for the disunionists that which, of all things, they most desire—feed them well, and give them disunion without a struggle of their own. It recognizes no fidelity to the Constitution, no obligation to maintain the Union; and while very many who have favored it are doubtless loyal citizens, it is, nevertheless, very injurious in effect.

Recurring to the action of the government, it may be stated that at first a call was made for 75,000 militia, and, rapidly following this, a proclamation was issued for closing the ports of the insurrectionary district by proceedings in the nature of blockade. So far all was believed to be strictly legal. At this point the insurrectionists announced their purpose to enter upon the practice of privateering.

Other calls were made for volunteers to serve for three years, unless sooner discharged, and also for large additions to the regular army and navy. These measures, whether strictly legal or not, were ventured upon, under what appeared to be a popular demand and a public necessity; trusting then, as now,

that Congress would readily ratify them. It is believed that nothing has been done beyond the constitutional competency of Congress.

Soon after the first call for militia, it was considered a duty to authorize the commanding general in proper cases, according to his discretion, to suspend the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*, or, in other words, to arrest and detain, without resort to the ordinary processes and forms of law, such individuals as he might deem dangerous to the public safety. This authority has purposely been exercised but very sparingly. Nevertheless, the legality and propriety of what has been done under it are questioned, and the attention of the country has been called to the proposition that one who has sworn to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed" should not himself violate them. Of course some consideration was given to the questions of power and propriety before this matter was acted upon. The whole of the laws which were required to be faithfully executed were being resisted and failing of execution in nearly one-third of the states. Must they be allowed to finally fail of execution, even had it been perfectly clear that by the use of the means necessary to their execution some single law, made in such extreme tenderness of the citizen's liberty that, practically, it relieves more of the guilty than of the innocent, should to a very limited extent be violated? To state the question more directly, are all the laws but one to go unexecuted, and the government itself go to pieces, lest that one be violated? Even in such a case, would not the official oath be broken if the government should be overthrown, when it was believed that disregarding the single law would tend to preserve it? But it was not believed that this question was presented. It was not believed that any law was violated. The provision of the Constitution that "the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* shall not be suspended, unless when, in cases of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it," is equivalent to a provision—is a provision—that such privilege may be suspended when, in case of rebellion or invasion, the public safety does require it. It was decided that we have a case of rebellion, and that the public safety does require the qualified sus-

pension of the privilege of the writ which was authorized to be made. Now it is insisted that Congress, and not the Executive, is vested with this power. But the Constitution itself is silent as to which or who is to exercise the power; and as the provision was plainly made for a dangerous emergency, it cannot be believed the framers of the instrument intended that in every case the danger should run its course until Congress could be called together, the very assembling of which might be prevented, as was intended in this case, by the rebellion.

No more extended argument is now offered, as an opinion at some length will probably be presented by the Attorney General. Whether there shall be any legislation upon the subject, and if any, what, is submitted entirely to the better judgment of Congress.

The forbearance of this government had been so extraordinary and so long continued as to lead some foreign nations to shape their action as if they supposed the early destruction of our National Union was probable. While this, on discovery, gave the Executive some concern, he is now happy to say that the sovereignty and rights of the United States are now everywhere practically respected by foreign powers; and a general sympathy with the country is manifested throughout the world.

The reports of the Secretaries of the Treasury, War, and the Navy will give the information in detail deemed necessary and convenient for your deliberation and action; while the Executive and all the departments will stand ready to supply omissions, or to communicate new facts considered important for you to know.

It is now recommended that you give the legal means for making this contest a short and decisive one: that you place at the control of the government for the work at least four hundred thousand men and \$400,000,000. That number of men is about one-tenth of those of proper ages within the regions where, apparently, all are willing to engage; and the sum is less than a twenty-third part of the money value owned by the men who seem ready to devote the whole. A debt of \$600,000,000 now is a less sum per head than was the debt of our Revolution when we came out of that struggle; and

the money value in the country now bears even a greater proportion to what it was then than does the population. Surely each man has as strong a motive now to preserve our liberties as each had then to establish them.

A right result at this time will be worth more to the world than ten times the men and ten times the money. The evidence reaching us from the country leaves no doubt that the material for the work is abundant, and that it needs only the hand of legislation to give it legal sanction, and the hand of the Executive to give it practical shape and efficiency. One of the greatest perplexities of the government is to avoid receiving troops faster than it can provide for them. In a word, the people will save their government if the government itself will do its part only indifferently well.

It might seem, at first thought, to be of little difference whether the present movement at the South be called "secession" or "rebellion." The movers, however, will understand the difference. At the beginning they knew they could never raise their treason to any respectable magnitude by any name which implies violation of law. They knew their people possessed as much of moral sense, as much of devotion to law and order, and as much pride in and reverence for the history and government of their common country as any other civilized and patriotic people. They knew they could make no advancement directly in the teeth of these strong and noble sentiments. Accordingly, they commenced by an insidious debauching of the public mind. They invented an ingenious sophism which, if conceded, was followed by perfectly logical steps, through all the incidents, to the complete destruction of the Union. The sophism itself is that any state of the Union may consistently with the National Constitution, and therefore lawfully and peacefully, withdraw from the Union without the consent of the Union or of any other state. The little disguise, that the supposed right is to be exercised only for just cause, themselves to be the sole judges of its justice, is too thin to merit any notice.

With rebellion thus sugar-coated they have been drugging the public mind of their section for more than thirty years, until at length they have brought many good men

to a willingness to take up arms against the government the day after some assemblage of men have enacted the farcical pretense of taking their state out of the Union, who could have been brought to no such thing the day before.

This sophism derives much, perhaps the whole, of its currency from the assumption that there is some omnipotent and sacred supremacy pertaining to a state—to each state of our Federal Union. Our states have neither more nor less power than that reserved to them in the Union by the Constitution—no one of them ever having been a state out of the Union.¹ The original ones passed into the Union even before they cast off their British colonial dependence; and the new ones each came into the Union directly from a condition of dependence, excepting Texas. And even Texas, in its temporary independence, was never designated a state. The new ones only took the designation of states on coming into the Union, while that name was first adopted for the old ones in and by the Declaration of Independence. Therein the “United Colonies” were declared to be “free and independent states”; but even then the object plainly was not to declare their independence of one another or of the Union, but directly the contrary, as their mutual pledge and their mutual action before, at the time, and afterward, abundantly show. The express plighting of faith by each and all of the original thirteen in the Articles of Confederation, two years later, that the Union shall be perpetual, is most conclusive. Having never been states either in substance or in name outside of the Union, whence this magical omnipotence of “State Rights,” asserting a claim of power to lawfully destroy the Union itself? Much is said about the “sovereignty” of the states; but the word even is not in the National Constitution, nor, as is believed, in any of the state constitutions. What is “sovereignty” in the political sense of the term? Would it be far wrong to define it “a political community without a political superior”? Tested by this, no one of our states except Texas ever was a sovereignty. And even Texas gave up the

character on coming into the Union; by which act she acknowledged the Constitution of the United States, and the laws and treaties of the United States made in pursuance of the Constitution, to be for her the supreme law of the land. The states have their status in the Union, and they have no other legal status. If they break from this, they can only do so against law and by revolution. The Union, and not themselves separately, procured their independence and their liberty. By conquest or purchase the Union gave each of them whatever of independence or liberty it has. The Union is older than any of the states, and, in fact, it created them as states. Originally some dependent colonies made the Union, and, in turn, the Union threw off their old dependence for them, and made them states, such as they are. Not one of them ever had a state constitution independent of the Union. Of course, it is not forgotten that all the new states framed their constitutions before they entered the Union—nevertheless, dependent upon and preparatory to coming into the Union.

Unquestionably the states have the powers and rights reserved to them in and by the National Constitution; but among these surely are not included all conceivable powers, however mischievous or destructive, but, at most, such only as were known in the world at the time as governmental powers; and certainly a power to destroy the government itself had never been known as a governmental, as a merely administrative power. This relative matter of national power and state rights, as a principle, is no other than the principle of generality and locality. Whatever concerns the whole should be confided to the whole—to the General Government; while whatever concerns only the state should be left exclusively to the state. This is all there is of the original principle about it. Whether the National Constitution in defining boundaries between the two has applied the principle with exact accuracy, is not to be questioned. We are all bound by that defining, without question.

What is now combated is the position that secession is consistent with the Constitution—is lawful and peaceful. It is not contended that there is any express law for it;

¹ It has been pointed out that Lincoln here was in error—North Carolina and Rhode Island having been, for a brief period, states out of the Union.

and nothing should ever be implied as law which leads to unjust or absurd consequences. The nation purchased with money the countries out of which several of these states were formed. Is it just that they shall go off without leave and without refunding? The nation paid very large sums (in the aggregate, I believe, nearly a hundred millions) to relieve Florida of the aboriginal tribes. Is it just that she shall now be off without consent or without making any return? The nation is now in debt for money applied to the benefit of these so-called seceding states in common with the rest. Is it just either that creditors shall go unpaid or the remaining states pay the whole? A part of the present national debt was contracted to pay the old debts of Texas. Is it just that she shall leave and pay no part of this herself?

Again, if one state may secede, so may another; and when all shall have seceded, none is left to pay the debts. Is this quite just to creditors? Did we notify them of this sage view of ours when we borrowed their money? If we now recognize this doctrine by allowing the seceders to go in peace, it is difficult to see what we can do if others choose to go or to extort terms upon which they will promise to remain.

The seceders insist that our Constitution admits of secession. They have assumed to make a national constitution of their own, in which of necessity they have either discarded or retained the right of secession as they insist it exists in ours. If they have discarded it, they thereby admit that on principle it ought not to be in ours. If they have retained it by their own construction of ours, they show that to be consistent they must secede from one another whenever they shall find it the easiest way of settling their debts, or effecting any other selfish or unjust object. The principle itself is one of disintegration, and upon which no government can possibly endure.

If all the states save one should assert the power to drive that one out of the Union, it is presumed the whole class of seceder politicians would at once deny the power and denounce the act as the greatest outrage upon state rights. But suppose that precisely the same act, instead of being called "driving the one out," should be called "the

seceding of the others from that one," it would be exactly what the seceders claim to do, unless, indeed, they make the point that the one, because it is a minority, may rightfully do what the others, because they are a majority, may not rightfully do. These politicians are subtle and profound on the rights of minorities. They are not partial to that power which made the Constitution and speaks from the preamble, calling itself "We, the People."

It may well be questioned whether there is to-day a majority of the legally qualified voters of any state, except perhaps South Carolina, in favor of disunion. There is much reason to believe that the Union men are the majority in many, if not in every other one, of the so-called seceded states. The contrary has not been demonstrated in any one of them. It is ventured to affirm this even of Virginia and Tennessee; for the result of an election held in military camps, where the bayonets are all on one side of the question voted upon, can scarcely be considered as demonstrating popular sentiment. At such an election, all that large class who are at once for the Union and against coercion would be coerced to vote against the Union.

It may be affirmed without extravagance that the free institutions we enjoy have developed the powers and improved the condition of our whole people beyond any example in the world. Of this we now have a striking and impressive illustration. So large an army as the government has now on foot was never before known, without a soldier in it but who has taken his place there of his own free choice. But more than this, there are many single regiments whose members, one and another, possess full practical knowledge of all the arts, sciences, professions, and whatever else, whether useful or elegant, is known in the world; and there is scarcely one from which there could not be selected a president, a cabinet, a congress, and perhaps a court, abundantly competent to administer the government itself. Nor do I say this is not true also in the army of our late friends, now adversaries in this contest; but if it is, so much better the reason why the government which has conferred such benefits on both them and us should not be broken up. Whoever in

any section proposes to abandon such a government would do well to consider in deference to what principle it is that he does it—what better he is likely to get in its stead—whether the substitute will give, or be intended to give, so much of good to the people. There are some foreshadowings on this subject. Our adversaries have adopted some declarations of independence in which, unlike the good old one, penned by Jefferson, they omit the words “all men are created equal.” Why? They have adopted a temporary national constitution, in the preamble of which, unlike our good old one, signed by Washington, they omit “We, the People,” and substitute, “We, the deputies of the sovereign and independent states.” Why? Why this deliberate pressing out of view the rights of men and the authority of the people?

This is essentially a people’s contest. On the side of the Union it is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men—to lift artificial weights from all shoulders; to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all; to afford all an unfettered start, and a fair chance in the race of life. Yielding to partial and temporary departures, from necessity, this is the leading object of the government for whose existence we contend.

I am most happy to believe that the plain people understand and appreciate this. It is worthy of note that while in this, the government’s hour of trial, large numbers of those in the army and navy who have been favored with the offices have resigned and proved false to the hand which had pampered them, not one common soldier or common sailor is known to have deserted his flag.

Great honor is due to those officers who remained true, despite the example of their treacherous associates; but the greatest honor, and most important fact of all, is the unanimous firmness of the common soldiers and common sailors. To the last man, so far as known, they have successfully resisted the traitorous efforts of those whose commands, but an hour before, they obeyed as absolute law. This is the patriotic instinct of the plain people. They understand, without an argument, that the destroying

of the government which was made by Washington means no good to them.

Our popular government has often been called an experiment. Two points in it our people have already settled—the successful establishing and the successful administering of it. One still remains—its successful maintenance against a formidable internal attempt to overthrow it. It is now for them to demonstrate to the world that those who can fairly carry an election can also suppress a rebellion; that ballots are the rightful and peaceful successors of bullets; and that when ballots have fairly and constitutionally decided, there can be no successful appeal back to bullets; that there can be no successful appeal, except to ballots themselves, at succeeding elections. Such will be a great lesson of peace: teaching men that what they cannot take by an election, neither can they take it by a war; teaching all the folly of being the beginners of a war.

Lest there be some uneasiness in the minds of candid men as to what is to be the course of the government toward the Southern states after the rebellion shall have been suppressed, the Executive deems it proper to say it will be his purpose then, as ever, to be guided by the Constitution and the laws; and that he probably will have no different understanding of the powers and duties of the Federal Government relatively to the rights of the states and the people, under the Constitution, than that expressed in the inaugural address.

He desires to preserve the government, that it may be administered for all as it was administered by the men who made it. Loyal citizens everywhere have the right to claim this of their government, and the government has no right to withhold or neglect it. It is not perceived that in giving it there is any coercion, any conquest, or any subjugation, in any just sense of those terms.

The Constitution provides, and all the states have accepted the provision, that “the United States shall guarantee to every state in this Union a republican form of government.” But if a state may lawfully go out of the Union, having done so, it may also discard the republican form of government; so that to prevent its going out is an indispensable means to the end of maintaining

the guaranty mentioned; and when an end is lawful and obligatory, the indispensable means to it are also lawful and obligatory.

It was with the deepest regret that the Executive found the duty of employing the war power in defense of the government forced upon him. He could but perform this duty or surrender the existence of the government. No compromise by public servants could, in this case, be a cure; not that compromises are not often proper, but that no popular government can long survive a marked precedent that those who carry an election can only save the government from immediate destruction by giving up the main point upon which the people gave the election. The people themselves, and not their servants, can safely reverse their own deliberate decisions.

As a private citizen the Executive could not have consented that these institutions shall perish; much less could he, in betrayal of so vast and so sacred a trust as the free people have confided to him. He felt that he had no moral right to shrink, nor even to count the chances of his own life in what might follow. In full view of his great responsibility he has, so far, done what he has deemed his duty. You will now, according to your own judgment, perform yours. He sincerely hopes that your views and your actions may so accord with his as to assure all faithful citizens who have been disturbed in their rights of a certain and speedy restoration to them, under the Constitution and the laws.

And having thus chosen our course, without guile and with pure purpose, let us renew our trust in God, and go forward without fear and with manly hearts.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS ¹

FOURSCORE and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

¹ Spoken on 19 November, 1863, at the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The chief speaker of the day was Edward Everett, an accomplished and eloquent orator, who spoke for two hours with great effect. Lincoln had the

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.²

LETTER TO MRS. BIXBY ³

Executive Mansion,
Washington, 21 November, 1864

Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Mass.

DEAR MADAM: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of

difficult task of following him. Reports concerning the immediate effect of his few words upon his audience have differed, but there have been no differences of critical opinion concerning their quality. James Bryce has said: "Words so simple and so strong could have come only from one who had meditated so long upon the primal facts of American history and popular government that the truths those facts taught him had become like the truths of mathematics in their clearness, their breadth, and their precision."

² It has been pointed out that Theodore Parker, in the course of an address to the New England Anti-Slavery Convention of 1850, said: "A democracy, that is, a government of all the people, by all the people, for all the people."

³ This letter, like the *Gettysburg Address*, has become a classic. "I do not know where the nobility of self-sacrifice for a great cause, and of the consolation which

the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS ¹

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN: At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties

the thought of a sacrifice so made should bring, is set forth with such simple and pathetic beauty. Deep must be the fountains from which there issues so pure a stream." (James Bryce.)

¹ Spoken on 4 March, 1865.

deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other.

It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh."² If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's

² St. Matthew, xviii, 7.

two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."¹

¹ Psalm xix, 9.

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY (1814-1877)

Motley was born at Dorchester (now a part of Boston), Massachusetts, on 15 April, 1814. He was precocious, and gifted almost from infancy with an irrepressible desire of self-expression. He entered Harvard at thirteen, a strikingly handsome boy with brilliant powers. He cared little, however, for academic rank to be gained only by following prescribed courses, and once was rusticated for negligence. At his graduation in 1831 he was elected a member of Phi Beta Kappa, despite the fact that he was not strictly entitled to the honor, because it seemed impossible to withhold that recognition of his high capacity. Motley now spent two years in the study of law in Germany, at Göttingen and Berlin, forming what was to be a life-long friendship with Bismarck, and also traveled to other parts of Europe. Upon his return to Boston he continued to study the law, but he never really entered the profession. He was already a writer, and into writing his best efforts went, now as later, though it was some years before it became clear that he was to be an historian. He wrote at this time for Willis's *American Monthly* and contributed verse to a paper called *The Anti-Masonic Mirror*. In 1837 he married Mary Benjamin, who proved a perfect companion. In 1839 he published his first book, a semi-autobiographic narrative, or novel, entitled *Morton's Hope*. It was a complete failure. In 1841 he went to St. Petersburg as Secretary to the American Legation, but returned after only a few months of service. Apparently it was not long after this that he began to consider history as a possible field of work, and as early as 1846 he was collecting material bearing on Holland, but, nevertheless, he continued for several years to try his hand in other ways. He wrote several weighty papers for the *North American Review*—*Peter the Great* (1845), *Balzac* (1847), and *The Policy of the Puritans* (1849)—and in 1849 he published another attempt at fiction, *Merry Mount*, which, while an improvement upon *Morton's Hope*, was not a success and did not deserve to be one. He had strong political convictions and some inclination towards public life, and in 1849 he was a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. One term, however, was enough to show him that his talents were not those of a politician.

Before this, Motley had definitely determined to devote himself to the history of Holland, and had settled for his work upon the period of conflict between the Netherlands and Spain. He then had heard of Prescott's design of writing the *History of Philip II*, and had been much cast down. "It seemed to me," he later wrote, "that I had nothing to do but to abandon at once a cherished dream, and probably to renounce authorship. For I had not first made up my mind to write a history, and then cast about to take up a subject. My subject had taken me up, drawn me on, and absorbed me into itself. It was necessary for me, it seemed, to write the book I had been thinking much of, even if it were destined to fall dead from the press, and I had no inclination or interest to write any other." Fearing, however, that even if he did risk the danger of being entirely overshadowed by Prescott's work upon a subject which partially coincided with his own, Prescott himself might be displeased, he went to Prescott and talked the situation over with him. The result relieved all his fears. It may be reported in Prescott's own words, from a letter written to Bancroft in July, 1847: "Working over the same soil will produce two crops so different that one cannot interfere with the demand for the other. . . . I feel this so strongly that when a clever writer asked me the other day if I had any objection to his treating the War of the Netherlands, the cream of my subject, I told him 'none in the world, though he could not expect me to give him my manuscripts to work with.'" (*Correspondence*, ed. R. Wolcott, 663.) Prescott did offer Motley the use of his books, but withheld his manuscripts at the suggestion of George Ticknor. Accordingly, Motley proceeded with the task he had taken up in love. From 1851 to 1855 he carried on investigations abroad, and in the latter year *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* was published in three volumes in London (New York, 1856), though it had to be printed at Motley's own expense. It was an immediate and great success, and proved that the author had now entered upon his true line of work. He returned to America for the winter of 1856-1857, but then went back to Europe, continuing to labor at his next book, *The History of the United Netherlands from the Death of William the Silent to the Synod of Dort*, the first two volumes of which were published in 1860.

In 1861, however, the outbreak of the Civil War turned Motley aside from history. He was in London, and found universal misunderstanding there of the causes of the War, which impelled him to write two important letters on the subject to the *London Times*. He soon returned to America, but

was at once offered, because of his letters, the post of Minister to Austria. This he accepted, and held until 1867, when he resigned the post in some anger, because he felt insulted by seeming suspicions concerning his loyalty to President Johnson. He now had managed, amidst diplomatic duties, to complete the remaining two volumes of *The History of the United Netherlands*, and they were published in 1868. In that year also Motley returned to America, but in 1869 was appointed Minister to England—only to be recalled suddenly in 1870, as far as is known from no real fault of his own, but because President Grant wished to annoy Senator Sumner. The effect of this humiliating experience can be seen in Motley's next work, *The Life and Death of John of Barneveld* (1874), which was written with constant reference, sometimes forced, to American affairs, and with evident thought of the author's trouble with Grant. He had hoped to complete his work by writing the history of the Thirty Years' War, but was not able to do so. Mrs. Motley died in 1874, and he did no work after that. He himself died in England on 29 May, 1877.

Motley's histories, like Prescott's, are no longer valuable to scholars. Unlike Prescott, Motley worked from no large background of general preparation. Again unlike Prescott, he worked in the light of a general conception of historical development, with which, too, his feelings were deeply involved. In the Preface to *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* he declared: "The maintenance of the right by the little provinces of Holland and Zealand in the sixteenth, by Holland and England united in the seventeenth, and by the United States of America in the eighteenth centuries, forms but a single chapter in the great volume of human fate; for the so-called revolutions of Holland, England, and America are all links of one chain." This may be in a sense true, but Motley was too ready to see analogies which were more apparent than real. His researches were thorough and his methods scholarly, and in this he had some advantage over Prescott, in being able to sift his sources where they were deposited. On the whole, however, the differences between Motley's work and Prescott's result from differences of temperament, style, and background; and of the work of both men it must be said that subsequent research has shown it to be faulty in many matters of detail. But Motley's work retains its worth not merely because of its vividness and its brilliant style; it was in its large outlines soundly conceived, and can still give the general reader or student a truer picture of the great events of which it treats than can be obtained from the study of many fragmentary monographs.

THE RISE OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC

PART II

ADMINISTRATION OF THE DUCHESS MARGARET

1559-1567

CHAPTER I

Biographical sketch and portrait of Margaret of Parma—The state council—Berlaymont—Vigilius—Sketch of William the Silent—Portrait of Anthony Perrenot, afterwards Cardinal Granvelle—General view of the political, social, and religious condition of the Netherlands—Habits of the aristocracy—Emulation in extravagance—Pecuniary embarrassments—Sympathy for the Reformation, steadily increasing among the people, the true cause of the impending revolt—Measures of the government—Edict of 1550 described—Papal Bulls granted to Philip for increasing the number of Bishops in the Netherlands—Necessity for retaining the Spanish troops to enforce the policy of persecution.

MARGARET OF PARMA, newly appointed Regent of the Netherlands, was the natural daughter of Charles the Fifth, and his eldest-

born child. Her mother, of a respectable family called Van der Genst, in Oudenarde, had been adopted and brought up by the distinguished house of Hoogstraaten. Peculiar circumstances, not necessary to relate at length, had palliated the fault to which Margaret owed her imperial origin, and gave the child almost a legitimate claim upon its father's protection. The claim was honorably acknowledged. Margaret was in her infancy placed by the Emperor in the charge of his paternal aunt, Margaret of Savoy, then Regent of the provinces. Upon the death of that princess, the child was entrusted to the care of the Emperor's sister, Mary, Queen Dowager of Hungary, who had succeeded to the government, and who occupied it until the abdication. The huntress-queen communicated her tastes to her youthful niece, and Margaret soon out-rivalled her instructress. The ardor with which she pursued the stag, and the courageous horsemanship which she always displayed, proved her, too, no degenerate descendant of Mary of Burgundy. Her education for the distinguished position in which she had somewhat surreptitiously been placed was at least not neglected in this

particular. When, soon after the memorable sack of Rome, the Pope and the Emperor had been reconciled, and it had been decided that the Medici family should be elevated upon the ruins of Florentine liberty, Margaret's hand was conferred in marriage upon the pontiff's nephew Alexander. The wretched profligate who was thus selected to mate with the Emperor's eldest-born child and to appropriate the fair demesnes of the Tuscan republic, was nominally the offspring of Lorenzo de Medici by a Moorish slave, although generally reputed a bastard of the Pope himself. The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp at Naples, where the Emperor rode at the tournament in the guise of a Moorish warrior. At Florence splendid festivities had also been held, which were troubled with omens believed to be highly unfavorable. It hardly needed, however, preternatural appearances in heaven or on earth to proclaim the marriage ill-starred which united a child of twelve years with a worn-out debauchee of twenty-seven. Fortunately for Margaret, the funeral portents proved true. Her husband, within the first year of their wedded life, fell a victim to his own profligacy, and was assassinated by his kinsman, Lorenzino de Medici. Cosmo, his successor in the tyranny of Florence, was desirous of succeeding to the hand of Margaret, but the politic Emperor, thinking that he had already done enough to conciliate that house, was inclined to bind to his interests the family which now occupied the papal throne. Margaret was accordingly a few years afterwards united to Ottavio Farnese, nephew of Paul the Third. It was still her fate to be unequally matched. Having while still a child been wedded to a man of more than twice her years, she was now, at the age of twenty, united to an immature youth of thirteen. She conceived so strong an aversion to her new husband, that it became impossible for them to live together in peace. Ottavio accordingly went to the wars, and in 1541 accompanied the Emperor in his memorable expedition to Barbary.

Rumors of disaster by battle and tempest reaching Europe before the results of the expedition were accurately known, reports that the Emperor had been lost in a storm, and that the young Ottavio had perished

with him, awakened remorse in the bosom of Margaret. It seemed to her that he had been driven forth by domestic inclemency to fall a victim to the elements. When, however, the truth became known, and it was ascertained that her husband, although still living, was lying dangerously ill in the charge of the Emperor, the repugnance which had been founded upon his extreme youth changed to passionate fondness. His absence, and his faithful military attendance upon her father, caused a revulsion in her feelings, and awakened her admiration. When Ottavio, now created Duke of Parma and Piacenza, returned to Rome, he was received by his wife with open arms. Their union was soon blessed with twins, and but for a certain imperiousness of disposition which Margaret had inherited from her father, and which she was too apt to exercise even upon her husband, the marriage would have been sufficiently fortunate.

Various considerations pointed her out to Philip as a suitable person for the office of Regent, although there seemed some mystery about the appointment which demanded explanation. It was thought that her birth would make her acceptable to the people; but perhaps, the secret reason with Philip was, that she alone of all other candidates would be amenable to the control of the churchman in whose hand he intended placing the real administration of the provinces. Moreover, her husband was very desirous that the citadel of Piacenza, still garrisoned by Spanish troops, should be surrendered to him. Philip was disposed to conciliate the Duke, but unwilling to give up the fortress. He felt that Ottavio would be flattered by the nomination of his wife to so important an office, and be not too much dissatisfied at finding himself relieved for a time from her imperious fondness. Her residence in the Netherlands would guarantee domestic tranquillity to her husband, and peace in Italy to the King. Margaret would be a hostage for the fidelity of the Duke, who had, moreover, given his eldest son to Philip to be educated in his service.

She was about thirty-seven years of age when she arrived in the Netherlands, with the reputation of possessing high talents, and a proud and energetic character. She

was an enthusiastic Catholic, and had sat at the feet of Loyola, who had been her confessor and spiritual guide. She felt a greater horror for heretics than for any other species of malefactors, and looked up to her father's bloody edicts as if they had been special revelations from on high. She was most strenuous in her observance of Roman rites, and was accustomed to wash the feet of twelve virgins every holy week, and to endow them in marriage afterwards. Her acquirements, save that of the art of horsemanship, were not remarkable.

Carefully educated in the Machiavellian and Medicean school of politics, she was versed in that "dissimulation," to which liberal Anglo-Saxons give a shorter name, but which formed the main substance of statesmanship at the court of Charles and Philip. In other respects her accomplishments were but meager, and she had little acquaintance with any language but Italian. Her personal appearance, which was masculine, but not without a certain grand and imperial fascination, harmonized with the opinion generally entertained of her character. The famous moustache upon her upper lip was supposed to indicate authority and virility of purpose, an impression which was confirmed by the circumstance that she was liable to severe attacks of gout, a disorder usually considered more appropriate to the sterner sex.

Such were the previous career and public reputation of the Duchess Margaret. It remains to be unfolded whether her character and endowments, as exemplified in her new position, were to justify the choice of Philip.

The members of the state council, as already observed, were Berlaymont, Viglius, Arras, Orange, and Egmont.

The first was, likewise, chief of the finance department. Most of the Catholic writers described him as a noble of loyal and highly honorable character. Those of the Protestant party, on the contrary, uniformly denounced him as greedy, avaricious, and extremely sanguinary. That he was a brave and devoted soldier, a bitter papist, and an inflexible adherent to the royal cause, has never been disputed. The Baron himself, with his four courageous and accomplished sons, were ever in the front ranks to

defend the crown against the nation. It must be confessed, however, that fanatical loyalty loses most of the romance with which genius and poetry have so often hallowed the sentiment, when the "legitimate" prince for whom the sword is drawn is not only an alien in tongue and blood, but filled with undisguised hatred for the land he claims to rule.

Viglius van Aytta van Zuichem was a learned Frisian, born, according to some writers, of "boors' degree, but having no inclination for boorish work." According to other authorities, which the president himself favored, he was of noble origin; but, whatever his race, it is certain that whether gentle or simple, it derived its first and only historical illustration from his remarkable talents and acquirements. These in early youth were so great as to acquire the commendation of Erasmus. He had studied in Louvain, Paris, and Padua, had refused the tutorship of Philip when that prince was still a child, and had afterwards filled a professorship at Ingolstadt. After rejecting several offers of promotion from the Emperor, he had at last accepted in 1542 a seat in the council of Mechlin, of which body he had become president in 1545. He had been one of the peace commissioners to France in 1558, and was now president of the privy council, a member of the state council, and of the inner and secret committee of that board, called the Consulta. Much odium was attached to his name for his share in the composition of the famous edict of 1550. The rough draught was usually attributed to his pen, but he complained bitterly, in letters written at this time, of injustice done him in this respect, and maintained that he had endeavored, without success, to induce the Emperor to mitigate the severity of the edict. One does not feel very strongly inclined to accept his excuses, however, when his general opinions on the subject of religion are remembered. He was most bigoted in precept and practice. Religious liberty he regarded as the most detestable and baleful of doctrines; heresy he denounced as the most unpardonable of crimes.

From no man's mouth flowed more bitter or more elegant commonplaces than from that of the learned president against those

blackest of malefactors, the men who claimed within their own walls the right to worship God according to their own consciences. For a common person, not learned in law or divinity, to enter into his closet, to shut the door, and to pray to Him who seeth in secret, was, in his opinion, to open wide the gate of destruction for all the land, and to bring in the Father of Evil at once to fly away with the whole population, body and soul. "If every man," said he to Hopper, "is to believe what he likes in his own house, we shall have hearth gods and tutelar divinities again, the country will swarm with a thousand errors and sects, and very few there will be, I fear, who will allow themselves to be enclosed in the sheep-fold of Christ. I have ever considered this opinion," continued the president, "the most pernicious of all. They who hold it have a contempt for all religion, and are neither more nor less than atheists. This vague, fireside liberty should be by every possible means extirpated; therefore did Christ institute shepherds to drive his wandering sheep back into the fold of the true Church; thus only can we guard the lambs against the ravening wolves, and prevent them being carried away from the flock of Christ to the flock of Belial. Liberty of religion, or of conscience, as they call it, ought never to be tolerated."

This was the cant with which Viglius was ever ready to feed not only his faithful Hopper, but all the world beside. The president was naturally anxious that the fold of Christ should be entrusted to none but regular shepherds, for he looked forward to taking one of the most lucrative crooks into his own hand, when he should retire from his secular career.

It is now necessary to say a few introductory words concerning the man, who, from this time forth, begins to rise upon the history of his country with daily increasing grandeur and influence. William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, although still young in years, is already the central personage about whom the events and the characters of the epoch most naturally group themselves; destined as he is to become more and more with each succeeding year the vivifying source of light, strength, and national life to a whole people.

The Nassau family first emerges into distinct existence in the middle of the eleventh century. It divides itself almost as soon as known into two great branches. The elder remained in Germany, ascended the imperial throne in the thirteenth century in the person of Adolph of Nassau and gave to the country many electors, bishops, and generals. The younger and more illustrious branch retained the modest property and petty sovereignty of Nassau Dillenburg, but at the same time transplanted itself to the Netherlands, where it attained at an early period to great power and large possessions. The ancestors of William, as Dukes of Gueldres, had begun to exercise sovereignty in the provinces four centuries before the advent of the house of Burgundy. That overshadowing family afterwards numbered the Netherland Nassaus among its most stanch and powerful adherents. Engelbert the Second was distinguished in the turbulent councils and in the battle-fields of Charles the Bold, and was afterwards the unwavering supporter of Maximilian, in court and camp. Dying childless, he was succeeded by his brother John, whose two sons, Henry and William of Nassau, divided the great inheritance after their father's death. William succeeded to the German estates, became a convert to Protestantism, and introduced the Reformation into his dominions. Henry, the eldest son, received the family possessions and titles in Luxembourg, Brabant, Flanders and Holland, and distinguished himself as much as his uncle Engelbert, in the service of the Burgundo-Austrian house. The confidential friend of Charles the Fifth, whose governor he had been in that Emperor's boyhood, he was ever his most efficient and reliable adherent. It was he whose influence placed the imperial crown upon the head of Charles. In 1515 he espoused Claudia de Chalons, sister of Prince Philibert of Orange, "in order," as he wrote to his father, "to be obedient to his imperial Majesty, to please the King of France, and more particularly for the sake of his own honor and profit." His son René de Nassau-Chalons succeeded Philibert. The little principality of Orange, so pleasantly situated between Provence and Dauphiny, but in such dangerous proximity to

the seat of the "Babylonian captivity" of the popes at Avignon, thus passed to the family of Nassau. The title was of high antiquity. Already in the reign of Charlemagne, Guillaume au Court-Nez, or "William with the Short Nose," had defended the little town of Orange against the assaults of the Saracens. The interest and authority acquired in the demesnes thus preserved by his valor became extensive, and in process of time hereditary in his race. The principality became an absolute and free sovereignty, and had already descended, in defiance of the Salic law, through the three distinct families of Orange, Baux, and Chalons.

In 1544, Prince René died at the Emperor's feet in the trenches of Saint Dizier. Having no legitimate children, he left all his titles and estates to his cousin-german, William of Nassau, son of his father's brother William, who thus at the age of eleven years became William the Ninth of Orange. For this child, whom the future was to summon to such high destinies and such heroic sacrifices, the past and present seemed to have gathered riches and power together from many sources. He was the descendant of the Othos, the Engelberts, and the Henries, of the Netherlands, the representative of the Philiberts and the Rénés of France; the chief of a house, humbler in resources and position in Germany, but still of high rank, and which had already done good service to humanity by being among the first to embrace the great principles of the Reformation.

His father, younger brother of the Emperor's friend Henry, was called William the Rich—he was, however, only rich in children. Of these he had five sons and seven daughters by his wife Juliana of Stolberg. She was a person of most exemplary character and unaffected piety. She instilled into the minds of all her children the elements of that devotional sentiment which was her own striking characteristic, and it was destined that the seed sown early should increase to an abundant harvest. Nothing can be more tender or more touching than the letters which still exist from her hand, written to her illustrious sons in hours of anxiety or anguish, and to the last, recommending to them with as much earnest simplicity as if they were still little children at her knee, to rely always in the midst of

the trials and dangers which were to beset their paths through life, upon the great hand of God. Among the mothers of great men, Juliana of Stolberg deserves a foremost place, and it is no slight eulogy that she was worthy to have been the mother of William of Orange and of Lewis, Adolphus, Henry, and John of Nassau.

At the age of eleven years, William having thus unexpectedly succeeded to such great possessions, was sent from his father's roof to be educated in Brussels. No destiny seemed to lie before the young prince but an education at the Emperor's court, to be followed by military adventures, embassies, viceroalties, and a life of luxury and magnificence. At a very early age he came, accordingly, as a page into the Emperor's family. Charles recognized, with his customary quickness, the remarkable character of the boy. At fifteen, William was the intimate, almost confidential friend of the Emperor, who prided himself, above all other gifts, on his power of reading and of using men. The youth was so constant an attendant upon his imperial chief that even when interviews with the highest personages, and upon the gravest affairs, were taking place, Charles would never suffer him to be considered superfluous or intrusive. There seemed to be no secrets which the Emperor held too high for the comprehension or discretion of his page. His perceptive and reflective faculties, naturally of remarkable keenness and depth, thus acquired a precocious and extraordinary development. He was brought up behind the curtain of that great stage where the world's dramas were daily enacted. The machinery and the masks which produced the grand delusions of history had no deceptions for him. Carefully to observe men's actions, and silently to ponder upon their motives, was the favorite occupation of the Prince during his apprenticeship at court. As he advanced to man's estate, he was selected by the Emperor for the highest duties. Charles, whose only merit, so far as the provinces were concerned, was in having been born in Ghent, and that by an ignoble accident, was glad to employ this representative of so many great Netherlands houses, in the defense of the land. Before the Prince was twenty-one he was

appointed general-in-chief of the army on the French frontier, in the absence of the Duke of Savoy. The post was coveted by many most distinguished soldiers—the Counts of Buren, Bossu, Lalaing, Aremberg, Meghem, and particularly by Count Egmont; yet Charles showed his extraordinary confidence in the Prince of Orange, by selecting him for the station, although he had hardly reached maturity, and was moreover absent in France. The young Prince acquitted himself of his high command in a manner which justified his appointment.

It was the Prince's shoulder upon which the Emperor leaned at the abdication; the Prince's hand which bore the imperial insignia of the discrowned monarch to Ferdinand, at Augsburg. With these duties his relations with Charles were ended, and those with Philip begun. He was with the army during the hostilities which were soon after resumed in Picardy; he was the secret negotiator of the preliminary arrangement with France, soon afterwards confirmed by the triumphant treaty of April, 1559. He had conducted these initiatory conferences with the Constable Montmorency and Marshal de Saint André with great sagacity, although hardly a man in years, and by so doing he had laid Philip under deep obligations. The King was so inexpressibly anxious for peace that he would have been capable of conducting a treaty upon almost any terms. He assured the Prince that "the greatest service he could render him in this world was to make peace, and that he desired to have it at any price whatever, so eager was he to return to Spain." To the envoy Suriano, Philip had held the same language. "Oh, Ambassador," said he, "I wish peace on any terms, and if the King of France had not sued for it, I would have begged for it myself."

With such impatience on the part of the sovereign, it certainly manifested diplomatic abilities of a high character in the Prince, that the treaty negotiated by him amounted to a capitulation by France. He was one of the hostages selected by Henry for the due execution of the treaty, and while in France made that remarkable discovery which was to color his life. While hunting with the King in the forest of Vincennes, the

Prince and Henry found themselves alone together, and separated from the rest of the company. The French monarch's mind was full of the great scheme which had just secretly been formed by Philip and himself, to extirpate Protestantism by a general extirpation of Protestants. Philip had been most anxious to conclude the public treaty with France, that he might be the sooner able to negotiate that secret convention by which he and his Most Christian Majesty were solemnly to bind themselves to massacre all the converts to the new religion in France and the Netherlands. This conspiracy of the two Kings against their subjects was the matter nearest the hearts of both. The Duke of Alva, a fellow hostage with William of Orange, was the plenipotentiary to conduct this more important arrangement. The French monarch, somewhat imprudently imagining that the Prince was also a party to the plot, opened the whole subject to him without reserve. He complained of the constantly-increasing numbers of sectaries in his kingdom, and protested that his conscience would never be easy, nor his state secure, until his realm should be delivered of "that accursed vermin." A civil revolution, under pretext of a religious reformation, was his constant apprehension, particularly since so many notable personages in the realm, and even princes of the blood, were already tainted with heresy. Nevertheless, with the favor of heaven, and the assistance of his son and brother Philip, he hoped soon to be master of the rebels. The King then proceeded, with cynical minuteness, to lay before his discreet companion the particulars of the royal plot, and the manner in which all heretics, whether high or humble, were to be discovered and massacred at the most convenient season. For the furtherance of the scheme in the Netherlands, it was understood that the Spanish regiments would be exceedingly efficient. The Prince, although horror-struck and indignant at the royal revelations, held his peace, and kept his countenance. The King was not aware that, in opening this delicate negotiation to Alva's colleague and Philip's plenipotentiary, he had given a warning of inestimable value to the man who had been born to resist the machinations of Philip and of Alva. William

of Orange earned the surname of "the Silent," from the manner in which he received these communications of Henry without revealing to the monarch, by word or look, the enormous blunder which he had committed. His purpose was fixed from that hour. A few days afterwards he obtained permission to visit the Netherlands, where he took measures to excite, with all his influence, the strongest and most general opposition to the continued presence of the Spanish troops, of which forces, much against his will he had been, in conjunction with Egmont, appointed chief. He already felt, in his own language, that "an inquisition for the Netherlands had been resolved upon more cruel than that of Spain; since it would need but to look askance at an image to be cast into the flames." Although having as yet no spark of religious sympathy for the reformers, he could not, he said, "but feel compassion for so many virtuous men and women thus devoted to massacre," and he determined to save them if he could! At the departure of Philip he had received instructions, both patent and secret, for his guidance as stadholder of Holland, Friesland, and Utrecht. He was ordered "most expressly to correct and extirpate the sects reprobated by our Holy Mother Church; to execute the edicts of his Imperial Majesty, renewed by the King, with absolute rigor. He was to see that the judges carried out the edicts, *without infraction, alteration, or moderation*, since they were there to enforce, not to make or to discuss the law." In his secret instructions he was informed that the execution of the edicts was to be with all rigor, and without any respect of persons. He was also reminded that, whereas some persons had imagined the severity of the law "to be only intended against Anabaptists, on the contrary, the edicts were to be enforced on Lutherans and all other sectaries without distinction." Moreover, in one of his last interviews with Philip, the King had given him the names of several "excellent persons suspected of the new religion," and had commanded him to have them put to death. This, however, he not only omitted to do, but on the contrary gave them warning, so that they might effect their escape, "thinking it more necessary to obey God than man."

William of Orange, at the departure of the King for Spain, was in his twenty-seventh year. He was a widower; his first wife, Anne of Egmont, having died in 1558, after seven years of wedlock. This lady, to whom he had been united when they were both eighteen years of age, was the daughter of the celebrated general, Count de Buren, and the greatest heiress in the Netherlands. William had thus been faithful to the family traditions, and had increased his possessions by a wealthy alliance. He had two children, Philip and Mary. The marriage had been more amicable than princely marriages arranged for convenience often prove. The letters of the Prince to his wife indicate tenderness and contentment. At the same time he was accused, at a later period, of "having murdered her with a dagger." The ridiculous tale was not even credited by those who reported it, but it is worth mentioning, as a proof that no calumny was too senseless to be invented concerning the man whose character was from that hour forth to be the mark of slander, and whose whole life was to be its signal, although often unavailing, refutation.

Yet we are not to regard William of Orange, thus on the threshold of his great career, by the light diffused from a somewhat later period. In no historical character more remarkably than in his is the law of constant development and progress illustrated. At twenty-six he is not the "*pater patriæ*," the great man struggling upward and onward against a host of enemies and obstacles almost beyond human strength, and along the dark and dangerous path leading through conflict, privation, and ceaseless labor to no repose but death. On the contrary, his foot was hardly on the first step of that difficult ascent which was to rise before him all his lifetime. He was still among the primrose paths. He was rich, powerful, of sovereign rank. He had only the germs within him of what was thereafter to expand into moral and intellectual greatness. He had small sympathy for the religious reformation, of which he was to be one of the most distinguished champions. He was a Catholic, nominally, and in outward observance. With doctrines he troubled himself but little. He had given orders to enforce conformity to the

ancient Church, not with bloodshed, yet with comparative strictness, in his principality of Orange. Beyond the compliance with rites and forms, thought indispensable in those days to a personage of such high degree, he did not occupy himself with theology. He was a Catholic, as Egmont and Horn, Berlaymont and Mansfeld, Montigny and even Brederode, were Catholic. It was only tanners, dyers, and apostate priests who were Protestants at that day in the Netherlands. His determination to protect a multitude of his harmless inferiors from horrible deaths did not proceed from sympathy with their religious sentiments, but merely from a generous and manly detestation of murder. He carefully averted his mind from sacred matters. If indeed the seed implanted by his pious parents were really the germ of his future conversion to Protestantism, it must be confessed that it lay dormant a long time. But his mind was in other pursuits. He was disposed for an easy, joyous, luxurious, princely life. Banquets, masquerades, tournaments, the chase, interspersed with the routine of official duties, civil and military, seemed likely to fill out his life. His hospitality, like his fortune, was almost regal. While the King and the foreign envoys were still in the Netherlands, his house, the splendid Nassau palace of Brussels, was ever open. He entertained for the monarch, who was, or who imagined himself to be, too poor to discharge his own duties in this respect, but he entertained at his own expense. This splendid household was still continued. Twenty-four noblemen and eighteen pages of gentle birth officiated regularly in his family. His establishment was on so extensive a scale that upon one day twenty-eight master cooks were dismissed, for the purpose of diminishing the family expenses, and there was hardly a princely house in Germany which did not send cooks to learn their business in so magnificent a kitchen. The reputation of his table remained undiminished for years. We find at a later period that Philip, in the course of one of the nominal reconciliations which took place several times between the monarch and William of Orange, wrote that, his head cook being dead, he begged the Prince to "make him a present of his chief cook,

Master Herman, who was understood to be very skillful."

In this hospitable mansion, the feasting continued night and day. From early morning till noon, the breakfast-tables were spread with wines and luxurious viands in constant succession, to all comers and at every moment. The dinner and supper were daily banquets for a multitude of guests. The highest nobles were not those alone who were entertained. Men of lower degree were welcomed with a charming hospitality which made them feel themselves at their ease. Contemporaries of all parties unite in eulogizing the winning address and gentle manners of the Prince. "Never," says a most bitter Catholic historian, "did an arrogant or indiscreet word fall from his lips. He, upon no occasion, manifested anger to his servants, however much they might be in fault, but contented himself with admonishing them graciously, without menace or insult. He had a gentle and agreeable tongue, with which he could turn all the gentlemen at court any way he liked. He was beloved and honored by the whole community." His manner was graceful, familiar, caressing, and yet dignified. He had the good breeding which comes from the heart, refined into an inexpressible charm from his constant intercourse, almost from his cradle, with mankind of all ranks.

It may be supposed that this train of living was attended with expense. Moreover, he had various other establishments in town and country, besides his almost royal residence in Brussels. He was ardently fond of the chase, particularly of the knightly sport of falconry. In the country he "consoled himself by taking every day a heron in the clouds." His falconers alone cost him annually fifteen hundred florins, after he had reduced their expenses to the lowest possible point. He was much in debt, even at this early period and with his princely fortune. "We come of a race," he wrote carelessly to his brother Louis, "who are somewhat bad managers in our young days, but when we grow older, we do better, like our late father: *sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper et in secula seculorum*.¹ My greatest

¹ Thus it was in the beginning, is now, and always will be for ever and ever.

difficulty," he adds, "as usual, is on account of the falconers."

His debts already amounted, according to Granvelle's statement, to 800,000 or 900,000 florins. He had embarrassed himself, not only through his splendid extravagance, by which all the world about him were made to partake of his wealth, but by accepting the high offices to which he had been appointed. When general-in-chief on the frontier, his salary was three hundred florins monthly; "not enough," as he said, "to pay the servants in his tent," his necessary expenses being twenty-five hundred florins, as appears by a letter to his wife. His embassy to carry the crown to Ferdinand, and his subsequent residence as a hostage for the treaty in Paris, were also very onerous, and he received no salary; according to the economical system in this respect pursued by Charles and Philip. In these two embassies or missions alone, together with the entertainments offered by him to the court and to foreigners, after the peace at Brussels, the Prince spent, according to his own estimate, 1,500,000 florins. He was, however, although deeply, not desperately involved, and had already taken active measures to regulate and reduce his establishment. His revenues were vast, both in his own right and in that of his deceased wife. He had large claims upon the royal treasury for service and expenditure. He had besides ample sums to receive from the ransoms of the prisoners of Saint Quentin and Gravelines, having served in both campaigns. The amount to be received by individuals from this source may be estimated from the fact that Count Horn, by no means one of the most favored in the victorious armies, had received from Leonor d'Orleans, Duc de Longueville, a ransom of eighty thousand crowns. The sum due, if payment were enforced, from the prisoners assigned to Egmont, Orange, and others, must have been very large. Granvelle estimated the whole amount at two millions; adding, characteristically, "that this kind of speculation was a practice" which our good old fathers, lovers of virtue, would not have found laudable. In this the churchman was right, but he might have added that the "lovers of virtue" would have found it as little "laudable" for ecclesiastics to dispose

of the sacred offices in their gift, for carpets, tapestry, and annual payments of certain percentages upon the cure of souls. If the profits respectively gained by military and clerical speculators in that day should be compared, the disadvantage would hardly be found to lie with those of the long robe.

Such, then, at the beginning of 1560, was William of Orange; a generous, stately, magnificent, powerful grandee. As a military commander, he had acquitted himself very creditably of highly important functions at an early age. Nevertheless it was the opinion of many persons, that he was of a timid temperament. He was even accused of having manifested an unseemly panic at Philippeville, and of having only been restrained by the expostulations of his officers, from abandoning both that fortress and Charlemont to Admiral Coligny, who had made his appearance in the neighborhood, merely at the head of a reconnoitering party. If the story were true, it would be chiefly important as indicating that the Prince of Orange was one of the many historical characters, originally of an excitable and even timorous physical organization, whom moral courage and a strong will have afterwards converted into dauntless heroes. Certain it is that he was destined to confront open danger in every form, that his path was to lead through perpetual ambush, yet that his cheerful confidence and tranquil courage were to become not only unquestionable but proverbial. It may be safely asserted, however, that the story was an invention, to be classed with those fictions which made him the murderer of his first wife, a common conspirator against Philip's crown and person, and a crafty malefactor in general, without a single virtue. It must be remembered that even the terrible Alva, who lived in harness almost from the cradle to the grave, was, so late as at the period with which we are now occupied, censured for timidity, and had been accused in youth of flat cowardice. He despised the insinuation, which for him had no meaning. There is no doubt too that caution was a predominant characteristic of the Prince. It was one of the chief sources of his greatness. At that period, perhaps at any period, he would have been incapable of such brilliant and dashing

exploits as had made the name of Egmont so famous. It had even become a proverb, "the counsel of Orange, the execution of Egmont," yet we shall have occasion to see how far this physical promptness which had been so felicitous upon the battle-field was likely to avail the hero of Saint Quentin in the great political combat which was approaching.

As to the talents of the Prince, there was no difference of opinion. His enemies never contested the subtlety and breadth of his intellect, his adroitness and capacity in conducting state affairs, his knowledge of human nature, and the profoundness of his views. In many respects it must be confessed that his surname of the Silent, like many similar appellations, was a misnomer. William of Orange was neither "silent" nor "taciturn," yet these are the epithets which will be for ever associated with the name of a man who, in private, was the most affable, cheerful, and delightful of companions, and who on many great public occasions was to prove himself, both by pen and by speech, the most eloquent man of his age. His mental accomplishments were considerable. He had studied history with attention, and he spoke and wrote with facility Latin, French, German, Flemish, and Spanish.

The man, however, in whose hands the administration of the Netherlands was in reality placed, was Anthony Perrenot, then Bishop of Arras, soon to be known by the more celebrated title of Cardinal Granvelle. He was the chief of the Consulta, or secret council of three, by whose deliberations the Duchess Regent was to be governed. His father, Nicholas Perrenot, of an obscure family in Burgundy, had been long the favorite minister and man of business to the Emperor Charles. Anthony, the eldest of thirteen children, was born in 1517. He was early distinguished for his talents. He studied at Dôle, Padua, Paris, and Louvain. At the age of twenty he spoke seven languages with perfect facility, while his acquaintance with civil and ecclesiastical laws was considered prodigious. At the age of twenty-three he became a canon of Liege Cathedral. The necessary eight quarters of gentility produced upon that occasion have accordingly been displayed by his

panegyrists in triumphant refutation of that theory which gave him a blacksmith for his grandfather. At the same period, although he had not reached the requisite age, the rich bishopric of Arras had already been prepared for him by his father's care. Three years afterwards, in 1543, he distinguished himself by a most learned and brilliant harangue before the Council of Trent, which display so much charmed the Emperor, that he created him councilor of state. A few years afterwards he rendered the unscrupulous Charles still more valuable proofs of devotion and dexterity by the part he played in the memorable imprisonment of the Landgrave of Hesse and the Saxon Dukes. He was thereafter constantly employed in embassies and other offices of trust and profit.

There was no doubt as to his profound and varied learning, nor as to his natural quickness and dexterity. He was ready-witted, smooth and fluent of tongue, fertile in expedients, courageous, resolute. He thoroughly understood the art of managing men, particularly his superiors. He knew how to govern under the appearance of obeying. He possessed exquisite tact in appreciating the characters of those far above him in rank and beneath him in intellect. He could accommodate himself with great readiness to the idiosyncrasies of sovereigns. He was a chameleon to the hand which fed him. In his intercourse with the King, he colored himself, as it were, with the King's character. He was not himself, but Philip; not the sullen, hesitating, confused Philip, however, but Philip endowed with eloquence, readiness, facility. The King ever found himself anticipated with the most delicate obsequiousness, beheld his struggling ideas change into winged words without ceasing to be his own. No flattery could be more adroit. The bishop accommodated himself to the King's epistolary habits. The silver-tongued and ready debater substituted protocols for conversation, in deference to a monarch who could not speak. He corresponded with Philip, with Margaret of Parma, with every one. He wrote folios to the Duchess when they were in the same palace. He would write letters forty pages long to the King, and send off another courier on the

same day with two or three additional dispatches of identical date. Such prolixity enchanted the King, whose greediness for business epistles was insatiable. The painstaking monarch toiled, pen in hand, after his wonderful minister in vain. Philip was only fit to be the bishop's clerk; yet he imagined himself to be the directing and governing power. He scrawled apostilles in the margins to prove that he had read with attention, and persuaded himself that he suggested when he scarcely even comprehended. The bishop gave advice and issued instructions when he seemed to be only receiving them. He was the substance while he affected to be the shadow. These tactics were comparatively easy, and likely to be triumphant, so long as he had only to deal with inferior intellects, like those of Philip and Margaret. When he should be matched against political genius and lofty character combined, it was possible that his resources might not prove so all-sufficient.

His political principles were sharply defined in reality, but smoothed over by a conventional and decorous benevolence of language, which deceived vulgar minds. He was a strict absolutist. His deference to arbitrary power was profound and slavish. God and "the master," as he always called Philip, he professed to serve with equal humility. "It seems to me," said he, in a letter of this epoch, "that I shall never be able to fulfill the obligation of slave which I owe to your majesty, to whom I am bound by so firm a chain;—at any rate, I shall never fail to struggle for that end with sincerity."

As a matter of course, he was a firm opponent of the national rights of the Netherlands. He had strenuously warned Philip against assembling the states-general before his departure for the sake of asking them for supplies. He earnestly deprecated allowing the constitutional authorities any control over the expenditures of the government, and averred that this practice under the Regent Mary had been the cause of endless trouble. It may easily be supposed that other rights were as little to his taste as the claim to vote the subsidies, a privilege which was in reality indisputable. Men who stood forth in defense of the provincial

constitutions were, in his opinion, mere demagogues and hypocrites; their only motive being to curry favor with the populace. Yet these charters were, after all, sufficiently limited. The natural rights of man were topics which had never been broached. Man had only natural wrongs. None ventured to doubt that sovereignty was heaven-born, anointed of God. The rights of the Netherlands were special, not general; plural, not singular; liberties, not liberty; "privileges," not maxims. They were practical, not theoretical; historical, not philosophical. Still, such as they were, they were facts, acquisitions. They had been purchased by the blood and toil of brave ancestors; they amounted—however open to criticism upon broad humanitarian grounds, of which few at that day had ever dreamed—to a solid, substantial dyke against the arbitrary power which was ever chafing and fretting to destroy its barriers. No men were more subtle or more diligent in corroding the foundation of these bulwarks than the disciples of Granvelle. Yet one would have thought it possible to tolerate an amount of practical freedom so different from the wild, social speculations which, in later days, have made both tyrants and reasonable lovers of our race tremble with apprehension. The Netherlands claimed, mainly, the right to vote the money which was demanded in such enormous profusion from their painfully-acquired wealth; they were also unwilling to be burned alive if they objected to transubstantiation. Granvelle was most distinctly of an opposite opinion upon both topics. He strenuously deprecated the interference of the states with the subsidies, and it was by his advice that the remorseless edict of 1550, the Emperor's ordinance of blood and fire, was re-enacted, as the very first measure of Philip's reign. Such were his sentiments as to national and popular rights by representation. For the people itself—"that vile and mischievous animal called the people"—as he expressed it, he entertained a cheerful contempt.

His aptitude for managing men was very great; his capacity for affairs incontestable; but it must be always understood as the capacity for the affairs of absolutism. He was a clever, scheming politician, an adroit

manager; it remained to be seen whether he had a claim to the character of a statesman. His industry was enormous. He could write fifty letters a day with his own hand. He could dictate to half a dozen amanuenses at once, on as many different subjects, in as many different languages, and send them all away exhausted.

He was already rich. His income from his see and other livings was estimated, in 1557, at ten thousand dollars; his property in ready money, "furniture, tapestry, and the like," at two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. When it is considered that, as compared with our times, these sums represent a revenue of a hundred thousand, and a capital of two millions and a half in addition, it may be safely asserted that the prelate had at least made a good beginning. Besides his regular income, moreover, he had handsome receipts from that simony which was reduced to a system, and which gave him a liberal profit, generally in the shape of an annuity, upon every benefice which he conferred. He was, however, by no means satisfied. His appetite was as boundless as the sea; he was still a shameless mendicant of pecuniary favors and lucrative offices. Already, in 1552, the Emperor had roundly rebuked his greediness. "As to what you say of getting no 'merced' nor 'ayuda de costa,'" said he, "'tis merced and ayuda de costa quite sufficient, when one has fat benefices, pensions, and salaries, with which a man might manage to support himself." The bishop, however, was not easily abashed, and he was, at the epoch which now occupies us, earnestly and successfully soliciting from Philip the lucrative abbey of Saint Armand. Not that he would have accepted this preferment, "could the abbey have been annexed to any of the new bishoprics"; on the contrary, he assured the King that "to carry out so holy a work as the erection of those new sees, he would willingly have contributed even out of his own miserable pittance." It not being considered expedient to confiscate the abbey to any particular bishop, Philip accordingly presented it to the prelate of Arras, together with a handsome sum of money in the shape of an "ayuda de costa" beside. The thrifty bishop, who foresaw the advent of troublous times in

the Netherlands, however, took care in the letters by which he sent his thanks, to instruct the King to secure the money upon crown property in Aragon, Naples, and Sicily, as matters in the provinces were beginning to look very precarious.

Such, at the commencement of the Duchess Margaret's administration, were the characters and the previous histories of the persons into whose hands the Netherlands were entrusted. None of them have been prejudged. Their characters have been sketched, not according to subsequent developments, but as they appeared at the opening of this important epoch.

The aspect of the country and its inhabitants offered many sharp contrasts, and revealed many sources of future trouble.

The aristocracy of the Netherlands was excessively extravagant, dissipated, and already considerably embarrassed in circumstances. It had been the policy of the Emperor and of Philip to confer high offices, civil, military, and diplomatic, upon the leading nobles, by which enormous expenses were entailed upon them, without any corresponding salaries. The case of Orange has been already alluded to, and there were many other nobles less able to afford the expense, who had been indulged with these ruinous honors. During the war, there had been, however, many chances of bettering broken fortunes. Victory brought immense prizes to the leading officers. The ransoms of so many illustrious prisoners as had graced the triumphs of Saint Quentin and Grave-lines had been extremely profitable. These sources of wealth had now been cut off; yet, on the departure of the King from the Netherlands, the luxury increased instead of diminishing. "Instead of one court," said a contemporary, "you would have said that there were fifty." Nothing could be more sumptuous than the modes of life in Brussels. The household of Orange has been already painted. That of Egmont was almost as magnificent. A rivalry in hospitality and in display began among the highest nobles, and extended to those less able to maintain themselves in the contest. During the war there had been the valiant emulation of the battle-field; gentlemen had vied with each other how best to illustrate an ancient name with deeds of desperate

valor, to repair the fortunes of a ruined house with the spoils of war. They now sought to surpass each other in splendid extravagance. It was an eager competition who should build the stateliest palaces, have the greatest number of noble pages and gentlemen in waiting, the most gorgeous liveries, the most hospitable tables, the most scientific cooks. There was also much depravity as well as extravagance. The morals of high society were loose. Gaming was practiced to a frightful extent. Drunkenness was a prevailing characteristic of the higher classes. Even the Prince of Orange himself, at this period, although never addicted to habitual excess, was extremely convivial in his tastes, tolerating scenes and companions not likely at a later day to find much favor in his sight. "We kept Saint Martin's joyously," he wrote, at about this period, to his brother, "and in the most jovial company. Brederode was one day in such a state that I thought he would certainly die, but he has now got over it." Count Brederode, soon afterwards to become so conspicuous in the early scenes of the revolt, was, in truth, most notorious for his performances in these banqueting scenes. He appeared to have vowed as uncompromising hostility to cold water as to the inquisition, and always denounced both with the same fierce and ludicrous vehemence. Their constant connection with Germany at that period did not improve the sobriety of the Netherland nobles. The aristocracy of that country, as is well known, were most "potent at potting." "When the German finds himself sober," said the bitter Badovaro, "he believes himself to be ill." Gladly, since the peace, they had welcomed the opportunities afforded for many a deep carouse with their Netherland cousins. The approaching marriage of the Prince of Orange with the Saxon princess—an episode which will soon engage our attention—gave rise to tremendous orgies. Count Schwartzburg, the Prince's brother-in-law, and one of the negotiators of the marriage, found many occasions to strengthen the bonds of harmony between the countries by indulgence of these common tastes. "I have had many princes and counts at my table," he wrote to Orange, "where a good deal more

was drunk than eaten. The Rhinegrave's brother fell down dead after drinking too much malvoisie; but we have had him balsamed and sent home to his family."

These disorders among the higher ranks were in reality so extensive as to justify the biting remark of the Venetian: "The gentlemen intoxicate themselves every day," said he, "and the ladies also; but much less than the men." His remarks as to the morality, in other respects, of both sexes were equally sweeping, and not more complimentary.

If these were the characteristics of the most distinguished society, it may be supposed that they were reproduced with more or less intensity throughout all the more remote but concentric circles of life, as far as the seductive splendor of the court could radiate. The lesser nobles emulated the grandees, and vied with each other in splendid establishments, banquets, masquerades, and equipages. Their estates, in consequence, were mortgaged, deeply and more deeply; then, after a few years, sold to the merchants, or rich advocates and other gentlemen of the robe, to whom they had been pledged. The more closely ruin stared the victims in the face, the more heedlessly did they plunge into excesses. Many of the nobles being thus embarrassed, and some even desperate, in their condition, it was thought that they were desirous of creating disturbances in the commonwealth, that the payment of just debts might be avoided, that their mortgaged lands might be wrested by main force from the low-born individuals who had become possessed of them, that, in particular, the rich abbey lands held by idle priests might be appropriated to the use of impoverished gentlemen, who could turn them to so much better account. It is quite probable that interested motives such as these were not entirely inactive among a comparatively small class of gentlemen. The religious reformation in every land of Europe derived a portion of its strength from the opportunity it afforded to potentates and great nobles for helping themselves to Church property. No doubt many Netherlanders thought that their fortunes might be improved at the expense of the monks, and for the benefit of religion. Even without apostasy from the mother

Church, they looked with longing eyes on the wealth of her favored and indolent children. They thought that the King would do well to carve a round number of handsome military commanderies out of the abbey lands, whose possessors should be bound to military service after the ancient manner of fiefs, so that a splendid cavalry, headed by the gentlemen of the country, should be ever ready to mount and ride at the royal pleasure, in place of a horde of lazy epicureans, telling beads and indulging themselves in luxurious vice.

Such views were entertained; such language often held. These circumstances and sentiments had their influence among the causes which produced the great revolt now impending. Care should be taken, however, not to exaggerate that influence. It is a prodigious mistake to refer this great historical event to sources so insufficient as the ambition of a few great nobles, and the embarrassments of a larger number of needy gentlemen. The Netherland revolt was not an aristocratic, but a popular, although certainly not a democratic movement. It was a great episode—the longest, the darkest, the bloodiest, the most important episode in the history of the religious reformation in Europe. The nobles so conspicuous upon the surface at the outbreak, only drifted before a storm which they neither caused nor controlled.

For the state of the people was very different from the condition of the aristocracy. The period of martyrdom had lasted long and was to last longer; but there were symptoms that it might one day be succeeded by a more active stage of popular disease. The tumults of the Netherlands were long in ripening; when the final outbreak came it would have been more philosophical to inquire, not why it had occurred, but how it could have been so long postponed. During the reign of Charles, the sixteenth century had been advancing steadily in strength as the once omnipotent Emperor lapsed into decrepitude. That extraordinary century had not dawned upon the earth only to increase the strength of absolutism and superstition. The new world had not been discovered, the ancient world reconquered, the printing-press perfected, only that the inquisition might reign undisturbed over the

fairest portions of the earth, and chartered hypocrisy fatten upon its richest lands. It was impossible that the most energetic and quick-witted people of Europe should not feel sympathy with the great effort made by Christendom to shake off the incubus which had so long paralyzed her hands and brain. In the Netherlands, where the attachment to Rome had never been intense, where in the old times, the Bishops of Utrecht had been rather Ghibelline than Guelph, where all the earliest sects of dissenters—Waldenses, Lollards, Hussites—had found numerous converts and thousands of martyrs, it was inevitable that there should be a response from the popular heart to the deeper agitation which now reached to the very core of Christendom.

The people were numerous, industrious, accustomed for centuries to a state of comparative civil freedom, and to a lively foreign trade, by which their minds were saved from the stagnation of bigotry. It was natural that they should begin to generalize, and to pass from the concrete images presented them in the Flemish monasteries to the abstract character of Rome itself. The Flemings, above all their other qualities, were a commercial nation. Commerce was the mother of their freedom, so far as they had acquired it, in civil matters. It was struggling to give birth to a larger liberty, to freedom of conscience. The provinces were situated in the very heart of Europe. The blood of a world-wide traffic was daily coursing through the thousand arteries of that water-inwoven territory. There was a mutual exchange between the Netherlands and all the world; and ideas were as liberally interchanged as goods. Truth was imported as freely as less precious merchandise. The psalms of Marot were as current as the drugs of Molucca or the diamonds of Borneo. The prohibitory measures of a despotic government could not annihilate this intellectual trade, nor could bigotry devise an effective quarantine to exclude the religious pest which lurked in every bale of merchandise, and was wafted on every breeze from East and West.

The edicts of the Emperor had been endured, but not accepted. The horrible persecution under which so many thousands had sunk had produced its inevitable result.

Fertilized by all this innocent blood, the soil of the Netherlands became as a watered garden, in which liberty, civil and religious, was to flourish perennially. The scaffold had its daily victims, but did not make a single convert. The statistics of these crimes will perhaps never be accurately adjusted; but those who love horrible details may find ample material. The chronicles contain the lists of these obscure martyrs; but their names, hardly pronounced in their lifetime, sound barbarously in our ears, and will never ring through the trumpet of fame. Yet they were men who dared and suffered as much as men can dare and suffer in this world, and for the noblest cause which can inspire humanity. Fanatics they certainly were not, if fanaticism consists in show, without corresponding substance. For them all was terrible reality. The Emperor and his edicts were realities, the ax, the stake were realities, and the heroism with which men took each other by the hand and walked into the flames, or with which women sang a song of triumph while the grave-digger was shoveling the earth upon their living faces, was a reality also.

Thus, the people of the Netherlands were already pervaded, throughout the whole extent of the country, with the expanding spirit of religious reformation. It was inevitable that sooner or later an explosion was to arrive. They were placed between two great countries, where the new principles had already taken root. The Lutheranism of Germany and the Calvinism of France had each its share in producing the Netherlands revolt, but a mistake is often made in estimating the relative proportion of these several influences. The Reformation first entered the provinces, not through the Augsburg, but the Huguenot gate. The fiery field-preachers from the south of France first inflamed the excitable hearts of the kindred population of the south-western Netherlands. The Walloons were the first to rebel against and the first to reconcile themselves with papal Rome, exactly as their Celtic ancestors, fifteen centuries earlier, had been foremost in the revolt against imperial Rome, and precipitate in their submission to her overshadowing power. The Batavians, slower to be moved but more steadfast, retained the impulse

which they received from the same source which was already agitating their "Welsh" compatriots. There were already French preachers at Valenciennes and Tournay, to be followed, as we shall have occasion to see, by many others. Without undervaluing the influence of the German Churches, and particularly of the garrison-preaching of the German military chaplains in the Netherlands, it may be safely asserted that the early Reformers of the provinces were mainly Huguenots in their belief. The Dutch Church became, accordingly, not Lutheran, but Calvinistic, and the founder of the commonwealth hardly ceased to be a nominal Catholic before he became an adherent to the same creed.

In the meantime, it is more natural to regard the great movement, psychologically speaking, as a whole, whether it revealed itself in France, Germany, the Netherlands, England, or Scotland. The policy of governments, national character, individual interests, and other collateral circumstances, modified the result; but the great cause was the same; the source of all the movements was single. The Reformation in Germany had been adjourned for half a century by the Augsburg religious peace, just concluded. It was held in suspense in France through the Machiavellian policy which Catherine de Medici had just adopted, and was for several years to prosecute, of balancing one party against the other, so as to neutralize all power but her own. The great contest was accordingly transferred to the Netherlands, to be fought out for the rest of the century, while the whole of Christendom was to look anxiously for the result. From the East and from the West the clouds rolled away, leaving a comparatively bright and peaceful atmosphere, only that they might concentrate themselves with portentous blackness over the soil of the Netherlands. In Germany, the princes, not the people, had conquered Rome, and to the princes, not the people, were secured the benefits of the victory—the spoils of churches, and the right to worship according to conscience. The people had the right to conform to their ruler's creed, or to depart from his land. Still, as a matter of fact, many of the princes being Reformers, a large mass of the population had acquired

the privilege for their own generation and that of their children to practice that religion which they actually approved. This was a fact, and a more comfortable one than the necessity of choosing between what they considered wicked idolatry and the stake—the only election left to their Netherland brethren. In France, the accidental splinter from Montgomery's lance had deferred the Huguenot massacre for a dozen years. During the period in which the Queen Regent was resolved to play her fast and loose policy, all the persuasions of Philip and the arts of Alva were powerless to induce her to carry out the scheme which Henry had revealed to Orange in the forest of Vincennes. When the crime came at last, it was as blundering as it was bloody; at once premeditated and accidental; the isolated execution of an interregal conspiracy, existing for half a generation, yet exploding without concert; a wholesale massacre, but a piecemeal plot.

The aristocracy and the masses being thus, from a variety of causes, in this agitated and dangerous condition, what were the measures of the government?

The edict of 1550 had been re-enacted immediately after Philip's accession to sovereignty. It is necessary that the reader should be made acquainted with some of the leading provisions of this famous document, thus laid down above all the constitutions as the organic law of the land. A few plain facts, entirely without rhetorical varnish, will prove more impressive in this case than superfluous declamation. The American will judge whether the wrongs inflicted by Laud and Charles upon his Puritan ancestors were the severest that a people has had to undergo, and whether the Dutch Republic does not track its source to the same high, religious origin as that of our own commonwealth.

"No one," said the edict, "shall print, write, copy, keep, conceal, sell, buy or give in churches, streets, or other places, any book or writing made by Martin Luther, John Ecolampadius, Ulrich Zwinglius, Martin Bucer, John Calvin, or other heretics reprobated by the Holy Church; . . . nor break, nor otherwise injure the images of the holy virgin, or canonized saints; . . . nor in his house hold conventicles, or illegal

gatherings, or be present at any such in which the adherents of the above-mentioned heretics teach, baptize, and form conspiracies against the Holy Church and the general welfare. . . . Moreover, we forbid," continues the edict, in name of the sovereign, "all lay persons *to converse or dispute concerning* the Holy Scriptures, openly or secretly, especially on any doubtful or difficult matters, or *to read, teach, or expound the Scriptures*, unless they have duly studied theology and been approved by some renowned university; . . . or to preach secretly, or openly, or *to entertain any of the opinions* of the above-mentioned heretics; . . . on pain, should any one be found to have contravened any of the points above mentioned, as perturbators of our state and of the general quiet, to be punished in the following manner." And how were they to be punished? What was the penalty inflicted upon the man or woman who owned a hymn-book, or who hazarded the opinion in private, that Luther was not quite wrong in doubting the power of a monk to sell for money the license to commit murder or incest; or upon the parent, not being a Roman Catholic doctor of divinity, who should read Christ's Sermon on the Mount to his children in his own parlor or shop? How were crimes like these to be visited upon the transgressor? Was it by reprimand, fine, imprisonment, banishment, or by branding on the forehead, by the cropping of the ears or the slitting of nostrils, as was practiced upon the Puritan fathers of New England for *their* nonconformity? It was by a sharper chastisement than any of these methods. The Puritan fathers of the Dutch Republic had to struggle against a darker doom. The edict went on to provide:

"That such perturbators of the general quiet are to be executed, to wit: the men with the sword and the women to be buried alive, if they *do not* persist in their errors; if they do persist in them, then they are to be executed with fire; all their property in both cases being confiscated to the crown."

Thus, the clemency of the sovereign permitted the *repentant* heretic to be beheaded or buried alive, instead of being burned.

The edict further provided against all misprision of heresy by making those who

failed to betray the suspected liable to the same punishment as if suspected or convicted themselves: "we forbid," said the decree, "all persons to lodge, entertain, furnish with food, fire, or clothing, or otherwise to favor any one holden or notoriously suspected of being a heretic; . . . and any one failing to denounce any such we ordain shall be liable to the above-mentioned punishments."

The edict went on to provide, "that if any person, being not convicted of heresy or error, but greatly suspected thereof, and *therefore condemned* by the spiritual judge to abjure such heresy, or by the secular magistrate to make public fine and reparation, shall again become suspected or tainted with heresy—*although it should not appear that he has contravened or violated any one of our above-mentioned commands*—nevertheless, we do will and ordain that such person shall be considered as relapsed, and, as such, be *punished with loss of life and property, without any hope* of moderation or mitigation of the above-mentioned penalties."

Furthermore, it was decreed, that "the spiritual judges, desiring to proceed against any one for the crime of heresy, shall request any of our sovereign courts or provincial councils to appoint any one of their college, or such other adjunct as the council shall select, to preside over the proceedings to be instituted against the suspected. All who know of any person tainted with heresy are required to denounce and give them up to all judges, officers of the bishops, or others having authority on the premises, on pain of being punished according to the pleasure of the judge. Likewise, all shall be obliged, who know of any place where such heretics keep themselves, to declare them to the authorities, on pain of being held as accomplices, and punished as such heretics themselves would be if apprehended."

In order to secure the greatest number of arrests by a direct appeal to the most ignoble, but not the least powerful principle of human nature, it was ordained "that *the informer*, in case of conviction, should be entitled to one-half the property of the accused, if not more than one hundred pounds Flemish; if more, then *ten per cent.* of all such excess."

Treachery to one's friends was encouraged by the provision, "that if any man being present at any secret conventicle, shall afterwards come forward and betray his fellow members of the congregation, he shall receive full pardon."

In order that neither the good people of the Netherlands, nor the judges and inquisitors should delude themselves with the notion that these fanatic decrees were only intended to inspire terror, not for practical execution, the sovereign continued to ordain—"to the end that the judges and officers may have no reason, under pretext that the penalties are too great and heavy and only devised to terrify delinquents, to punish them less severely than they deserve—that the culprits be really punished by the penalties above declared; forbidding all judges to alter or moderate the penalties in any manner—*forbidding any one*, of whatsoever condition, to *ask of us* or of any one having authority, to *grant pardon*, or to present any petition in favor of such heretics, exiles, or fugitives, on penalty of being declared for ever incapable of civil and military office, and of being arbitrarily punished besides."

Such were the leading provisions of this famous edict, originally promulgated in 1550 as a recapitulation and condensation of all the previous ordinances of the Emperor upon religious subjects. By its style and title it was a perpetual edict, and, according to one of its clauses, was to be published for ever once in every six months, in every city and village of the Netherlands. It had been promulgated at Augsburg, where the Emperor was holding a diet, upon the 25th of September. Its severity had so appalled the Dowager Queen of Hungary, that she had made a journey to Augsburg expressly to procure a mitigation of some of its provisions. The principal alteration which she was able to obtain of the Emperor was, however, in the phraseology only. As a concession to popular prejudice, the words "spiritual judges" were substituted for "inquisitors" wherever that expression had occurred in the original draft.

The edict had been re-enacted by the express advice of the Bishop of Arras, immediately on the accession of Philip. The prelate knew the value of the Emperor's name; he may have thought, also, that it

would be difficult to increase the sharpness of the ordinances. "I advised the King," says Granvelle, in a letter written a few years later, "to make no change in the placards, but to proclaim the text drawn up by the Emperor, republishing the whole as the King's edict, with express insertion of the phrase, 'Carolus,' etc. I recommended this lest men should calumniate his Majesty as wishing to introduce novelties in the matter of religion."

This edict, containing the provisions which have been laid before the reader, was now to be enforced with the utmost rigor; every official personage, from the stadholders down, having received the most stringent instructions to that effect, under Philip's own hand. This was the first gift of Philip and of Granvelle to the Netherlands; of the monarch who said of himself that he had always, "from the beginning of his government, followed the path of clemency, according to his natural disposition, so well known to all the world"; of the prelate who said of himself, "that he had ever combated the opinion that anything could be accomplished by terror, death, and violence."

During the period of the French and Papal war, it has been seen that the execution of these edicts had been permitted to slacken. It was now resumed with redoubled fury. Moreover, a new measure had increased the disaffection and dismay of the people, already sufficiently filled with apprehension. As an additional security for the supremacy of the ancient religion, it had been thought desirable that the number of bishops should be increased. There were but four sees in the Netherlands, those of Arras, Cambray, Tournay, and Utrecht. That of Utrecht was within the archiepiscopate of Cologne; the other three were within that of Rheims. It seemed proper that the prelates of the Netherlands should owe no extra-provincial allegiance. It was likewise thought that three millions of souls required more than four spiritual superintendents. At any rate, whatever might be the interest of the flocks, it was certain that those broad and fertile pastures would sustain more than the present number of shepherds. The wealth of the religious houses in the provinces was very great. The abbey of Affligem alone had a revenue

of fifty thousand florins, and there were many others scarcely inferior in wealth. But these institutions were comparatively independent both of King and Pope. Electing their own superiors from time to time, in nowise desirous of any change by which their ease might be disturbed and their riches endangered, the honest friars were not likely to engage in any very vigorous crusade against heresy, nor for the sake of introducing or strengthening Spanish institutions, which they knew to be abominated by the people, to take the risk of driving all their disciples into revolt and apostasy. Comforting themselves with an Erasmian philosophy, which they thought best suited to the times, they were as little likely as the Sage of Rotterdam himself would have been, to make martyrs of themselves for the sake of extirpating Calvinism. The abbots and monks were, in political matters, very much under the influence of the great nobles, in whose company they occupied the benches of the upper house of the states-general.

Doctor Francis Sonnius had been sent on a mission to the Pope, for the purpose of representing the necessity of an increase in the episcopal force of the Netherlands. Just as the King was taking his departure, the commissioner arrived, bringing with him the Bull of Paul the Fourth, dated May 18, 1559. This was afterwards confirmed by that of Pius the Fourth, in January of the following year. The document stated that "Paul the Fourth, slave of slaves, wishing to provide for the welfare of the provinces and the eternal salvation of their inhabitants, had determined to plant in that fruitful field several new bishoprics. The enemy of mankind being abroad," said the Bull, "in so many forms at that particular time, and the Netherlands, then under the sway of that beloved son of his holiness, Philip the Catholic, being compassed about with heretic and schismatic nations, it was believed that the eternal welfare of the land was in great danger. At the period of the original establishment of Cathedral churches, the provinces had been sparsely peopled; they had now become filled to overflowing, so that the original ecclesiastical arrangement did not suffice. *The harvest was plentiful, but the laborers were few.*"

In consideration of these and other

reasons, three archbishoprics were accordingly appointed. That of Mechlin was to be principal, under which were constituted six bishoprics, those, namely, of Antwerp, Bois le Duc, Rurmond, Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres. That of Cambray was second, with the four subordinate dioceses of Tournay, Arras, Saint Omer, and Namur. The third archbishopric was that of Utrecht, with the five sees of Haarlem, Middelburg, Leeuwarden, Groningen, and Deventer.

The nomination to these important offices was granted to the King, subject to confirmation by the Pope. Moreover, it was ordained by the Bull that "each bishop should appoint *nine additional prebendaries*, who were to assist him in the matter of the *inquisition* throughout his bishopric, *two of whom were themselves to be inquisitors*."

To sustain these two great measures, through which Philip hoped once and for ever to extinguish the Netherland heresy, it was considered desirable that the Spanish troops still remaining in the provinces should be kept there indefinitely.

The force was not large, amounting hardly to four thousand men, but they were unscrupulous, and admirably disciplined. As the entering wedge, by which a military and ecclesiastical despotism was eventually to be forced into the very heart of the land, they were invaluable. The moral effect to be hoped from the regular presence of a Spanish standing army during a time of peace in the Netherlands could hardly be exaggerated. Philip was therefore determined to employ every argument and subterfuge to detain the troops.

AMERICAN LITERATURE

PART II

FROM MELVILLE AND WHITMAN TO THE PRESENT TIME

HERMAN MELVILLE (1819-1891)

R. L. Stevenson characteristically expressed his enthusiasm for Melville by terming him "a howling cheese." More explicitly and sensitively John Masefield has said of *Moby Dick*: "In that wild, beautiful romance Melville seems to have spoken the very secret of the sea, and to have drawn into his tale all the magic, all the sadness, all the wild joy of many waters. It stands quite alone; quite unlike any other book known to me. It strikes a note which no other sea writer has ever struck." And recently the *London Mercury* has referred to Melville as "perhaps the greatest of all American writers." These citations could be multiplied; and, though the last tells more of its writer's limitations of knowledge or of taste than it does of Melville, still, it is a straw which, with the rest, indicates that Melville, though a frustrated, unstable, ill-balanced man, was nevertheless a writer of genius whose books have scarcely yet taken their deserved place in American literature.

Melville's ancestry was Dutch on his mother's side, Scotch-Irish on his father's. His paternal grandfather was the Major Thomas Melville who inspired Holmes's poem, *The Last Leaf*. His father was a merchant of New York, and there Herman was born on 1 August, 1819. His father died in 1832, leaving his family almost without money. Very little is known of Herman's childhood and schooling. In 1826, when the boy was being sent to Albany on a visit to members of his mother's family, his father wrote: "He is very backward in speech and somewhat slow in comprehension, but you will find him as far as he understands men and things both solid and profound and of a docile and amiable disposition." Beyond this somewhat extraordinary sentence, there is little or no contemporary evidence concerning Melville's earlier years. It is known that he attended the Albany Academy, and that with this his formal education ceased, but it is not known how long he was there. In 1834 he was employed as a clerk in a bank, and in the following year as a clerk in his brother's fur and cap store in Albany. During the greater part of 1836 he lived with an uncle upon the latter's farm at Pittsfield, Massachusetts, doing farm work and possibly for a few months teaching in a nearby school. He was unhappy, if a statement in *Redburn* may be trusted, and determined now to try to sail away from his misery: "Sad disappointments in several plans which I had sketched for my future life, the necessity of doing something for myself, united to a naturally roving disposition, had now conspired within me to send me to sea as a sailor." In the spring of 1837 he went to New York and shipped as a common sailor on a trading vessel bound for Liverpool. The ship stayed some six weeks in Liverpool, and he then came back with her, a bitterly disillusioned youth, though capable still—as he remained for many a year—of cherishing other hopes equally illusory. From this time until the beginning of 1841 he taught in several schools, in Pittsfield and near Albany, and made some attempts to write for periodicals. But he only succeeded in bringing on another fit of desperation and illusory hope. He went to New Bedford and shipped as a sailor aboard the *Acushnet*, a whaler, which left Fairhaven (across the river from New Bedford) on 3 January, 1841, bound for the Pacific Ocean. The *Acushnet's* captain was brutal, and Melville found his life finally unbearable, and so deserted the ship, with a fellow-sailor, Richard Tobias Greene, in the summer of 1842, at Nukuheva, the chief port of the Marquesas. After a short time the two were separated, and Greene made his way back to America. Melville, however, was taken by cannibals and was held by them some four months in loose captivity, until he succeeded in escaping to an Australian whaler. He then visited Tahiti and others of the Society Islands and, now in another ship, went to Honolulu. There, after a time, he became a member of the crew of the frigate *United States*, and so returned to America in 1844.

Almost immediately Melville must have begun writing the books founded on his South-Sea experiences which were to make him famous;—founded on those experiences, but so built up by a strange imagination and colored by unrestrained feeling that it is impossible exactly to draw the line between romance and reality. *Typee* was published in 1846. *Omoo* followed in 1847, and in the same year Melville was married to Miss Elizabeth Shaw of Boston. Soon after the marriage they removed to New York, where they lived with a brother and several sisters of Melville. In the spring of 1849 *Mardi* appeared. In its preface Melville wrote: "Not long ago, having published two narratives of voyages in the Pacific, which, in many quarters, were received with incredulity, the thought occurred to me of indeed writing a romance of Polynesian adventure and publishing it as such, to see whether the fiction might not, possibly, be received for a verity." This is one, though only one, reason for the

fact that *Mardi* is one of the strangest books ever written. In the same year *Redburn* (based on Melville's first ocean voyage) was published, but, despite this rapidity of production and despite good sales of his books on both sides of the Atlantic, Melville was already finding his income insufficient for the support of his family, and in the fall of 1849 he went to England with the manuscript of his fifth book, hoping by his presence to make better financial arrangements with his English publisher. At the close of his outward voyage he wrote in his Journal: "This time to-morrow I shall be on land, and press English earth after the lapse of ten years—*then a sailor*, now H. M., author of *Pee-dee*, *Hulabaloo*, and *Pog-Dog*,"—a sufficient indication that Melville was not enchanted with authorship or, at any rate, with such authorship as the demands of his public and the state of his pocketbook were forcing upon him. Early in 1850 he returned to New York, and in this year *White-Jacket* (based on his experiences aboard the *United States*) was published. In the summer Melville and his family went to Pittsfield, and in the fall—Melville buying a house there, which he called Arrowhead—they began a period of residence in Pittsfield which lasted until 1863. During the first year of this period Hawthorne and his wife lived not far away, and the two men became friends. Differences of temperament must have kept them from fully understanding each other, but did not close the gates to a real, if somewhat curious, friendship. When Melville published *Moby Dick* in 1851, his greatest book, he dedicated it to Hawthorne. In 1852 *Pierre* was published, and was a failure. *Israel Potter* followed in 1855, and *The Piazza Tales* in 1856. In the fall of the same year Melville, for the sake of his health, which had become seriously impaired, sailed for England, and went thence to Constantinople and Palestine, returning in the late spring of 1857. In this year *The Confidence-Man* appeared, the last of Melville's prose to be published, though when he died he left a novel, *Billy Budd*, in manuscript, besides ten shorter prose pieces. He turned in following years to the writing of verse, producing one long poem, *Clarel* (published in 1876), based on his journey to Palestine, and a number of short poems, some of which were published in 1866, under the title *Battle-Pieces*, while others were privately printed in 1888 and 1891, and still others remained in manuscript until they were included, together with the hitherto unpublished prose, in the final volumes of the Standard Edition of Melville's *Works* issued by Messrs. Constable (London) in 1922-1924.

In the years from 1857 to 1860 Melville attempted to increase his income by lecturing, without marked success. In 1863 he purchased a house in New York and removed thither, where he remained until his death. He was appointed an inspector of customs in 1866, and held this post until 1 January, 1886, living in great retirement, almost forgotten by his countrymen. He died on 28 September, 1891. It is believed that, whatever view of life he finally arrived at, it was one which brought him a measure of quietude and serenity in his later years. But earlier in life his portion had been different. Then, both the manner of his life and the substance of his books had been born of a fierce, seemingly unquenchable, romantic desire to escape from the world of reality as he found it both within him and around him, conjoined with a belief that somewhere there awaited him a haven of perfect peace and happiness. "I am tormented with an everlasting itch for things remote. I love to sail forbidden seas, and land on barbarous coasts." (*Moby Dick*, Chap. I.) "And though essaying but a sportive sail, I was driven from my course by a blast resistless; and, ill-provided, young, and bowed to the brunt of things before my prime, still fly before the gale;—hard have I striven to keep stout heart. And if it harder be than e'er before to find new climes, when now our seas have oft been circled by ten thousand prows—much more the glory! . . . But fiery yearnings their own phantom-future make, and deem it present. So, if after all these fearful, fainting trances, the verdict be, the golden haven was not gained;—yet, in bold quest thereof better to sink in boundless deeps than float on vulgar shoals; and give me, ye gods, an utter wreck, if wreck I do." (*Mardi*, Chap. CLXIX.) It was believed until recent years, by most of those who remembered Melville at all, that utter wreck had indeed been his lot. But it was not so. He quivered for a time under the conviction of failure, and a failure in some sense he was, partly as a result of contemporary misunderstanding and neglect. But he burned not with an empty, unmeaning nostalgia. His sense of life was honest and profound. Thus he spoke through Father Mapple's sermon (*Moby Dick*, Chap. IX): "Woe to him who seeks to pour oil upon the waters when God has brewed them into a gale! Woe to him who seeks to please rather than to appall! Woe to him whose good name is more to him than goodness! Woe to him who, in this world, courts not dishonor! Woe to him who would not be true, even though to be false were salvation! . . . But oh! shipmates! on the starboard hand of every woe there is a sure delight . . . Delight is to him who, against the proud gods and commodores of this earth, ever stands forth his own inexorable self. . . . Delight—top-gallant delight—is to him who acknowledges no law or lord but the Lord his God, and is only a patriot to heaven." This was the deep, true core of Melville's romantic passion for escape. It was born of a fierce integrity—an integrity which has given enduring substance and worth to the workings of his powerful, astonishing imagination in *Moby Dick* and in *Bartleby* (one of *The Piazza Tales*), and perhaps also in *Mardi* and in cloudy *Pierre*.

MOBY DICK; OR, THE WHITE WHALE

CHAPTER XXXVI¹

THE QUARTER-DECK

(Enter Ahab: Then, all.)

It was not a great while after the affair of the pipe,² that one morning shortly after breakfast, Ahab, as was his wont, ascended the cabin gangway to the deck. There most sea captains usually walk at that hour, as country gentlemen, after the same meal, take a few turns in the garden.

Soon his steady, ivory stride was heard, as to and fro he paced his old rounds, upon planks so familiar to his tread, that they were all over dented, like geological stones, with the peculiar mark of his walk. Did you fixedly gaze, too, upon that ribbed and dented brow; there also, you would see still stranger footprints—the footprints of his one unsleeping, everpacing thought.

But on the occasion in question, those dents looked deeper, even as his nervous step that morning left a deeper mark. And so full of his thought was Ahab, that at every uniform turn that he made, now at the mainmast and now at the binnacle, you could almost see that thought turn in him as he turned, and pace in him as he paced; so completely possessing him, indeed, that it all but seemed the inward mold of every outer movement.

"D'ye mark him, Flask?" whispered Stubb; "the chick that's in him pecks the shell. 'Twill soon be out."

¹ The preceding chapters introduce the reader to the narrator of the tale, who calls himself Ishmael, and tell of his going to Nantucket, in company with Queequeg the harpooneer, a native of the South Sea Islands whom he had met in New Bedford, of their joining the crew of Captain Ahab's ship, the *Pequod*, and of the beginning of the *Pequod's* long voyage. As is explained in Chap. XXXV, Ahab had lost one leg on an earlier voyage, and he wore strapped to the stump a "barbaric white leg" which had "been fashioned from the polished bone of the sperm whale's jaw." This leg came to a pointed end, which accounts for what is said in the first sentence of the second paragraph above.

² Chap. XXX tells how Ahab resolved to smoke no more, and tossed his pipe into the sea. He said: "What business have I with this pipe? This thing that is meant for serenity, to send up mild white vapors among mild white hairs, not among torn iron-gray locks like mine."

The hours wore on;—Ahab now shut up within his cabin; anon, pacing the deck, with the same intense bigotry of purpose in his aspect.

It drew near the close of day. Suddenly he came to a halt by the bulwarks, and inserting his bone leg into the auger-hole there, and with one hand grasping a shroud, he ordered Starbuck to send everybody aft.

"Sir!" said the mate, astonished at an order seldom or never given on shipboard except in some extraordinary case.

"Send everybody aft," repeated Ahab. "Mastheads, there! come down!"

When the entire ship's company were assembled, and with curious and not wholly unapprehensive faces, were eyeing him, for he looked not unlike the weather horizon when a storm is coming up, Ahab, after rapidly glancing over the bulwarks, and then darting his eyes among the crew, started from his standpoint; and as though not a soul were nigh him resumed his heavy turns upon the deck. With bent head and half-slouched hat he continued to pace, unmindful of the wondering whispering among the men; till Stubb cautiously whispered to Flask, that Ahab must have summoned them there for the purpose of witnessing a pedestrian feat. But this did not last long. Vehemently pausing, he cried—

"What do ye do when ye see a whale, men?"

"Sing out for him!" was the impulsive rejoinder from a score of clubbed voices.

"Good!" cried Ahab, with a wild approval in his tones; observing the hearty animation into which his unexpected question had so magnetically thrown them.

"And what do ye next, men?"

"Lower away, and after him!"

"And what tune is it ye pull to, men?"

"A dead whale or a stove boat!"

More and more strangely and fiercely glad and approving grew the countenance of the old man at every shout; while the mariners began to gaze curiously at each other, as if marveling how it was that they themselves became so excited at such seemingly purposeless questions.

But, they were all eagerness again, as Ahab, now half-revolving in his pivot-hole, with one hand reaching high up a shroud,

and tightly, almost convulsively grasping it, addressed them thus—

"All ye mastheaders have before now heard me give orders about a white whale. Look ye! d'ye see this Spanish ounce of gold?"—holding up a broad bright coin to the sun—"it is a sixteen dollar piece, men. D'ye see it? Mr. Starbuck, hand me yon top-maul."

While the mate was getting the hammer, Ahab, without speaking, was slowly rubbing the gold piece against the skirts of his jacket, as if to heighten its luster, and without using any words was meanwhile lowly humming to himself, producing a sound so strangely muffled and inarticulate that it seemed the mechanical humming of the wheels of his vitality in him.

Receiving the top-maul from Starbuck, he advanced towards the mainmast with the hammer uplifted in one hand, exhibiting the gold with the other, and with a high raised voice exclaiming: "Whosoever of ye raises me a white-headed whale with a wrinkled brow and a crooked jaw; whosoever of ye raises me that white-headed whale, with three holes punctured in his starboard fluke—look ye, whosoever of ye raises me that same white whale, he shall have this gold ounce, my boys!"

"Huzza! huzza!" cried the seamen, as with swinging tarpaulins they hailed the act of nailing the gold to the mast.

"It's a white whale, I say," resumed Ahab, as he threw down the top-maul; "a white whale. Skin your eyes for him, men; look sharp for white water; if ye see but a bubble, sing out."

All this while Tashtego, Daggoo, and Queequeg had looked on with even more intense interest and surprise than the rest, and at the mention of the wrinkled brow and crooked jaw, they had started as if each was separately touched by some specific recollection.

"Captain Ahab," said Tashtego, "that white whale must be the same that some call Moby Dick."

"Moby Dick?" shouted Ahab. "Do ye know the white whale then, Tash?"

"Does he fan-tail a little curious, sir, before he goes down?" said the Gay-Header deliberately.

"And has he a curious spout, too," said

Daggoo, "very bushy, even for a parmacetty, and mighty quick, Captain Ahab?"

"And he have one, two, tree—oh! good many iron in him hide, too, Captain," cried Queequeg disjointedly, "all twisketee betwisk, like him—him—" faltering hard for a word, and screwing his hand round and round as though uncorking a bottle—"like him—him——"

"Corkscrew!" cried Ahab; "aye, Queequeg, the harpoons lie all twisted and wrenched in him; aye, Daggoo, his spout is a big one, like a whole shock of wheat, and white as a pile of our Nantucket wool after the great annual sheep-shearing; aye, Tashtego, and he fan-tails like a split jib in a squall. Death and devils! men, it is Moby Dick ye have seen—Moby Dick—Moby Dick!"

"Captain Ahab," said Starbuck, who, with Stubb and Flask, had thus far been eyeing his superior with increasing surprise, but at last seemed struck with a thought which somewhat explained all the wonder. "Captain Ahab, I have heard of Moby Dick—but it was not Moby Dick that took off thy leg?"

"Who told thee that?" cried Ahab; then pausing, "Aye, Starbuck; aye, my hearties all round; it was Moby Dick that dismasted me; Moby Dick that brought me to this dead stump I stand on now. Aye, aye," he shouted with a terrific, loud, animal sob, like that of a heart-stricken moose; "Aye, aye! it was that accursed white whale that razed me; made a poor pegging lubber of me for ever and a day!" Then tossing both arms, with measureless imprecations he shouted out: "Aye, aye! and I'll chase him round Good Hope, and round the Horn, and round the Norway Maelstrom, and round perdition's flames before I give him up. And this is what ye have shipped for, men! to chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls fin out. What say ye, men, will ye splice hands on it, now? I think ye do look brave."

"Aye, aye!" shouted the harpooneers and seamen, running closer to the excited old man: "a sharp eye for the White Whale; a sharp lance for Moby Dick!"

"God bless ye," he seemed to half sob and half shout. "God bless ye, men. Steward!

go draw the great measure of grog. But what's this long face about, Mr. Starbuck? wilt thou not chase the white whale? art not game for Moby Dick?"

"I am game for his crooked jaw, and for the jaws of Death too, Captain Ahab, if it fairly comes in the way of the business we follow; but I came here to hunt whales, not my commander's vengeance. How many barrels will thy vengeance yield thee even if thou gettest it, Captain Ahab? it will not fetch thee much in our Nantucket market."

"Nantucket market! Hoot! But come closer, Starbuck; thou requirest a little lower layer. If money's to be the measurer, man, and the accountants have computed their great counting-house the globe, by girdling it with guineas, one to every three parts of an inch; then, let me tell thee, that my vengeance will fetch a great premium *here!*"

"He smites his chest," whispered Stubb, "what's that for? methinks it rings most vast, but hollow."

"Vengeance on a dumb brute!" cried Starbuck, "that simply smote thee from blindest instinct! Madness! To be enraged with a dumb thing, Captain Ahab, seems blasphemous."

"Hark ye yet again,—the little lower layer. All visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event—in the living act, the undoubted deed—there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the moldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner reach outside except by thrusting through the wall? To me, the white whale is that wall, shoved near to me. Sometimes I think there's naught beyond. But 'tis enough. He tasks me; he heaps me; I see in him outrageous strength, with an inscrutable malice sinewing it. That inscrutable thing is chiefly what I hate; and be the white whale agent, or be the white whale principal, I will wreak that hate upon him. Talk not to me of blasphemy, man; I'd strike the sun if it insulted me. For could the sun do that, then could I do the other; since there is ever a sort of fair play herein, jealousy presiding over all creations. But not my master, man, is even that fair

play. Who's over me? Truth hath no confines. Take off thine eye! more intolerable than fiends' glarings is a doltish stare! So, so; thou reddenest and palest; my heat has melted thee to anger-glow. But look ye, Starbuck, what is said in heat, that thing unsays itself. There are men from whom warm words are small indignity. I meant not to incense thee. Let it go. Look! see yonder Turkish cheeks of spotted tawn—living, breathing pictures painted by the sun. The pagan leopards—the unrecking and unworshipping things, that live; and seek, and give no reasons for the torrid life they feel! The crew, man, the crew! Are they not one and all with Ahab, in this matter of the whale? See Stubb! he laughs! See yonder Chilian! he snorts to think of it. Stand up amid the general hurricane, thy one tossed sapling cannot, Starbuck! And what is it? Reckon it. 'Tis but to help strike a fin; no wondrous feat for Starbuck. What is it more? From this one poor hunt, then, the best lance out of all Nantucket, surely he will not hang back, when every foremost hand has clutched a whetstone? Ah! constrainings seize thee; I see! the billow lifts thee! Speak, but speak!—Aye, aye! thy silence, then—*that* voices thee. (*Aside*) Something shot from my dilated nostrils, he has inhaled it in his lungs. Starbuck now is mine; cannot oppose me now, without rebellion."

"God keep me!—keep us all!" murmured Starbuck lowly.

But in his joy at the enchanted, tacit acquiescence of the mate, Ahab did not hear his foreboding invocation; nor yet the low laugh from the hold; nor yet the presaging vibrations of the winds in the cordage; nor yet the hollow flap of the sails against the masts, as for a moment their hearts sank in. For again Starbuck's downcast eyes lighted up with the stubbornness of life; the subterranean laugh died away; the winds blew on; the sails filled out; the ship heaved and rolled as before. Ah, ye admonitions and warnings! why stay ye not when ye come? But rather are ye predictions than warnings, ye shadows! Yet not so much predictions from without, as verifications of the foregoing things within. For with little external to constrain us, the innermost necessities in our being, these still drive us on.

"The measure! the measure!" cried Ahab.

Receiving the brimming pewter, and turning to the harpooneers, he ordered them to produce their weapons. Then ranging them before him near the capstan, with their harpoons in their hands, while his three mates stood at his side with their lances, and the rest of the ship's company formed a circle round the group; he stood for an instant searchingly eyeing every man of his crew. But those wild eyes met his, as the bloodshot eyes of the prairie wolves meet the eye of their leader, ere he rushes on at their head in the trail of the bison; but, alas! only to fall into the hidden snare of the Indian.

"Drink and pass!" he cried, handing the heavy charged flagon to the nearest seaman. "The crew alone now drink. Round with it, round! Short draughts—long swallows, men; 'tis hot as Satan's hoof. So, so; it goes round excellently. It spiralizes in ye; forks out at the serpent-snapping eye. Well done; almost drained. That way it went, this way it comes. Hand it me—here's a hollow! Men, ye seem the years; so brimming life is gulped and gone. Steward, refill!"

"Attend now, my braves. I have mustered ye all round this capstan; and ye mates, flank me with your lances; and ye harpooneers, stand there with your irons; and ye, stout mariners, ring me in, that I may in some sort revive a noble custom of my fishermen fathers before me. O men, you will yet see that—Ha! boy, come back? bad pennies come not sooner. Hand it me. Why, now, this pewter had run brimming again, wert not thou St. Vitus' imp—away, thou ague!"

"Advance, ye mates! Cross your lances full before me. Well done! Let me touch the axis." So saying, with extended arm, he grasped the three level, radiating lances at their crossed center; while so doing, suddenly and nervously twitched them; meanwhile, glancing intently from Starbuck to Stubb; from Stubb to Flask. It seemed as though, by some nameless, interior volition, he would fain have shocked into them the same fiery emotion accumulated within the Leyden jar of his own magnetic life. The

three mates quailed before his strong, sustained, and mystic aspect. Stubb and Flask looked sideways from him; the honest eye of Starbuck fell downright.

"In vain!" cried Ahab; "but, maybe, 'tis well. For did ye three but once take the full-forced shock, then mine own electric thing, *that* had perhaps expired from out me. Perchance, too, it would have dropped ye dead. Perchance ye need it not. Down lances! And now, ye mates, I do appoint ye three cupbearers to my three pagan kinsmen there—yon three most honorable gentlemen and noblemen, my valiant harpooneers. Disdain the task? What, when the great pope washes the feet of beggars, using his tiara for ewer? Oh, my sweet cardinals! your own condescension, *that* shall bend ye to it. I do not order ye; ye will it. Cut your seizings and draw the poles, ye harpooneers!"

Silently obeying the order, the three harpooneers now stood with the detached iron part of their harpoons, some three feet long, held, barbs up, before him.

"Stab me not with that keen steel! Cant them; cant them over! know ye not the goblet end? Turn up the socket! So; so, now, ye cupbearers, advance. The irons! take them; hold them while I fill!" Forthwith, slowly going from one officer to the other, he brimmed the harpoon sockets with the fiery waters from the pewter.

"Now, three to three, ye stand. Commend the murderous chalices! Bestow them, ye who are now made parties to this indissoluble league. Ha! Starbuck! but the deed is done! Yon ratifying sun now waits to sit upon it. Drink! ye harpooneers! drink and swear, ye men that man the deathful whaleboat's bow—Death to Moby Dick! God hunt us all, if we do not hunt Moby Dick to his death!"

The long, barbed steel goblets were lifted; and to cries and maledictions against the white whale, the spirits were simultaneously quaffed down with a hiss. Starbuck paled, and turned, and shivered. Once more, and finally, the replenished pewter went the rounds among the frantic crew; when, waving his free hand to them, they all dispersed; and Ahab retired within his cabin.

CHAPTER XXXVII

SUNSET

(The cabin; by the stern windows. Ahab sitting alone, and gazing out.)

I LEAVE a white and turbid wake; pale waters, paler cheeks, where'er I sail. The envious billows sidelong swell to whelm my track; let them; but first I pass.

Yonder, by the ever-brimming goblet's rim, the warm waves blush like wine. The gold brow plumbs the blue. The diver sun—slow dived from noon,—goes down; my soul mounts up! she wearies with her endless hill. Is, then, the crown too heavy that I wear? this Iron Crown of Lombardy. Yet is it bright with many a gem; I, the wearer, see not its far flashings; but darkly feel that I wear that, that dazzlingly confounds. 'Tis iron—that I know—not gold. 'Tis split, too—that I feel; the jagged edge galls me so, my brain seems to beat against the solid metal; aye, steel skull, mine; the sort that needs no helmet in the most brain-battering fight!

Dry heat upon my brow? Oh! time was, when as the sunrise nobly spurred me, so the sunset soothed. No more. This lovely light, it lights not me; all loveliness is anguish to me, since I can ne'er enjoy. Gifted with the high perception, I lack the low, enjoying power; damned, most subtly and most malignantly! damned in the midst of Paradise! Good-night—good-night! *(Waving his hand, he moves from the window.)*

'Twas not so hard a task. I thought to find one stubborn, at the least; but my one cogged circle fits into all their various wheels, and they revolve. Or, if you will, like so many ant-hills of powder, they all stand before me; and I their match. Oh, hard! that to fire others, the match itself must needs be wasting! What I've dared, I've willed; and what I've willed, I'll do! They think me mad—Starbuck does; but I'm demoniac, I am madness maddened! That wild madness that's only calm to comprehend itself! The prophecy was that I should be dismembered; and—Aye! I lost this leg. I now prophesy that I will dismember my dismemberer. Now, then, be the prophet and the fulfiller one. That's more than ye,

ye great gods, ever were. I laugh and hoot at ye, ye cricket players, ye pugilists, ye deaf Burkes and blinded Bendigoes! I will not say as schoolboys do to bullies,—Take some one of your own size; don't pommel *me*! No, ye've knocked me down, and I am up again, but *ye* have run and hidden. Come forth from behind your cotton bags! I have no long gun to reach ye. Come, Ahab's compliments to ye; come and see if you can swerve me. Swerve me? ye cannot swerve me, else ye swerve yourselves! man has ye there. Swerve me? The path to my fixed purpose is laid with iron rails, whereon my soul is grooved to run. Over unsounded gorges, through the rifled hearts of mountains, under torrents' beds, unerringly I rush! Naught's an obstacle, naught's an angle to the iron way!

CHAPTER XXXVIII

DUSK

(By the mainmast; Starbuck leaning against it.)

My soul is more than matched; she's overmanned; and by a madman! Insufferable sting, that sanity should ground arms on such a field! But he drilled deep down, and blasted all my reason out of me! I think I see his impious end; but feel that I must help him to it. Will I, nill I, the ineffable thing has tied me to him; tows me with a cable I have no knife to cut. Horrible old man! Who's over him, he cries;—aye, he would be a democrat to all above; look, how he lords it over all below! Oh! I plainly see my miserable office,—to obey, rebelling; and worse yet, to hate with touch of pity! For in his eyes I read some lurid woe would shrivel me up, had I it. Yet is there hope. Time and tide flow wide. The hated whale has the round, watery world to swim in, as the small goldfish has its glassy globe. His heaven-insulting purpose, God may wedge aside. I would up-heart, were it not like lead. But my whole clock's run down; my heart the all-controlling weight, I have no key to lift again.

(A burst of revelry from the fore-castle.)

Oh, God! to sail with such a heathen crew that have small touch of human mothers in

them! Whelped somewhere by the sharkish sea. The white whale is their demogorgon. Hark! the infernal orgies! that revelry is forward! mark the unfaltering silence aft! Methinks it pictures life. Foremost through the sparkling sea shoots on the gay, embattled, bantering bow, but only to drag dark Ahab after it, where he broods within his sternward cabin, builded over the dead water of the wake, and further on, hunted by its wolfish gurglings. The long howl thrills me through! Peace! ye revelers, and set the watch! Oh, life! 'tis in an hour like this, with soul beat down and held to knowledge,—as wild, untutored things are forced to feel—Oh, life! 'tis now that I do feel the latent horror in thee! but 'tis not I! that horror's out of me! and with the soft feeling of the human in me, yet will I try to fight ye, ye grim, phantom futures! Stand by me, hold me, bind me, O ye blessed influences!

CHAPTER XXXIX

FIRST NIGHT-WATCH

FORETOP

(Stubb solus, and mending a brace.)

HA! ha! ha! ha! hem! clear my throat!—I've been thinking over it ever since, and that ha-ha's the final consequence. Why so? Because a laugh's the wisest, easiest answer to all that's queer; and come what will, one comfort's always left—that unfailing comfort is, it's all predestinated. I heard not all his talk with Starbuck; but to my poor eye Starbuck then looked something as I the other evening felt. Be sure the old Mogul has fixed him, too. I twigged it, knew it; had had the gift, might readily have prophesied it—for when I clapped my eye upon his skull I saw it. Well, Stubb, *wise* Stubb—that's my title—well, Stubb, what of it, Stubb? Here's a carcase. I know not all that may be coming, but be it what it will, I'll go to it laughing. Such a waggish leering as lurks in all your horrors! I feel funny. Fa, la, lirra, skirra! What's my juicy little pear at home doing now? Crying its eyes out?—Giving a party to the last arrived harpooneers, I dare say, gay as a frigate's pennant, and so am I—fa la! lirra, skirra! Oh—

We'll drink to-night with hearts as light,
To love, as gay and fleeting
As bubbles that swim, on the beaker's brim,
And break on the lips while meeting.

A brave stave that—who calls? Mr. Starbuck? Aye, aye, sir—*(Aside)* he's my superior, he has his too, if I'm not mistaken. —Aye, aye, sir, just through with this job—coming.

CHAPTER XL

MIDNIGHT, FORECASTLE

HARPOONEERS AND SAILORS

(Foresail rises and discovers the watch standing, lounging, leaning, and lying in various attitudes, all singing in chorus.)

Farewell and adieu to you, Spanish ladies!
Farewell and adieu to you, ladies of Spain!
Our captain's commanded.—

FIRST NANTUCKET SAILOR

Oh, boys, don't be sentimental; it's bad for the digestion! Take a tonic, follow me!
(Sings, and all follow.)

Our captain stood upon the deck,
A spy-glass in his hand,
A viewing of those gallant whales
That blew at every strand.
Oh, your tubs in your boats, my boys,
And by your braces stand,
And we'll have one of those fine whales,
Hand, boys, over hand!

So, be cheery, my lads! may your hearts never fail!
While the bold harpooneer is striking the whale!

MATE'S VOICE FROM THE QUARTER-DECK

Eight bells there, forward!

SECOND NANTUCKET SAILOR

Avast the chorus! Eight bells there! d'ye hear, bell-boy? Strike the bell eight, thou Pip! thou blackling! and let me call the watch. I've the sort of mouth for that—the hogshead mouth. So, so *(thrusts his head down the scuttle)*, Star—bo-l-e-e-n-s, a-h-o-y! Eight bells there below! Tumble up!

DUTCH SAILOR

Grand snoozing to-night, maty; fat night for that. I mark this in our old Mogul's wine; it's quite as deadening to some as

filliping to others. We sing; they sleep—ay, lie down there, like ground-tier butts. At 'em again! There, take this copper-pump, and hail 'em through it. Tell 'em to avast dreaming of their lasses. Tell 'em it's the resurrection; they must kiss their last, and come to judgment. That's the way—*that's* it; thy throat ain't spoiled with eating Amsterdam butter.

FRENCH SAILOR

Hist, boys! let's have a jig or two before we ride to anchor in Blanket Bay. What say ye? There comes the other watch. Stand by all legs! Pip! little Pip! hurrah with your tambourine!

PIP (*sulky and sleepy*)

Don't know where it is.

FRENCH SAILOR

Beat thy belly, then, and wag thy ears. Jig it, men, I say; merry's the word; hurrah! Damn me, won't you dance? Form, now, Indian file, and gallop into the double shuffle! Throw yourselves! Legs! legs!

ICELAND SAILOR

I don't like your floor, maty; it's too springy to my taste. I'm used to ice-floors. I'm sorry to throw cold water on the subject; but excuse me.

MALTESE SAILOR

Me too; where's your girls? Who but a fool would take his left hand by his right, and say to himself, how d'ye do? Partners! I must have partners!

SICILIAN SAILOR

Aye; girls and a green!—then I'll hop with ye, yea, turn grasshopper!

LONG-ISLAND SAILOR

Well, well, ye sulkies, there's plenty more of us. Hoe corn when you may, say I. All legs go to harvest soon. Ah! here comes the music; now for it!

AZORE SAILOR

(*ascending, and pitching the tambourine up the scuttle*)

Here you are, Pip; and there's the wind-lass-bits; up you mount! Now, boys!

(*The half of them dance to the tambourine; some go below; some sleep or lie among the coils of rigging. Oaths a-plenty.*)

AZORE SAILOR (*dancing*)

Go it, Pip! Bang it, bell-boy! Rig it, dig it, stig it, quig it, bell-boy! Make fire-flies; break the jinglers!

PIP

Jinglers, you say?—there goes another, dropped off; I pound it so.

CHINA SAILOR

Rattle thy teeth, then, and pound away; make a pagoda of thyself.

FRENCH SAILOR

Merry-mad! Hold up thy hoop, Pip, till I jump through it! Split jibs! tear yourselves!

TASHTEGO (*quietly smoking*)

That's a white man; he calls that fun: humph! I save my sweat.

OLD MANX SAILOR

I wonder whether those jolly lads bethink them of what they are dancing over. I'll dance over your grave, I will—that's the bitterest threat of your night-women, that beat head-winds round corners. O Christ! to think of the green navies and the green-skulled crews! Well, well; belike the whole world's a ball, as you scholars have it; and so 'tis right to make one ballroom of it. Dance on, lads, you're young; I was once.

THIRD NANTUCKET SAILOR

Spell oh!—whew! this is worse than pulling after whales in a calm—give us a whiff, Tash.

(*They cease dancing, and gather in clusters. Meantime the sky darkens—the wind rises.*)

LASCAR SAILOR

By Brahma! boys, it'll be douse sail soon. The sky-born, high-tide Ganges turned to wind! Thou showest thy black brow, Seeva!

MALTESE SAILOR

(*reclining and shaking his cap*)

It's the waves—the snow's caps turn to jig it now. They'll shake their tassels soon.

Now would all the waves were women, then I'd go drown, and chassee with them evermore! There's naught so sweet on earth—heaven may not match it!—as those swift glances of warm, wild bosoms in the dance, when the over-arboring arms hide such ripe, bursting grapes.

SICILIAN SAILOR (*reclining*)

Tell me not of it! Hark ye, lad—fleet interlacings of the limbs—lithe swayings—coyings—flutterings! lip! heart! hip! all graze: unceasing touch and go! not taste, observe ye, else come satiety. Eh, Pagan? (*Nudging.*)

TAHITAN SAILOR (*reclining on a mat*)

Hail, holy nakedness of our dancing girls!—the Heeva-Heeva! Ah! low-veiled, high-palmed Tahiti! I still rest me on thy mat, but the soft soil has slid! I saw thee woven in the wood, my mat! green the first day I brought ye thence; now worn and wilted quite. Ah me!—not thou nor I can bear the change! How then, if so be transplanted to yon sky? Hear I the roaring streams from Pirohitee's peak of spears, when they leap down the crags and drown the villages?—The blast! the blast! Up, spine, and meet it! (*Leaps to his feet.*)

PORTUGUESE SAILOR

How the sea rolls swashing 'gainst the side! Stand by for reefing, hearties! the winds are just crossing swords, pell-mell they'll go lunging presently.

DANISH SAILOR

Crack, crack, old ship! so long as thou crackest, thou holdest! Well done! The mate there holds ye to it stiffly. He's no more afraid than the isle fort at Cattegat, put there to fight the Baltic with storm-lashed guns, on which the sea-salt cakes!

FOURTH NANTUCKET SAILOR

He has his orders, mind ye that. I heard old Ahab tell him he must always kill a squall, something as they burst a water-spout with a pistol—fire your ship right into it!

ENGLISH SAILOR

Blood! but that old man's a grand old cove! We are the lads to hunt him up his whale!

ALL

Aye! aye!

OLD MANX SAILOR

How the three pines shake! Pines are the hardest sort of tree to live when shifted to any other soil, and here there's none but the crew's cursed clay. Steady, helmsman! steady. This is the sort of weather when brave hearts snap ashore, and keeled hulls split at sea. Our captain has his birthmark; look yonder, boys, there's another in the sky—lurid-like, ye see, all else pitch black.

DAGGOO

What of that? Who's afraid of black's afraid of me! I'm quarried out of it!

SPANISH SAILOR

(*Aside*) He wants to bully, ah!—the old grudge makes me touchy. (*Advancing*) Aye, harpooneer, thy race is the undeniable dark side of mankind—devilish dark at that. No offense.

DAGGOO (*grimly*)

None.

ST. JAGO'S SAILOR

That Spaniard's mad or drunk. But that can't be, or else in his one case our old Mogul's fire-waters are somewhat long in working.

FIFTH NANTUCKET SAILOR

What's that I saw—lightning? Yes.

SPANISH SAILOR

No; Daggo showing his teeth.

DAGGOO (*springing*)

Swallow thine, manikin! White skin, white liver!

SPANISH SAILOR (*meeting him*)

Knife thee heartily! big frame, small spirit!

ALL

A row! a row! a row!

TASHTEGO (*with a whiff*)

A row a'low, and a row aloft—gods and men—both brawlers! Humph!

BELFAST SAILOR

A row! arrah, a row! The Virgin be blessed, a row! Plunge in with ye!

ENGLISH SAILOR

Fair play! Snatch the Spaniard's knife! A ring, a ring!

OLD MANX SAILOR

Ready formed. There! the ringed horizon. In that ring Cain struck Abel. Sweet work, right work! No? Why then, God, mad'st thou the ring?

MATE'S VOICE FROM THE QUARTER-DECK

Hands by the halyards! in top-gallant sails! Stand by to reef topsails!

ALL

The squall! the squall! jump, my jollies! (*They scatter.*)

PIP

(*shrinking under the windlass*)

Jollies? Lord help such jollies! Crish, crash! there goes the jib-stay! Blang-whang! God! Duck lower, Pip, here comes the royal yard! It's worse than being in the whirled woods, the last day of the year! Who'd go climbing after chestnuts now? But there they go, all cursing, and here I don't. Fine prospects to 'em; they're on the road to heaven. Hold on hard! Jimmini, what a squall! But those chaps there are worse yet—they are your white squalls, they. White squalls? white whale, shirr! shirr! Here have I heard all their chat just now, and the white whale—shirr! shirr!—but spoken of once! and only this evening—it makes me jingle all over like my tambourine—that anaconda of an old man swore 'em in to hunt him! Oh, thou big white God aloft there somewhere in yon darkness, have mercy on this small black boy down here; preserve him from all men that have no bowels to feel fear!

CHAPTER XLI

MOBY DICK

I, ISHMAEL, was one of that crew; my shouts had gone up with the rest; my oath had been welded with theirs; and stronger I shouted, and more did I hammer and clinch my oath, because of the dread in my soul. A wild, mystical, sympathetical feeling was in me; Ahab's quenchless feud seemed mine. With greedy ears I learned the history of that murderous monster against whom I and all the others had taken our oaths of violence and revenge.

For some time past, though at intervals only, the unaccompanied, secluded White Whale had haunted those uncivilized seas mostly frequented by the Sperm Whale fishermen. But not all of them knew of his existence; only a few of them, comparatively, had knowingly seen him; while the number who as yet had actually and knowingly given battle to him, was small indeed. For, owing to the large number of whale-cruisers; the disorderly way they were sprinkled over the entire watery circumference, many of them adventurously pushing their quest along solitary latitudes, so as seldom or never for a whole twelvemonth or more on a stretch, to encounter a single news-telling sail of any sort; the inordinate length of each separate voyage; the irregularity of the times of sailing from home; all these, with other circumstances, direct and indirect, long obstructed the spread through the whole world-wide whaling fleet of the special individualizing tidings concerning Moby Dick. It was hardly to be doubted, that several vessels reported to have encountered, at such or such a time, or on such or such a meridian, a Sperm Whale of uncommon magnitude and malignity, which whale, after doing great mischief to his assailants, had completely escaped them; to some minds it was not an unfair presumption, I say, that the whale in question must have been no other than Moby Dick. Yet as of late the Sperm Whale fishery had been marked by various and not unfrequent instances of great ferocity, cunning, and malice in the monster attacked; therefore it was, that those who by accident ignorantly gave battle to Moby Dick; such hunters, perhaps, for the most part, were content to

ascribe the peculiar terror he bred, more, as it were, to the perils of the Sperm Whale fishery at large, than to the individual cause. In that way, mostly, the disastrous encounter between Ahab and the whale had hitherto been popularly regarded.

And as for those who, previously hearing of the White Whale, by chance caught sight of him; in the beginning of the thing they had every one of them, almost, as boldly and fearlessly lowered for him, as for any other whale of that species. But at length, such calamities did ensue in these assaults—not restricted to sprained wrists and ankles, broken limbs, or devouring amputations—but fatal to the last degree of fatality; those repeated disastrous repulses, all accumulating and piling their terrors upon Moby Dick; those things had gone far to shake the fortitude of many brave hunters, to whom the story of the White Whale had eventually come.

Nor did wild rumors of all sorts fail to exaggerate, and still the more horrify the true histories of these deadly encounters. For not only do fabulous rumors naturally grow out of the very body of all surprising terrible events,—as the smitten tree gives birth to its fungi; but, in maritime life, far more than in that of *terra firma*, wild rumors abound, wherever there is any adequate reality for them to cling to. And as the sea surpasses the land in this matter, so the whale-fishery surpasses every other sort of maritime life, in the wonderfulness and fearfulness of the rumors which sometimes circulate there. For not only are whalers as a body unexempt from that ignorance and superstitiousness hereditary to all sailors; but of all sailors, they are by all odds the most directly brought into contact with whatever is appallingly astonishing in the sea; face to face they not only eye its greatest marvels, but, hand to jaw, give battle to them. Alone, in such remotest waters, that though you sailed a thousand miles, and passed a thousand shores, you would not come to any chiseled hearthstone, or aught hospitable beneath that part of the sun; in such latitudes and longitudes, pursuing too such a calling as he does, the whaler is wrapped by influences all tending to make his fancy pregnant with many a mighty birth.

No wonder, then, that ever gathering volume from the mere transit over the wildest watery spaces, the outblown rumors of the White Whale did in the end incorporate with themselves all manner of morbid hints, and half-formed foetal suggestions of supernatural agencies, which eventually invested Moby Dick with new terrors unborrowed from anything that visibly appears. So that in many cases such a panic did he finally strike, that few who by those rumors, at least, had heard of the White Whale, few of those hunters were willing to encounter the perils of his jaw.

But there were still other and more vital practical influences at work. Not even at the present day has the original prestige of the Sperm Whale, as fearfully distinguished from all other species of the leviathan, died out of the minds of the whalers as a body. There are those this day among them, who, though intelligent and courageous enough in offering battle to the Greenland or Right Whale, would perhaps—either from professional inexperience, or incompetency, or timidity, decline a contest with the Sperm Whale. At any rate, there are plenty of whalers, especially among those whaling nations not sailing under the American flag, who have never hostilely encountered the Sperm Whale, but whose sole knowledge of the leviathan is restricted to the ignoble monster primitively pursued in the North. Seated on their hatches, these men will harken with a childish fireside interest and awe, to the wild, strange tales of Southern whaling. Nor is the pre-eminent tremendousness of the great Sperm Whale anywhere more feelingly comprehended, than on board of those prows which stem him.

And as if the now tested reality of his might had in former legendary times thrown its shadow before it; we find some book naturalists—Olassen and Povelson—declaring the Sperm Whale not only to be a consternation to every other creature in the sea, but also to be so incredibly ferocious as continually to be athirst for human blood. Nor even down to so late a time as Cuvier's, were these or almost similar impressions effaced. For in his Natural History, the Baron himself affirms that at sight of the Sperm Whale, all fish (sharks included) are "struck with the most lively terrors," and

"often in the precipitancy of their flight dash themselves against the rocks with such violence as to cause instantaneous death." And however the general experiences in the fishery may amend such reports as these; yet in their full terribleness, even to the blood-thirsty item of Povelson, the superstitious belief in them is, in some vicissitudes of their vocation, revived in the minds of the hunters.

So that overawed by the rumors and portents concerning him, not a few of the fishermen recalled, in reference to Moby Dick, the earlier days of the Sperm Whale fishery, when it was oftentimes hard to induce long practiced Right whalers to embark in the perils of this new and daring warfare; such men protesting that although other leviathans might be hopefully pursued, yet to chase and point lances at such an apparition as the Sperm Whale was not for mortal man—that to attempt it, would be inevitably to be torn into a quick eternity. On this head, there are some remarkable documents that may be consulted.

Nevertheless, some there were, who even in the face of these things were ready to give chase to Moby Dick; and a still greater number who, chancing only to hear of him distantly and vaguely, without the specific details of any certain calamity, and without superstitious accompaniments, were sufficiently hardy not to flee from the battle if offered.

One of the wild suggestions referred to, as at last coming to be linked with the White Whale in the minds of the superstitiously inclined, was the unearthly conceit that Moby Dick was ubiquitous; that he had actually been encountered in opposite latitudes at one and the same instant of time.

Nor, credulous as such minds must have been, was this conceit altogether without some faint show of superstitious probability. For as the secrets of the currents in the seas have never yet been divulged, even to the most erudite research; so the hidden ways of the Sperm Whale when beneath the surface remain, in great part, unaccountable to his pursuers; and from time to time have originated the most curious and contradictory speculations regarding them, especially concerning the mystic modes whereby, after sounding to a great depth, he

transports himself with such vast swiftness to the most widely distant points.

It is a thing well known to both American and English whale ships, and as well a thing placed upon authoritative record years ago by Scoresby, that some whales have been captured far north in the Pacific, in whose bodies have been found the barbs of harpoons darted in the Greenland seas. Nor is it to be gainsaid, that in some of these instances it has been declared that the interval of time between the two assaults could not have exceeded very many days. Hence, by inference, it has been believed by some whalers, that the Nor'-West Passage, so long a problem to man, was never a problem to the whale. So that here, in the real living experience of living men, the prodigies related in old times of the inland Strello mountain in Portugal (near whose top there was said to be a lake in which the wrecks of ships floated up to the surface); and that still more wonderful story of the Arethusa fountain near Syracuse (whose waters were believed to have come from the Holy Land by an underground passage); these fabulous narrations are almost fully equaled by the realities of the whaleman.

Forced into familiarity, then, with such prodigies as these; and knowing that after repeated, intrepid assaults, the White Whale had escaped alive; it cannot be much matter of surprise that some whalers should go still further in their superstitions; declaring Moby Dick not only ubiquitous, but immortal (for immortality is but ubiquity in time); that though groves of spears should be planted in his flanks, he would still swim away unharmed; or if indeed he should ever be made to spout thick blood, such a sight would be but a ghastly deception; for again in unensanguined billows hundred of leagues away, his unsullied jet would once more be seen.

But even stripped of these supernatural surmisings, there was enough in the earthly make and incontestable character of the monster to strike the imagination with unwonted power. For, it was not so much his uncommon bulk that so much distinguished him from other sperm whales, but, as was elsewhere thrown out—a peculiar snow-white wrinkled forehead, and a high, pyramidal white hump. These were his prominent

features; the tokens whereby, even in the limitless, uncharted seas, he revealed his identity, at a long distance, to those who knew him.

The rest of his body was so streaked, and spotted, and marbled with the same shrouded hue, that, in the end, he had gained his distinctive appellation of the White Whale; a name, indeed, literally justified by his vivid aspect, when seen gliding at high noon through a dark blue sea, leaving a milky-way wake of creamy foam, all spangled with golden gleamings. Nor was it his unwonted magnitude, nor his remarkable hue, nor yet his deformed lower jaw, that so much invested the whale with natural terror, as that unexampled, intelligent malignity which, according to specific accounts, he had over and over again evinced in his assaults. More than all, his treacherous retreats struck more of dismay than perhaps aught else. For, when swimming before his exulting pursuers, with every apparent symptom of alarm, he had several times been known to turn round suddenly, and, bearing down upon them, either stave their boats to splinters, or drive them back in consternation to their ship.

Already several fatalities had attended his chase. But though similar disasters, however little bruited ashore, were by no means unusual in the fishery; yet in most instances, such seemed the White Whale's infernal forethought of ferocity, that every dismembering or death that he caused, was not wholly regarded as having been inflicted by an unintelligent agent.

Judge, then, to what pitches of inflamed, distracted fury the minds of his more desperate hunters were impelled, when amid the chips of chewed boats, and the sinking limbs of torn comrades, they swam out of the white curds of the whale's direful wrath into the serene, exasperating sunlight, that smiled on, as if at a birth or a bridal.

His three boats stove around him, and oars and men both whirling in the eddies, one captain, seizing the line-knife from his broken prow, had dashed at the whale, as an Arkansas duelist at his foe, blindly seeking with a six-inch blade to reach the fathom-deep life of the whale. That captain was Ahab. And then it was, that suddenly sweeping his sickle-shaped lower jaw beneath

him, Moby Dick had reaped away Ahab's leg, as a mower a blade of grass in the field. No turbaned Turk, no hired Venetian or Malay, could have smote him with more seeing malice. Small reason was there to doubt, then, that ever since that almost fatal encounter, Ahab had cherished a wild vindictiveness against the whale, all the more fell, for that in his frantic morbidness he at last came to identify with him, not only all his bodily woes, but all his intellectual and spiritual exasperations. The White Whale swam before him as the monomaniac incarnation of all those malicious agencies which some deep men feel eating in them, till they are left living on with half a heart and half a lung. That intangible malignity which has been from the beginning; which the ancient Ophites of the east revered in their statue devil;—Ahab did not fall down and worship it like them; but deliriously transferring its idea to the abhorred white whale, he pitted himself, all mutilated, against it. All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees of things; all truth with malice in it; all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in Moby Dick. He piled upon the whale's white hump the sum of all the general rage and hate felt by his whole race from Adam down; and then, as if his chest had been a mortar, he burst his hot heart's shell upon it.

It is not probable that this monomania in him took its instant rise at the precise time of his bodily dismemberment. Then, in darting at the monster, knife in hand, he had but given loose to a sudden, passionate, corporal animosity; and when he received the stroke that tore him, he probably felt the agonising bodily laceration, but nothing more. Yet, when by this collision forced to turn towards home, and for long months of days and weeks, Ahab and anguish lay stretched together in one hammock, rounding in mid-winter that dreary, howling Patagonian Cape; then it was, that his torn body and gashed soul bled into one another; and so interfusing, made him mad. That it was only then, on the homeward voyage, after the encounter, that the final monomania seized him, seems all but certain from the

fact that, at intervals during the passage, he was a raving lunatic; and, though unlimbed of a leg, yet such vital strength yet lurked in his Egyptian chest, and was moreover intensified by his delirium, that his mates were forced to lace him fast, even there, as he sailed, raving in his hammock. In a strait-jacket, he swung to the mad rockings of the gales. And, when running into more sufferable latitudes, the ship, with mild stun-sails spread, floated across the tranquil tropics, and, to all appearances, the old man's delirium seemed left behind him with the Cape Horn swells, and he came forth from his dark den into the blessed light and air; even then, when he bore that firm, collected front, however pale, and issued his calm orders once again; and his mates thanked God the direful madness was now gone; even then, Ahab, in his hidden self, raved on. Human madness is oftentimes a cunning and most feline thing. When you think it fled, it may have but become transfigured into some still subtler form. Ahab's full lunacy subsided not, but deepeningly contracted; like the unabated Hudson, when that noble Northman flows narrowly, but unfathomably through the Highland gorge. But, as in his narrow-flowing monomania, not one jot of Ahab's broad madness had been left behind; so in that broad madness, not one jot of his great natural intellect had perished. That before living agent, now became the living instrument. If such a furious trope may stand, his special lunacy stormed his general sanity, and carried it, and turned all its concentrated cannon upon its own mad mark; so that far from having lost his strength, Ahab, to that one end, did now possess a thousand-fold more potency than ever he had sanely brought to bear upon any one reasonable object.

This is much; yet Ahab's larger, darker, deeper part remains unhinted. But vain to popularize profundities, and all truth is profound. Winding far down from within the very heart of this spiked Hotel de Cluny where we here stand—however grand and wonderful, now quit it;—and take your way, ye nobler, sadder souls, to those vast Roman halls of Thermes; where far beneath the fantastic towers of man's upper earth, his root of grandeur, his whole awful essence sits in bearded state; an antique

buried beneath antiquities, and throned on torsoes! So with a broken throne, the great gods mock that captive king; so like a Caryatid, he patient sits, upholding on his frozen brow the piled entablatures of ages. Wind ye down there, ye prouder, sadder souls! question that proud, sad king! A family likeness! aye, he did beget ye, ye young exiled royalties; and from your grim sire only will the old State-secret come.

Now, in his heart, Ahab had some glimpse of this, namely, all my means are sane, my motive and my object mad. Yet without power to kill, or change, or shun the fact; he likewise knew that to mankind he did long dissemble; in some sort, did still. But that thing of his dissembling was only subject to his perceptibility, not to his will determinate. Nevertheless, so well did he succeed in that dissembling, that when with ivory leg he stepped ashore at last, no Nantucketer thought him otherwise than but naturally grieved, and that to the quick, with the terrible casualty which had overtaken him.

The report of his undeniable delirium at sea was likewise popularly ascribed to a kindred cause. And so too, all the added moodiness which always afterwards, to the very day of sailing in the *Pequod* on the present voyage, sat brooding on his brow. Nor is it so very unlikely, that far from distrusting his fitness for another whaling voyage, on account of such dark symptoms, the calculating people of that prudent isle were inclined to harbor the conceit, that for those very reasons he was all the better qualified and set on edge, for a pursuit so full of rage and wildness as the bloody hunt of whales. Gnawed within and scorched without, with the infixed, unrelenting fangs of some incurable idea; such an one, could he be found, would seem the very man to dart his iron and lift his lance against the most appalling of all brutes. Or, if for any reason thought to be corporeally incapacitated for that, yet such an one would seem superlatively competent to cheer and howl on his underlings to the attack. But be all this as it may, certain it is, that with the mad secret of his unabated rage bolted up and keyed in him, Ahab had purposely sailed upon the present voyage with the one only and all-engrossing object of hunting the

White Whale. Had any one of his old acquaintances on shore but half dreamed of what was lurking in him then, how soon would their aghast and righteous souls have wrenched the ship from such a fiendish man! They were bent on profitable cruises, the profit to be counted down in dollars from the mint. He was intent on an audacious, immitigable, and supernatural revenge.

Here, then, was this gray-headed, ungodly old man, chasing with curses a Job's whale round the world, at the head of a crew, too, chiefly made up of mongrel renegades, and castaways, and cannibals—morally enfeebled also, by the incompetence of mere unaided virtue of right-mindedness in Starbuck, the invulnerable jollity of indifference and recklessness in Stubb, and the pervading mediocrity in Flask. Such a crew, so officered, seemed specially picked and packed by some infernal fatality to help him to his monomaniac revenge. How it was that they so abundantly responded to the old man's ire—by what evil magic their souls were possessed, that at times his hate seemed almost theirs; the White Whale as much their insufferable foe as his; how all this came to be—what the White Whale was to them, or how to their unconscious understandings, also, in some dim, unsuspected way, he might have seemed the gliding great demon of the seas of life,—all this to explain, would be to dive deeper than Ishmael can go. The subterranean miner that works in us all, how can one tell whither leads his shaft by the ever shifting, muffled sound of his pick? Who does not feel the irresistible arm drag? What skiff in tow of a seventy-four can stand still? For one, I gave myself up to the abandonment of the time and the place; but while yet all a-rush to encounter the whale, could see naught in that brute but the deadliest ill.

CHAPTER LXXXV

THE FOUNTAIN

THAT for six thousand years—and no one knows how many millions of ages before—the great whales should have been spouting all over the sea, and sprinkling and mistifying the gardens of the deep, as with so many sprinkling or mistifying pots; and that for some centuries back, thousands of hunters

should have been close by the fountain of the whale, watching these sprinklings and spoutings—that all this should be, and yet, that down to this blessed minute (fifteen and a quarter minutes past one o'clock p.m. of this sixteenth day of December, A.D. 1850), it should still remain a problem, whether these spoutings are, after all, really water, or nothing but vapor—this is surely a noteworthy thing.

Let us, then, look at this matter, along with some interesting items contingent. Every one knows that by the peculiar cunning of their gills, the finny tribes in general breathe the air which at all times is combined with the element in which they swim; hence, a herring or a cod might live a century, and never once raise his head above the surface. But owing to his marked internal structure which gives him regular lungs, like a human being's, the whale can only live by inhaling the disengaged air in the open atmosphere. Wherefore the necessity for his periodical visits to the upper world. But he cannot in any degree breathe through his mouth, for, in his ordinary attitude, the Sperm Whale's mouth is buried at least eight feet beneath the surface; and what is still more, his windpipe has no connection with his mouth. No, he breathes through his spiracle alone; and this is on the top of his head.

If I say, that in any creature breathing is only a function indispensable to vitality, inasmuch as it withdraws from the air a certain element, which being subsequently brought into contact with the blood imparts to the blood its vivifying principle, I do not think I shall err; though I may possibly use some superfluous scientific words. Assume it, and it follows that if all the blood in a man could be aerated with one breath, he might then seal up his nostrils and not fetch another for a considerable time. That is to say, he would then live without breathing. Anomalous as it may seem, this is precisely the case with the whale, who systematically lives, by intervals, his full hour and more (when at the bottom) without drawing a single breath, or so much as in any way inhaling a particle of air; for, remember, he has no gills. How is this? Between his ribs and on each side of his spine he is supplied with a remarkable involved Cretan labyrinth

of vermicelli-like vessels, which vessels, when he quits the surface, are completely distended with oxygenated blood. So that for an hour or more, a thousand fathoms in the sea, he carries a surplus stock of vitality in him, just as the camel crossing the waterless desert carries a surplus supply of drink for future use in its four supplementary stomachs. The anatomical fact of this labyrinth is indisputable; and that the supposition founded upon it is reasonable and true, seems the more cogent to me, when I consider the otherwise inexplicable obstinacy of that leviathan in *having his spoutings out*, as the fishermen phrase it. This is what I mean. If unmolested, upon rising to the surface, the Sperm Whale will continue there for a period of time exactly uniform with all his other unmolested risings. Say he stays eleven minutes, and jets seventy times, that is, respire seventy breaths; then whenever he rises again, he will be sure to have his seventy breaths over again, to a minute. Now, if after he fetches a few breaths you alarm him, so that he sounds, he will be always dodging up again to make good his regular allowance of air. And not till those seventy breaths are told, will he finally go down to stay out his full term below. Remark, however, that in different individuals these rates are different; but in any one they are alike. Now, why should the whale thus insist upon having his spoutings out, unless it be to replenish his reservoir of air, ere descending for good? How obvious is it, too, that this necessity for the whale's rising exposes him to all the fatal hazards of the chase. For not by hook or by net could this vast leviathan be caught, when sailing a thousand fathoms beneath the sunlight. Not so much thy skill, then, O hunter, as the great necessities that strike the victory to thee!

In man, breathing is incessantly going on—one breath only serving for two or three pulsations; so that whatever other business he has to attend to, waking or sleeping, breathe he must, or die he will. But the Sperm Whale only breathes about one-seventh or Sunday of his time.

It has been said that the whale only breathes through his spout-hole; if it could truthfully be added that his spouts are mixed with water, then I opine we should be fur-

nished with the reason why his sense of smell seems obliterated in him; for the only thing about him that at all answers to his nose is that identical spout-hole; and being so clogged with two elements, it could not be expected to have the power of smelling. But owing to the mystery of the spout—whether it be water or whether it be vapor—no absolute certainty can as yet be arrived at on this head. Sure it is, nevertheless, that the Sperm Whale has no proper olfactories. But what does he want of them? No roses, no violets, no Cologne-water in the sea.

Furthermore, as his windpipe solely opens into the tube of his spouting canal, and as that long canal—like the grand Erie Canal—is furnished with a sort of locks (that open and shut) for the downward retention of air or the upward exclusion of water, therefore the whale has no voice; unless you insult him by saying, that when he so strangely rumbles, he talks through his nose. But then again, what has the whale to say? Seldom have I known any profound being that had anything to say to this world, unless forced to stammer out something by way of getting a living. Oh! happy that the world is such an excellent listener!

Now, the spouting canal of the Sperm Whale, chiefly intended as it is for the conveyance of air, and for several feet laid along, horizontally, just beneath the upper surface of his head, and a little to one side; this curious canal is very much like a gas-pipe laid down in a city on one side of a street. But the question returns whether this gas-pipe is also a water-pipe; in other words, whether the spout of the Sperm Whale is the mere vapor of the exhaled breath, or whether that exhaled breath is mixed with water taken in at the mouth, and discharged through the spiracle. It is certain that the mouth indirectly communicates with the spouting canal; but it cannot be proved that this is for the purpose of discharging water through the spiracle. Because the greatest necessity for so doing would seem to be, when in feeding he accidentally takes in water. But the Sperm Whale's food is far beneath the surface, and there he cannot spout even if he would. Besides, if you regard him very closely, and time him with your watch, you will find that when unmolested, there is an undeviating rhyme

between the periods of his jets and the ordinary periods of respiration.

But why pester one with all this reasoning on the subject? Speak out! You have seen him spout; then declare what the spout is; can you not tell water from air? My dear sir, in this world it is not so easy to settle these plain things. I have ever found your plain things the knottiest of all. And as for this whale spout, you might almost stand in it, and yet be undecided as to what it is precisely.

The central body of it is hidden in the snowy sparkling mist enveloping it; and how can you certainly tell whether any water falls from it, when, always, when you are close enough to a whale to get a close view of his spout, he is in a prodigious commotion, the water cascading all around him? And if at such times you should think that you really perceived drops of moisture in the spout, how do you know that they are not merely condensed from its vapor; or how do you know that they are not those identical drops superficially lodged in the spout-hole fissure, which is counter-sunk into the summit of the whale's head? For even when tranquilly swimming through the midday sea in a calm, with his elevated hump sundried as a dromedary's in the desert; even then, the whale always carries a small basin of water on his head, as under a blazing sun you will sometimes see a cavity in a rock filled up with rain.

Nor is it at all prudent for the hunter to be over-curious touching the precise nature of the whale spout. It will not do for him to be peering into it, and putting his face in it. You cannot go with your pitcher to this fountain and fill it, and bring it away. For even when coming into slight contact with the outer, vapory shreds of the jet, which will often happen, your skin will feverishly smart, from the acridness of the thing so touching it. And I know one, who coming into still closer contact with the spout, whether with some scientific object in view, or otherwise, I cannot say, the skin peeled off from his cheek and arm. Wherefore, among whalemens, the spout is deemed poisonous; they try to evade it. Another thing: I have heard it said, and I do not

much doubt it, that if the jet is fairly spouted into your eyes, it will blind you. The wisest thing the investigator can do then, it seems to me, is to let this deadly spout alone.

Still, we can hypothesize, even if we cannot prove and establish. My hypothesis is this: that the spout is nothing but mist. And besides other reasons, to this conclusion I am impelled, by considerations touching the great inherent dignity and sublimity of the Sperm Whale. I account him no common, shallow being, inasmuch as it is an undisputed fact that he is never found on soundings, or near shores; all other whales sometimes are. He is both ponderous and profound. And I am convinced that from the heads of all ponderous profound beings, such as Plato, Pyrrho, the Devil, Jupiter, Dante, and so on, there always goes up a certain semi-visible steam, while in the act of thinking deep thoughts. While composing a little treatise on Eternity, I had the curiosity to place a mirror before me; and ere long saw reflected there, a curious involved worming and undulation in the atmosphere over my head. The invariable moisture of my hair, while plunged in deep thought, after six cups of hot tea in my thin shingled attic, of an August noon; this seems an additional argument for the above supposition.

And how nobly it raises our conceit of the mighty, misty monster, to behold him solemnly sailing through a calm tropical sea; his vast, mild head overhung by a canopy of vapor, engendered by his incommunicable contemplations, and that vapor—as you will sometimes see it—glorified by a rainbow, as if Heaven itself had put its seal upon his thoughts. For, d'ye see, rainbows do not visit the clear air; they only irradiate vapor. And so, through all the thick mists of the dim doubts in my mind, divine intuitions now and then shoot, enkindling my fog with a heavenly ray. And for this I thank God; for all have doubts; many deny; but doubts or denials, few along with them, have intuitions. Doubts of all things earthly, and intuitions of some things heavenly; this combination makes neither believer nor infidel, but makes a man who regards them both with equal eye.

CHAPTER XCVI

THE TRY-WORKS

BESIDES her hoisted boats, an American whaler is outwardly distinguished by her try-works. She presents the curious anomaly of the most solid masonry joining with oak and hemp in constituting the completed ship. It is as if from the open field a brick-kiln were transported to her planks.

The try-works are planted between the foremast and mainmast, the most roomy part of the deck. The timbers beneath are of a peculiar strength, fitted to sustain the weight of an almost solid mass of brick and mortar, some ten feet by eight square, and five in height. The foundation does not penetrate the deck, but the masonry is firmly secured to the surface by ponderous knees of iron bracing it on all sides, and screwing it down to the timbers. On the flanks it is cased with wood, and at top completely covered by a large, sloping, battened hatchway. Removing this hatch we expose the great try-pots, two in number, and each of several barrels' capacity. When not in use, they are kept remarkably clean. Sometimes they are polished with soapstone and sand, till they shine within like silver punch-bowls. During the night-watches some cynical old sailors will crawl into them and coil themselves away there for a nap. While employed in polishing them—one man in each pot, side by side—many confidential communications are carried on, over the iron lips. It is a place also for profound mathematical meditation. It was in the left hand try-pot of the *Pequod*, with the soapstone diligently circling round me, that I was first indirectly struck by the remarkable fact, that in geometry all bodies gliding along the cycloid, my soapstone for example, will descend from any point in precisely the same time.

Removing the fire-board from the front of the try-works, the bare masonry of that side is exposed, penetrated by the two iron mouths of the furnaces, directly underneath the pots. These mouths are fitted with heavy doors of iron. The intense heat of the fire is prevented from communicating itself to the deck, by means of a shallow reservoir extending under the entire enclosed surface of the works. By a tunnel inserted at the rear, this

reservoir is kept replenished with water as fast as it evaporates. There are no external chimneys; they open direct from the rear wall. And here let us go back for a moment.

It was about nine o'clock at night that the *Pequod's* try-works were first started on this present voyage. It belonged to Stubb to oversee the business.

"All ready there? Off hatch, then, and start her. You, cook, fire the works." This was an easy thing, for the carpenter had been thrusting his shavings into the furnace throughout the passage. Here be it said that in a whaling voyage the first fire in the try-works has to be fed for a time with wood. After that no wood is used, except as a means of quick ignition to the staple fuel. In a word, after being tried out, the crisp, shriveled blubber, now called scraps or fritters, still contains considerable of its unctuous properties. These fritters feed the flames. Like a plethoric burning martyr, or a self-consuming misanthrope, once ignited, the whale supplies his own fuel and burns by his own body. Would that he consumed his own smoke! for his smoke is horrible to inhale, and inhale it you must, and not only that, but you must live in it for the time. It has an unspeakable, wild, Hindoo odor about it, such as may lurk in the vicinity of funereal pyres. It smells like the left wing of the day of judgment; it is an argument for the pit.

By midnight the works were in full operation. We were clear from the carcass; sail had been made; the wind was freshening; the wild ocean darkness was intense. But that darkness was licked up by the fierce flames, which at intervals forked forth from the sooty flues, and illuminated every lofty rope in the rigging, as with the famed Greek fire. The burning ship drove on, as if remorselessly commissioned to some vengeful deed. So the pitch and sulphur-freighted brigs of the bold Hydriote, Canaris, issuing from their midnight harbors, with broad sheets of flame for sails, bore down upon the Turkish frigates, and folded them in conflagrations.

The hatch, removed from the top of the works, now afforded a wide hearth in front of them. Standing on this were the Tartarean shapes of the pagan harpooneers, always the whale-ship's stokers. With huge pronged poles they pitched hissing masses of

blubber into the scalding pots, or stirred up the fires beneath, till the snaky flames darted, curling, out of the doors to catch them by the feet. The smoke rolled away in sullen heaps. To every pitch of the ship there was a pitch of the boiling oil, which seemed all eagerness to leap into their faces. Opposite the mouth of the works, on the further side of the wide wooden hearth, was the windlass. This served for a sea-sofa. Here lounged the watch, when not otherwise employed, looking into the red heat of the fire, till their eyes felt scorched in their heads. Their tawny features, now all begrimed with smoke and sweat, their matted beards, and the contrasting barbaric brilliancy of their teeth, all these were strangely revealed in the capricious emblazonings of the works. As they narrated to each other their unholy adventures, their tales of terror told in words of mirth; as their uncivilized laughter forked upwards out of them, like the flames from the furnace; as to and fro, in their front, the harpooneers wildly gesticulated with their huge pronged forks and dippers; as the wind howled on, and the sea leaped, and the ship groaned and dived, and yet steadfastly shot her red hell further and further into the blackness of the sea and the night, and scornfully champed the white bone in her mouth, and viciously spat round her on all sides; then the rushing *Pequod*, freighted with savages, and laden with fire, and burning a corpse, and plunging into that blackness of darkness, seemed the material counterpart of her monomaniac commander's soul.

So seemed it to me, as I stood at her helm, and for long hours silently guided the way of this fire-ship on the sea. Wrapped, for that interval, in darkness myself, I but the better saw the redness, the madness, the ghastliness of others. The continual sight of the fiend shapes before me, capering half in smoke and half in fire, these at last begat kindred visions in my soul, so soon as I began to yield to that unaccountable drowsiness which ever would come over me at a midnight helm.

But that night, in particular, a strange (and ever since inexplicable) thing occurred to me. Starting from a brief standing sleep, I was horribly conscious of something fatally wrong. The jawbone tiller smote my side, which leaned against it; in my ears was the

low hum of sails, just beginning to shake in the wind; I thought my eyes were open; I was half conscious of putting my fingers to the lids and mechanically stretching them still further apart. But, spite of all this, I could see no compass before me to steer by; though it seemed but a minute since I had been watching the card, by the steady binnacle lamp illuminating it. Nothing seemed before me but a jet gloom, now and then made ghastly by flashes of redness. Uppermost was the impression, that whatever swift, rushing thing I stood on was not so much bound to any haven ahead as rushing from all havens astern. A stark, bewildered feeling, as of death, came over me. Convulsively my hands grasped the tiller, but with the crazy conceit that the tiller was, somehow, in some enchanted way, inverted. My God! what is the matter with me? thought I. Lo! in my brief sleep I had turned myself about, and was fronting the ship's stern, with my back to her prow and the compass. In an instant I faced back, just in time to prevent the vessel from flying up into the wind, and very probably capsizing her. How glad and how grateful the relief from this unnatural hallucination of the night, and the fatal contingency of being brought by the lee!

Look not too long in the face of the fire, O man! Never dream with thy hand on the helm! Turn not thy back to the compass; accept the first hint of the hitching tiller; believe not the artificial fire, when its redness makes all things look ghastly. To-morrow, in the natural sun, the skies will be bright; those who glared like devils in the forking flames, the morn will show in far other, at least gentler, relief; the glorious, golden, glad sun, the only true lamp—all others but liars!

Nevertheless the sun hides not Virginia's Dismal Swamp, nor Rome's accursed Campagna, nor wide Sahara, nor all the millions of miles of deserts and of griefs beneath the moon. The sun hides not the ocean, which is the dark side of this earth, and which is two-thirds of this earth. So, therefore, that mortal man who hath more of joy than sorrow in him, that mortal man cannot be true—not true, or undeveloped. With books the same. The truest of all men was the Man of Sorrows, and the truest of all books is Solomon's, and Ecclesiastes is the fine-hammered steel of woe. "All is vanity."

ALL. This willful world hath not got hold of unchristian Solomon's wisdom yet. But he who dodges hospitals and jails, and walks fast crossing graveyards, and would rather talk of operas than hell; calls Cowper, Young, Pascal, Rousseau, poor devils all of sick men; and throughout a care-free lifetime swears by Rabelais as passing wise, and therefore jolly;—not that man is fitted to sit down on tombstones, and break the green damp mold with unfathomably wondrous Solomon.

But even Solomon, he says, "the man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain" (*i.e.*, even while living) "in the congregation of the dead." Give not thyself up, then, to fire, lest it invert thee, deaden thee; as for the time it did me. There is a wisdom that is woe; but there is a woe that is madness. And there is a Catskill eagle in some souls that can alike dive down into the blackest gorges, and soar out of them again and become invisible in the sunny spaces. And even if he for ever flies within the gorge, that gorge is in the mountains; so that even in his lowest swoop the mountain eagle is still higher than other birds upon the plain, even though they soar.

CHAPTER CXXXII

THE SYMPHONY

It was a clear steel-blue day. The firmaments of air and sea were hardly separable in that all-pervading azure; only, the pensive air was transparently pure and soft, with a woman's look, and the robust and man-like sea heaved with long, strong, lingering swells, as Samson's chest in his sleep.

Hither, and thither, on high, glided the snow-white wings of small, unspeckled birds; these were the gentle thoughts of the feminine air; but to and fro in the deeps, far down in the bottomless blue, rushed mighty leviathans, sword-fish, and sharks; and these were the strong, troubled, murderous thinkings of the masculine sea.

But though thus contrasting within, the contrast was only in shades and shadows without; those two seemed one; it was only the sex, as it were, that distinguished them.

Aloft, like a royal czar and king, the sun seemed giving this gentle air to this bold and rolling sea; even as bride to groom. And at the girdling line of the horizon, a

soft and tremulous motion—most seen here at the Equator—denoted the fond, throbbing trust, the loving alarms, with which the poor bride gave her bosom away.

Tied up and twisted; gnarled and knotted with wrinkles; haggardly firm and unyielding; his eyes glowing like coals, that still glow in the ashes of ruin; untottering Ahab stood forth in the clearness of the morn; lifting his splintered helmet of a brow to the fair girl's forehead of heaven.

Oh, immortal infancy, and innocence of the azure! Invisible winged creatures that frolic all round us! Sweet childhood of air and sky! how oblivious were ye of old Ahab's close-coiled woe! But so have I seen little Miriam and Martha, laughing-eyed elves, heedlessly gambol around their old sire; sporting with the circle of singed locks which grew on the marge of that burnt-out crater of his brain.

Slowly crossing the deck from the scuttle, Ahab leaned over the side, and watched how his shadow in the water sank and sank to his gaze, the more and the more that he strove to pierce the profundity. But the lovely aromas in that enchanted air did at last seem to dispel, for a moment, the cankerous thing in his soul. That glad, happy air, that winsome sky, did at last stroke and caress him; the stepmother world, so long cruel—forbidding—now threw affectionate arms round his stubborn neck, and did seem to joyously sob over him, as if over one, that however willful and erring, she could yet find it in her heart to save and to bless. From beneath his slouched hat Ahab dropped a tear into the sea; nor did all the Pacific contain such wealth as that one wee drop.

Starbuck saw the old man; saw him, how he heavily leaned over the side; and he seemed to hear in his own true heart the measureless sobbing that stole out of the center of the serenity around. Careful not to touch him, or be noticed by him, he yet drew near to him, and stood there.

Ahab turned.

"Starbuck!"

"Sir."

"Oh, Starbuck! it is a mild, mild wind, and a mild looking sky. On such a day—very much such a sweetness as this—I struck my first whale—a boy-harpooneer of eighteen! Forty—forty—forty years ago!—ago!

Forty years of continual whaling! forty years of privation, and peril, and storm-time! forty years on the pitiless sea! for forty years has Ahab forsaken the peaceful land, for forty years to make war on the horrors of the deep! Aye and yes, Starbuck, out of those forty years I have not spent three ashore. When I think of this life I have led; the desolation of solitude it has been; the masoned, walled-town of a Captain's exclusiveness, which admits but small entrance to any sympathy from the green country without—oh, weariness! heaviness! Guinea-coast slavery of solitary command!—when I think of all this; only half-suspected, not so keenly known to me before—and how for forty years I have fed upon dry salted fare—fit emblem of the dry nourishment of my soul!—when the poorest landsman has had fresh fruit to his daily hand, and broken the world's fresh bread to my moldy crusts—away, whole oceans away, from that young girl-wife I wedded past fifty, and sailed for Cape Horn the next day, leaving but one dent in my marriage pillow—wife? wife?—rather a widow with her husband alive! Aye, I widowed that poor girl when I married her, Starbuck; and then, the madness, the frenzy, the boiling blood and the smoking brow, with which, for a thousand lowerings old Ahab has furiously, foamingly chased his prey—more a demon than a man!—aye, aye! what a forty years' fool—fool—old fool, has old Ahab been! Why this strife of the chase? why weary and palsy the arms at the oar, and the iron, and the lance? how the richer or better is Ahab now? Behold. Oh, Starbuck! is it not hard, that with this weary load I bear, one poor leg should have been snatched from under me? Here, brush this old hair aside; it blinds me, that I seem to weep. Locks so gray did never grow but from out some ashes! But do I look very old, so very, very old, Starbuck? I feel deadly faint, bowed, and humped, as though I were Adam, staggering beneath the piled centuries since Paradise. God! God! God!—crack my heart!—stave my brain!—mockery! mockery! bitter, biting mockery of gray hairs, have I lived enough joy to wear ye; and seem and feel thus intolerably old? Close! stand close to me, Starbuck; let me look into a human eye; it is better than to gaze into sea or sky; better than to gaze upon God. By the green land;

by the bright hearthstone! this is the magic glass, man; I see my wife and my child in thine eye. No, no; stay on board, on board!—lower not when I do; when branded Ahab gives chase to Moby Dick. That hazard shall not be thine. No, no! not with the far-away home I see in that eye!”

“Oh, my Captain! my Captain! noble soul! grand old heart, after all! why should any one give chase to that hated fish! Away with me! let us fly these deadly waters! let us home! Wife and child, too, are Starbuck's—wife and child of his brotherly, sisterly, playfellow youth; even as thine, sir, are the wife and child of thy loving, longing, paternal old age! Away! let us away!—this instant let me alter the course! How cheerily, how hilariously, O my Captain, would we bowl on our way to see old Nantucket again! I think, sir, they have some such mild blue days, even as this, in Nantucket.”

“They have, they have. I have seen them—some summer days in the morning. About this time—yes, it is his noon nap now—the boy vivaciously wakes; sits up in bed; and his mother tells him of me, of cannibal old me; how I am abroad upon the deep, but will yet come back to dance him again.”

“’Tis my Mary, my Mary herself! She promised that my boy, every morning, should be carried to the hill to catch the first glimpse of his father's sail! Yes, yes! no more! it is done! we head for Nantucket! Come, my Captain, study out the course, and let us away! See, see! the boy's face from the window! the boy's hand on the hill!”

But Ahab's glance was averted; like a blighted fruit tree he shook, and cast his last cindered apple to the soil.

“What is it, what nameless, inscrutable, unearthly thing is it; what cozening, hidden lord and master, and cruel, remorseless emperor commands me; that against all natural lovings and longings, I so keep pushing, and crowding, and jamming myself on all the time; recklessly making me ready to do what in my own proper, natural heart, I durst not so much as dare? Is Ahab, Ahab? Is it I, God, or who, that lifts this arm? But if the great sun move not of himself; but is as an errand-boy in heaven; nor one single star can revolve, but by some invisible power; how then can this one small heart

beat; this one small brain think thoughts; unless God does that beating, does that thinking, does that living, and not I. By heaven, man, we are turned round and round in this world, like yonder windlass, and Fate is the handspike. And all the time, lo! that smiling sky, and this unsounded sea! Look! see yon Albicore! who put it into him to chase and fang that flying-fish? Where do murderers go, man? Who's to doom, when the judge himself is dragged to the bar? But it is a mild, mild wind, and a mild-looking sky; and the air smells now, as if it blew from a far-away meadow; they have been making hay somewhere under the slopes of the Andes, Starbuck, and the mowers are sleeping among the new-mown hay. Sleeping? Aye, toil we how we may, we all sleep at last on the field. Sleep? Aye, and rust amid greenness; as last year's scythes flung down, and left in the half-cut swathes!—Starbuck!”

But blanched to a corpse's hue with despair, the mate had stolen away.

Ahab crossed the deck to gaze over on the other side; but started at two reflected, fixed eyes in the water there. Fedallah was motionlessly leaning over the same rail.

CHAPTER CXXXIII

THE CHASE—FIRST DAY

THAT night, in the mid-watch, when the old man—as his wont at intervals—stepped forth from the scuttle in which he leaned, and went to his pivot-hole, he suddenly thrust out his face fiercely, snuffing up the sea air as a sagacious ship's dog will, in drawing nigh to some barbarous isle. He declared that a whale must be near. Soon that peculiar odor, sometimes to a great distance given forth by the living Sperm Whale, was palpable to all the watch; nor was any mariner surprised when, after inspecting the compass, and then the dog-vane, and then ascertaining the precise bearing of the odor as nearly as possible, Ahab rapidly ordered the ship's course to be slightly altered, and the sail to be shortened.

The acute policy dictating these movements was sufficiently vindicated at day-break by the sight of a long sleek on the sea directly and lengthwise ahead, smooth as oil, and resembling in the pleated watery wrinkles bordering it, the polished metallic-like

marks of some swift tide-rip, at the mouth of a deep, rapid stream.

“Man the mastheads! Call all hands!”

Thundering with the butts of three clubbed handspikes on the forecastle deck, Daggoo roused the sleepers with such judgment claps that they seemed to exhale from the scuttle, so instantaneously did they appear with their clothes in their hands.

“What d'ye see?” cried Ahab, flattening his face to the sky.

“Nothing, nothing, sir!” was the sound hailing down in reply.

“T'gallant-sails! stunsails alow and aloft, and on both sides!”

All sail being set, he now cast loose the life-line, reserved for swaying him to the mainroyal masthead; and in a few moments they were hoisting him thither, when, while but two-thirds of the way aloft, and while peering ahead through the horizontal vacancy between the maintopsail and top-gallant-sail, he raised a gull-like cry in the air, “There she blows!—there she blows! A hump like a snowhill! It is Moby Dick!”

Fired by the cry which seemed simultaneously taken up by the three lookouts, the men on deck rushed to the rigging to behold the famous whale they had so long been pursuing. Ahab had now gained his final perch, some feet above the other lookouts, Tashtego standing just beneath him on the cap of the top-gallant-mast, so that the Indian's head was almost on a level with Ahab's heel. From this height the whale was now seen some mile or so ahead, at every roll of the sea revealing his high sparkling hump, and regularly jetting his silent spout into the air. To the credulous mariners it seemed the same silent spout they had so long ago beheld in the moonlit Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

“And did none of ye see it before?” cried Ahab, hailing the perched men all around him.

“I saw him almost that same instant, sir, that Captain Ahab did, and I cried out,” said Tashtego.

“Not the same instant; not the same—no, the doubloon is mine, Fate reserved the doubloon for me. I only; none of ye could have raised the White Whale first. There she blows! there she blows!—there she blows! There again!—there again!” he cried, in

long-drawn, lingering, methodic tones, attuned to the gradual prolongings of the whale's visible jets. "He's going to sound! In stunsails! Down top-gallant-sails! Stand by three boats. Mr. Starbuck, remember, stay on board, and keep the ship. Helm there! Luff, luff a point! So; steady, man, steady! There go flukes! No, no; only black water! All ready the boats there? Stand by, stand by! Lower me, Mr. Starbuck; lower, lower,—quick, quicker!" and he slid through the air to the deck.

"He is heading straight to leeward, sir," cried Stubb; "right away from us; cannot have seen the ship yet."

"Be dumb, man! Stand by the braces! Hard down the helm!—brace up! Shiver her!—shiver her! So; well that! Boats, boats!"

Soon all the boats but Starbuck's were dropped; all the boat-sails set—all the paddles plying; with rippling swiftness, shooting to leeward; and Ahab heading the onset. A pale, death-glimmer lit up Fedallah's sunken eyes; a hideous motion gnawed his mouth.

Like noiseless nautilus shells, their light prows sped through the sea; but only slowly they neared the foe. As they neared him, the ocean grew still more smooth; seemed drawing a carpet over its waves; seemed a noon-meadow, so serenely it spread. At length the breathless hunter came so nigh his seemingly unsuspecting prey, that his entire dazzling hump was distinctly visible, sliding along the sea as if an isolated thing, and continually set in a revolving ring of finest, fleecy, greenish foam. He saw the vast involved wrinkles of the slightly projecting head beyond. Before it, far out on the soft Turkish-rugged waters, went the glistening white shadow from his broad, milky forehead, a musical rippling playfully accompanying the shade; and behind, the blue waters interchangeably flowed over into the moving valley of his steady wake; and on either hand bright bubbles arose and danced by his side. But these were broken again by the light toes of hundreds of gay fowls softly feathering the sea, alternate with their fitful flight; and like to some flagstaff rising from the painted hull of an argosy, the tall but shattered pole of a recent lance projected from the white whale's back; and at intervals one of the cloud of soft-toed

fowls hovering, and to and fro skimming like a canopy over the fish, silently perched and rocked on this pole, the long tail feathers streaming like pennons.

A gentle joyousness—a mighty mildness of repose in swiftness, invested the gliding whale. Not the white bull Jupiter swimming away with ravished Europa clinging to his graceful horns; his lovely, leering eyes sideways intent upon the maid; with smooth bewitching fleetness, rippling straight for the nuptial bower in Crete; not Jove, not that great majesty Supreme! did surpass the glorified White Whale as he so divinely swam.

On each soft side—coincident with the parted swell, that but once laving him, then flowed so wide away—on each bright side, the whale shed off enticings. No wonder there had been some among the hunters who, namelessly transported and allured by all this serenity, had ventured to assail it; but had fatally found that quietude but the vesture of tornadoes. Yet calm, enticing calm, oh, whale! thou glidest on, to all who for the first time eye thee, no matter how many in that same way thou may'st have bejuggled and destroyed before.

And thus, through the serene tranquillities of the tropical sea, among waves whose hand-clappings were suspended by exceeding rapture, Moby Dick moved on, still withholding from sight the full terrors of his submerged trunk, entirely hiding the wrenched hideousness of his jaw. But soon the fore part of him slowly rose from the water; for an instant his whole marbleized body formed a high arch, like Virginia's Natural Bridge, and warningly waving his bannered flukes in the air, the grand god revealed himself, sounded, and went out of sight. Hoveringly halting, and dipping on the wing, the white sea-fowls longingly lingered over the agitated pool that he left.

With oars apeak, and paddles down, the sheets of their sails adrift, the three boats now stilly floated, awaiting Moby Dick's reappearance.

"An hour," said Ahab, standing rooted in his boat's stern; and he gazed beyond the whale's place, towards the dim blue spaces and wide wooing vacancies to leeward. It was only an instant; for again his eyes seemed whirling round in his head as he swept the

watery circle. The breeze now freshened; the sea began to swell.

"The birds!—the birds!" cried Tashtego.

In long Indian file, as when herons take wing, the white birds were now all flying towards Ahab's boat; and when within a few yards began fluttering over the water there, wheeling round and round, with joyous, expectant cries. Their vision was keener than man's; Ahab could discover no sign in the sea. But suddenly as he peered down and down into its depths, he profoundly saw a white living spot no bigger than a white weasel, with wonderful celerity uprising, and magnifying as it rose, till it turned, and then there were plainly revealed two long crooked rows of white, glistening teeth, floating up from the undiscoverable bottom. It was Moby Dick's open mouth and scrolled jaw; his vast, shadowed bulk still half blending with the blue of the sea. The glittering mouth yawned beneath the boat like an open-doored marble tomb; and giving one sidelong sweep with his steering oar, Ahab whirled the craft aside from this tremendous apparition. Then, calling upon Fedallah to change places with him, went forward to the bows, and seizing Perth's harpoon, commanded his crew to grasp their oars and stand by to stern.

Now, by reason of this timely spinning round the boat upon its axis, its bow, by anticipation, was made to face the whale's head while yet under water. But as if perceiving this stratagem, Moby Dick, with that malicious intelligence ascribed to him, sidelingly transplanted himself, as it were, in an instant, shooting his pleated head lengthwise beneath the boat.

Through and through; through every plank and each rib, it thrilled for an instant, the whale obliquely lying on his back, in the manner of a biting shark, slowly and feelingly taking its bows full within his mouth, so that the long, narrow, scrolled lower jaw curled high up into the open air, and one of the teeth caught in a rowlock. The bluish pearl-white of the inside of the jaw was within six inches of Ahab's head, and reached higher than that. In this attitude the White Whale now shook the slight cedar as a mildly cruel cat her mouse. With unastonished eyes Fedallah gazed, and crossed his arms; but the tiger-yellow crew were tumbling over each other's heads to gain the uttermost stern.

And now, while both elastic gunwales were springing in and out, as the whale dallied with the doomed craft in this devilish way; and from his body being submerged beneath the boat, he could not be darted at from the bows, for the bows were almost inside of him, as it were; and while the other boats involuntarily paused, as before a quick crisis impossible to withstand, then it was that monomaniac Ahab, furious with this tantalizing vicinity of his foe, which placed him all alive and helpless in the very jaws he hated; frenzied with all this, he seized the long bone with his naked hands, and wildly strove to wrench it from its gripe. As now he thus vainly strove, the jaw slipped from him; the frail gunwales bent in, collapsed, and snapped, as both jaws, like an enormous shears, sliding further aft, bit the craft completely in twain, and locked themselves fast again in the sea, midway between the two floating wrecks. These floated aside, the broken ends drooping, the crew at the sternwreck clinging to the gunwales, and striving to hold fast to the oars to lash them across.

At that prelude moment, ere the boat was yet snapped, Ahab, the first to perceive the whale's intent, by the crafty upraising of his head, a movement that loosed his hold for the time; at that moment his hand had made one final effort to push the boat out of the bite. But only slipping further into the whale's mouth, and tilting over sideways as it slipped, the boat had shaken off his hold on the jaw; spilled him out of it, as he leaned to the push; and so he fell flat-faced upon the sea.

Ripplingly withdrawing from his prey, Moby Dick now lay at a little distance, vertically thrusting his oblong white head up and down in the billows; and at the same time slowly revolving his whole spindled body; so that when his vast wrinkled forehead rose—some twenty or more feet out of the water—the now rising swells, with all their confluent waves, dazzlingly broke against it; vindictively tossing their shivered spray still higher into the air.¹ So, in a gale, the but

¹ This motion is peculiar to the Sperm Whale. It receives its designation (pitchpoling) from its being likened to that preliminary up-and-down poise of the whale-lance, in the exercise called pitchpoling, previously described. By this motion the whale must best and most comprehensively view whatever objects may be encircling him. (Melville's note.)

half baffled Channel billows only recoil from the base of the Eddystone, triumphantly to overleap its summit with their scud.

But soon resuming his horizontal attitude, Moby Dick swam swiftly round and round the wrecked crew; sideways churning the water in his vengeful wake, as if lashing himself up to still another and more deadly assault. The sight of the splintered boat seemed to madden him, as the blood of grapes and mulberries cast before Antiochus's elephants in the book of Maccabees. Meanwhile Ahab half smothered in the foam of the whale's insolent tail and too much of a cripple to swim,—though he could still keep afloat, even in the heart of such a whirlpool as that; helpless Ahab's head was seen, like a tossed bubble which the least chance shock might burst. From the boat's fragmentary stern, Fedallah incuriously and mildly eyed him; the clinging crew, at the other drifting end, could not succor him; more than enough was it for them to look to themselves. For so revolvingly appalling was the White Whale's aspect, and so planetarily swift the ever-contracting circles he made, that he seemed horizontally swooping upon them. And though the other boats, unharmed, still hovered hard by, still they dared not pull into the eddy to strike, lest that should be the signal for the instant destruction of the jeopardized castaways, Ahab and all; nor in that case could they themselves hope to escape. With straining eyes, then, they remained on the outer edge of the direful zone, whose center had now become the old man's head.

Meantime, from the beginning all this had been descried from the ship's mastheads; and squaring her yards, she had borne down upon the scene; and was now so nigh, that Ahab in the water hailed her:—"Sail on the"—but that moment a breaking sea dashed on him from Moby Dick, and whelmed him for the time. But struggling out of it again, and chancing to rise on a towering crest, he shouted,—“Sail on the whale!—Drive him off!”

The *Pequod's* prows were pointed; and breaking up the charmed circle, she effectually parted the White Whale from his victim. As he sullenly swam off, the boats flew to the rescue.

Dragged into Stubb's boat with bloodshot,

blinded eyes, the white brine caking in his wrinkles; the long tension of Ahab's bodily strength did crack, and helplessly he yielded to his body's doom for a time, lying all crushed in the bottom of Stubb's boat, like one trodden under foot of herds of elephants. Far inland, nameless wails came from him, as desolate sounds from out ravines.

But this intensity of his physical prostration did but so much the more abbreviate it. In an instant's compass, great hearts sometimes condense to one deep pang, the sum-total of those shallow pains kindly diffused through feebler men's whole lives. And so, such hearts, though summary in each one suffering; still, if the gods decree it, in their lifetime aggregate a whole age of woe, wholly made up of instantaneous intensities; for even in their pointless centers, those noble natures contain the entire circumferences of inferior souls.

“The harpoon,” said Ahab, half-way rising, and draggingly leaning on one bended arm—“is it safe?”

“Aye, sir, for it was not darted; this is it,” said Stubb, showing it.

“Lay it before me;—any missing men?”

“One, two, three, four, five;—there were five oars, sir, and here are five men.”

“That's good.—Help me, man; I wish to stand. So, so, I see him! there! there! going to leeward still; what a leaping spout!—Hands off from me! The eternal sap runs up in Ahab's bones again! Set the sail; out oars; the helm!”

It is often the case that when a boat is stove, its crew, being picked up by another boat, help to work that second boat; and the chase is thus continued with what is called double-banked oars. It was thus now. But the added power of the boat did not equal the added power of the whale, for he seemed to have treble-banked his every fin; swimming with a velocity which plainly showed, that if now, under these circumstances, pushed on, the chase would prove an indefinitely prolonged, if not a hopeless one; nor could any crew endure for so long a period, such an unintermitted, intense straining at the oar; a thing barely tolerable only in some one brief vicissitude. The ship itself, then, as it sometimes happens, offered the most promising intermediate means of overtaking the chase. Accordingly, the boats now made for

her, and were soon swayed up to their cranes—the two parts of the wrecked boat having been previously secured by her—and then hoisting everything to her side, and stacking her canvas high up, and sideways outstretching it with stunsails, like the double-jointed wings of an albatross; the *Pequod* bore down in the leeward wake of Moby Dick. At the well-known, methodic intervals, the whale's glittering spout was regularly announced from the manned mastheads; and when he would be reported as just gone down, Ahab would take the time, and then pacing the deck, binnacle-watch in hand, so soon as the last second of the allotted hour expired, his voice was heard.—“Whose is the doubloon now? D'ye see him?” and if the reply was, “No, sir!” straightway he commanded them to lift him to his perch. In this way the day wore on; Ahab, now aloft and motionless; anon, unrestingly pacing the planks.

As he was thus walking, uttering no sound, except to hail the men aloft, or to bid them hoist a sail still higher, or to spread one to a still greater breadth—thus to and fro pacing, beneath his slouched hat, at every turn he passed his own wrecked boat, which had been dropped upon the quarter-deck, and lay there reversed; broken bow to shattered stern. At last he paused before it; and as in an already over-clouded sky fresh troops of clouds will sometimes sail across, so over the old man's face there now stole some such added gloom as this.

Stubb saw him pause; and perhaps intending, not vainly, though, to evince his own unabated fortitude, and thus keep up a valiant place in his Captain's mind, he advanced, and eyeing the wreck exclaimed—“The thistle the ass refused; it pricked his mouth too keenly, sir; ha! ha!”

“What soulless thing is this that laughs before a wreck? Man, man! did I not know thee brave as fearless fire (and as mechanical) I could swear thou wert a poltroon. Groan nor laugh should be heard before a wreck.”

“Aye, sir,” said Starbuck, drawing near, “’tis a solemn sight; an omen, and an ill one.”

“Omen? omen?—the dictionary! If the gods think to speak outright to man, they will honorably speak outright; not shake their heads, and give an old wives' darkling hint.—Begone! Ye two are the opposite

poles of one thing; Starbuck is Stubb reversed, and Stubb is Starbuck; and ye two are all mankind; and Ahab stands alone among the millions of the peopled earth, nor gods nor men his neighbors! Cold, cold—I shiver!—How now? Aloft there! D'ye see him? Sing out for every spout, though he spout ten times a second!”

The day was nearly done; only the hem of his golden robe was rustling. Soon, it was almost dark, but the look-out men still remained unset.

“Can't see the spout now, sir;—too dark”—cried a voice from the air.

“How heading when last seen?”

“As before, sir,—straight to leeward.”

“Good! he will travel slower now 'tis night. Down royals and top-gallant stunsails, Mr. Starbuck. We must not run over him before morning; he's making a passage now, and may heave-to a while. Helm there! Keep her full before the wind!—Aloft! come down!—Mr. Stubb, send a fresh hand to the foremast head, and see it manned till morning.”—Then advancing towards the doubloon in the mainmast—“Men, this gold is mine, for I earned it; but I shall let it abide here till the White Whale is dead; and then, whosoever of ye first raises him, upon the day he shall be killed, this gold is that man's; and if on that day I shall again raise him, then, ten times its sum shall be divided among all of ye! Away now!—the deck is thine, sir.”

And so saying, he placed himself half-way within the scuttle, and slouching his hat, stood there till dawn, except when at intervals rousing himself to see how the night wore on.

CHAPTER CXXXIV

THE CHASE—SECOND DAY

At daybreak, the three mastheads were punctually manned afresh.

“D'ye see him?” cried Ahab, after allowing a little space for the light to spread.

“See nothing, sir.”

“Turn up all hands and make sail! he travels faster than I thought for;—the top-gallant sails!—aye, they should have been kept on her all night. But no matter—'tis but resting for the rush.”

Here be it said, that this pertinacious pursuit of one particular whale, continued

through day into night, and through night into day, is a thing by no means unprecedented in the South Sea fishery. For such is the wonderful skill, prescience of experience, and invincible confidence acquired by some great natural geniuses among the Nantucket commanders, that from the simple observation of a whale when last descried, they will, under certain given circumstances, pretty accurately foretell both the direction in which he will continue to swim for a time, while out of sight, as well as his probable rate of progression during that period. And in these cases, somewhat as a pilot, when about losing sight of a coast, whose general trending he well knows, and which he desires shortly to return to again, but at some further point; like as this pilot stands by his compass, and takes the precise bearing of the cape at present visible, in order the more certainly to hit aright the remote, unseen headland, eventually to be visited: so does the fisherman, at his compass, with the whale; for after being chased, and diligently marked, through several hours of daylight, then, when night obscures the fish, the creature's future wake through the darkness is almost as established to the sagacious mind of the hunter, as the pilot's coast is to him. So that to this hunter's wondrous skill, the proverbial evanescence of a thing writ in water, a wake, is to all desired purposes well-nigh as reliable as the steadfast land. And as the mighty iron Leviathan of the modern railway is so familiarly known in its every pace, that, with watches in their hands, men time his rate as doctors that of a baby's pulse; and lightly say of it, "the up train or the down train will reach such or such a spot, at such or such an hour," even so, almost, there are occasions when these Nantucketers time that other Leviathan of the deep, according to the observed humor of his speed; and say to themselves, "so many hours hence this whale will have gone two hundred miles, will have about reached this or that degree of latitude or longitude." But to render this acuteness at all successful in the end, the wind and the sea must be the whaleman's allies; for of what present avail to the becalmed or windbound mariner is the skill that assures him he is exactly ninety-three leagues and a quarter from his port? Inferable from these statements are many col-

lateral subtle matters touching the chase of whales.

The ship tore on; leaving such a furrow in the sea as when a cannon-ball, missent, becomes a ploughshare and turns up the level field.

"By salt and hemp!" cried Stubb, "but this swift motion of the deck creeps up one's legs and tingles at the heart. This ship and I are two brave fellows!—Ha! ha! Some one take me up, and launch me, spine-wise, on the sea,—for by live-oaks! my spine's a keel. Ha, ha! we go the gait that leaves no dust behind!"

"There she blows—she blows!—she blows!—right ahead!" was now the masthead cry.

"Aye, aye!" cried Stubb; "I knew it—ye can't escape—blow on and split your spout, O whale! the mad fiend himself is after ye! blow your trump—blister your lungs!—Ahab will dam off your blood, as a miller shuts his water-gate upon the stream!"

And Stubb did but speak out for well-nigh all that crew. The frenzies of the chase had by this time worked them bubblingly up, like old wine worked anew. Whatever pale fears and forebodings some of them might have felt before; these were not only now kept out of sight through the growing awe of Ahab, but they were broken up, and on all sides routed, as timid prairie hares that scatter before the bounding bison. The hand of Fate had snatched all their souls; and by the stirring perils of the previous day; the rack of the past night's suspense; the fixed, unfearing, blind, reckless way in which their wild craft went plunging towards its flying mark; by all these things, their hearts were bowled along. The wind that made great bellies of their sails, and rushed the vessel on by arms invisible as irresistible; this seemed the symbol of that unseen agency which so enslaved them to the race.

They were one man, not thirty. For as the one ship that held them all; though it was put together of all contrasting things—oak, and maple, and pine wood; iron, and pitch, and hemp—yet all these ran into each other in the one concrete hull, which shot on its way, both balanced and directed by the long central keel; even so, all the individualities of the crew, this man's valor, that man's fear; guilt and guiltiness, all varieties were welded into oneness, and were all

directed to that fatal goal which Ahab their one lord and keel did point to.

The rigging lived. The mastheads, like the tops of tall palms, were outspreadingly tufted with arms and legs. Clinging to a spar with one hand, some reached forth the other with impatient wavings; others, shading their eyes from the vivid sunlight, sat far out on the rocking yards; all the spars in full bearing of mortals, ready and ripe for their fate. Ah! how they still strove through that infinite blueness to seek out the thing that might destroy them!

"Why sing ye not out for him, if ye see him?" cried Ahab, when, after the lapse of some minutes since the first cry, no more had been heard. "Sway me up, men; ye have been deceived; not Moby Dick casts one odd jet that way, and then disappears."

It was even so; in their headlong eagerness, the men had mistaken some other thing for the whale-spout, as the event itself soon proved; for hardly had Ahab reached his perch; hardly was the rope belayed to its pin on deck, when he struck the key-note to an orchestra, that made the air vibrate as with the combined discharges of rifles. The triumphant halloo of thirty buckskin lungs was heard, as—much nearer to the ship than the place of the imaginary jet, less than a mile ahead—Moby Dick bodily burst into view! For not by any calm and indolent spoutings; not by the peaceable gush of that mystic fountain in his head, did the White Whale now reveal his vicinity; but by the far more wondrous phenomenon of breaching. Rising with his utmost velocity from the furthest depths, the Sperm Whale thus booms his entire bulk into the pure element of air, and piling up a mountain of dazzling foam, shows his place to the distance of seven miles and more. In those moments, the torn, enraged waves he shakes off seem his mane; in some cases this breaching is his act of defiance.

"There she breaches! there she breaches!" was the cry, as in his immeasurable bravadoes the White Whale tossed himself salmon-like to Heaven. So suddenly seen in the blue plain of the sea, and relieved against the still bluer margin of the sky, the spray that he raised, for the moment, intolerably glittered and glared like a glacier; and stood there gradually fading and fading away from its

first sparkling intensity, to the dim mistiness of an advancing shower in a vale.

"Aye, breach your last to the sun, Moby Dick!" cried Ahab, "thy hour and thy harpoon are at hand!—Down! down all of ye, but one man at the fore. The boats!—stand by!"

Unmindful of the tedious rope-ladders of the shrouds, the men, like shooting stars, slid to the deck, by the isolated back-stays and halyards; while Ahab, less dartingly, but still rapidly, was dropped from his perch.

"Lower away," he cried, so soon as he had reached his boat—a spare one, rigged the afternoon previous. "Mr. Starbuck, the ship is thine—keep away from the boats, but keep near them. Lower, all!"

As if to strike a quick terror into them, by this time being the first assailant himself, Moby Dick had turned, and was now coming for the three crews. Ahab's boat was central; and cheering his men, he told them he would take the whale head-and-head,—that is, pull straight up to his forehead,—a not uncommon thing; for when within a certain limit, such a course excludes the coming onset from the whale's sidelong vision. But ere that close limit was gained, and while yet all three boats were plain as the ship's three masts to his eye; the White Whale churning himself into furious speed, almost in an instant as it were, rushing among the boats with open jaws, and a lashing tail, offered appalling battle on every side; and heedless of the irons darted at him from every boat, seemed only intent on annihilating each separate plank of which those boats were made. But skillfully maneuvered, incessantly wheeling like trained chargers in the field; the boats for a while eluded him; though, at times, but by a plank's breadth; while all the time, Ahab's unearthly slogan tore every other cry but his to shreds.

But at last in his untraceable evolutions, the White Whale so crossed and recrossed, and in a thousand ways entangled the slack of the three lines now fast to him, that they foreshortened, and, of themselves, warped the devoted boats towards the planted irons in him; though now for a moment the whale drew aside a little, as if to rally for a more tremendous charge. Seizing that opportunity, Ahab first paid out more line; and then was rapidly hauling and jerking in

upon it again—hoping that way to disencumber it of some snarls—when lo!—a sight more savage than the embattled teeth of sharks!

Caught and twisted—corkscrewed in the mazes of the line—loose harpoons and lances, with all their bristling barbs and points, came flashing and dripping up to the chocks in the bows of Ahab's boat. Only one thing could be done. Seizing the boat-knife, he critically reached within—through—and then, without—the rays of steel; dragged in the line beyond, passed it, inboard, to the bowsman, and then, twice sundering the rope near the chocks—dropped the intercepted fagot of steel into the sea; and was all fast again. That instant, the White Whale made a sudden rush among the remaining tangles of the other lines; by so doing, irresistibly dragged the more involved boats of Stubb and Flask towards his flukes; dashed them together like two rolling husks on a surf-beaten beach, and then, diving down into the sea, disappeared in a boiling maelstrom, in which, for a space, the odorous cedar chips of the wrecks danced round and round, like the grated nutmeg in a swiftly stirred bowl of punch.

While the two crews were yet circling in the waters, reaching out after the revolving line-tubs, oars, and other floating furniture, while aslope little Flask bobbed up and down like an empty vial, twitching his legs upwards to escape the dreaded jaws of sharks; and Stubb was lustily singing out for some one to ladle him up; and while the old man's line—now parting—admitted of his pulling into the creamy pool to rescue whom he could;—in that wild simultaneousness of a thousand concerted perils,—Ahab's yet unstricken boat seemed drawn up towards Heaven by invisible wires,—as, arrow-like, shooting perpendicularly from the sea, the White Whale dashed his broad forehead against its bottom, and sent it, turning over and over, into the air; till it fell again—gunwale downwards—and Ahab and his men struggled out from under it, like seals from a seaside cave.

The first uprising momentum of the whale—modifying its direction as he struck the surface—involuntarily launched him along it, to a little distance from the center of the destruction he had made; and with

his back to it, he now lay for a moment slowly feeling with his flukes from side to side; and whenever a stray oar, bit of plank, the least chip or crumb of the boats touched his skin, his tail swiftly drew back, and came sideways, smiting the sea. But soon, as if satisfied that his work for that time was done, he pushed his pleated forehead through the ocean, and trailing after him the intertangled lines, continued his leeward way at a traveler's methodic pace.

As before, the attentive ship having descried the whole fight, again came bearing down to the rescue, and dropping a boat, picked up the floating mariners, tubs, oars, and whatever else could be caught at, and safely landed them on her decks. Some sprained shoulders, wrists, and ankles; livid contusions; wrenched harpoons and lances; inextricable intricacies of rope; shattered oars and planks; all these were there; but no fatal or even serious ill seemed to have befallen any one. As with Fedallah the day before, so Ahab was now found grimly clinging to his boat's broken half, which afforded a comparatively easy float; nor did it so exhaust him as the previous day's mishap.

But when he was helped to the deck, all eyes were fastened upon him; as instead of standing by himself he still half-hung upon the shoulder of Starbuck, who had thus far been the foremost to assist him. His ivory leg had been snapped off, leaving but one short sharp splinter.

"Aye, aye, Starbuck, 'tis sweet to lean sometimes, be the leaner who he will; and would old Ahab had leaned oftener than he has."

"The ferrule has not stood, sir," said the carpenter, now coming up; "I put good work into that leg."

"But no bones broken, sir, I hope," said Stubb with true concern.

"Aye! and all splintered to pieces, Stubb!—d'ye see it.—But even with a broken bone, old Ahab is untouched; and I account no living bone of mine one jot more me, than this dead one that's lost. Nor white whale, nor man, nor fiend, can so much as graze old Ahab in his own proper and inaccessible being. Can any lead touch yonder floor, any mast scrape yonder roof?—Aloft there! which way?"

"Dead to leeward, sir."

"Up helm, then; pile on the sail again, shipkeepers! down the rest of the spare boats and rig them—Mr. Starbuck, away, and muster the boats' crews."

"Let me first help thee towards the bulwarks, sir."

"Oh, oh, oh! how this splinter gores me now! Accursed fate! that the unconquerable captain in the soul should have such a craven mate!"

"Sir?"

"My body, man, not thee. Give me something for a cane—there, that shivered lance will do. Muster the men. Surely I have not seen him yet. By heaven, it cannot be!—missing?—quick! call them all."

The old man's hinted thought was true. Upon mustering the company, the Parsee was not there.

"The Parsee!" cried Stubb—"he must have been caught in——"

"The black vomit wrench thee!—run all of ye above, aloft, cabin, fore-castle—find him—not gone—not gone!"

But quickly they returned to him with the tidings that the Parsee was nowhere to be found.

"Aye, sir," said Stubb—"caught among the tangles of your line—I thought I saw him dragging under."

"My line? *my* line? Gone?—gone?—What means that little word?—What death-knell rings in it, that old Ahab shakes as if he were the belfry. The harpoon, too!—toss over the litter there,—d'ye see it?—the forged iron, men, the white whale's—no, no, no,—blistered fool! this hand did dart it!—'tis in the fish!—Aloft there! Keep him nailed—Quick!—all hands to the rigging of the boats—collect the oars—harpooneers! the irons, the irons!—hoist the royals higher—a pull on all the sheets!—helm there! steady, steady for your life! I'll ten times girdle the unmeasured globe; yea and dive straight through it, but I'll slay him yet!"

"Great God! but for one single instant show thyself," cried Starbuck; "never, never wilt thou capture him, old man.—In Jesus' name no more of this, that's worse than devil's madness. Two days chased; twice stove to splinters; thy very leg once more snatched from under thee; thy evil shadow gone—all good angels mobbing thee with warnings:—what more wouldst thou have?—

Shall we keep chasing this murderous fish till he swamps the last man? Shall we be dragged by him to the bottom of the sea? Shall we be towed by him to the infernal world? Oh, oh!—Impiety and blasphemy to hunt him more!"

"Starbuck, of late I've felt strangely moved to thee; ever since that hour we both saw—thou know'st what, in one another's eyes. But in this matter of the whale, be the front of thy face to me as the palm of this hand—a lipless, unfeatured blank. Ahab is for ever Ahab, man. This whole act's immutably decreed. 'Twas rehearsed by thee and me a billion years before this ocean rolled. Fool! I am the Fates' lieutenant; I act under orders. Look thou, underling! that thou obeyest mine.—Stand round me, men. Ye see an old man cut down to the stump; leaning on a shivered lance; propped up on a lonely foot. 'Tis Ahab—his body's part; but Ahab's soul's a centipede, that moves upon a hundred legs. I feel strained, half stranded, as ropes that tow dismasted frigates in a gale; and I may look so. But ere I break, ye'll hear me crack; and till ye hear *that*, know that Ahab's hawser tows his purpose yet. Believe ye, men, in the things called omens? Then laugh aloud, and cry encore! For ere they drown, drowning things will twice rise to the surface; then rise again, to sink for evermore. So with Moby Dick—two days he's floated—to-morrow will be the third. Aye, men, he'll rise once more—but only to spout his last! D'ye feel brave men, brave?"

"As fearless fire," cried Stubb.

"And as mechanical," muttered Ahab. Then as the men went forward, he muttered on:—"The things called omens! And yesterday I talked the same to Starbuck there, concerning my broken boat. Oh! how valiantly I seek to drive out of others' hearts what's clinched so fast in mine!—The Parsee—the Parsee!—gone, gone? and he was to go before:—but still was to be seen again ere I could perish—How's that?—There's a riddle now might baffle all the lawyers backed by the ghosts of the whole line of judges:—like a hawk's beak it pecks my brain. *I'll, I'll* solve it, though!"

When dusk descended, the whale was still in sight to leeward.

So once more the sail was shortened, and

everything passed nearly as on the previous night; only, the sound of hammers, and the hum of the grindstone was heard till nearly daylight, as the men toiled by lanterns in the complete and careful rigging of the spare boats and sharpening their fresh weapons for the morrow. Meantime, of the broken keel of Ahab's wrecked craft the carpenter made him another leg; while still as on the night before, slouched Ahab stood fixed within his scuttle; his hid heliotrope glance anticipatantly gone backward on its dial; set due eastward for the earliest sun.

CHAPTER CXXXV

THE CHASE—THIRD DAY

THE morning of the third day dawned fair and fresh, and once more the solitary night-man at the fore-masthead was relieved by crowds of the daylight lookouts, who dotted every mast and almost every spar.

"D'ye see him?" cried Ahab; but the whale was not yet in sight.

"In his infallible wake, though; but follow that wake, that's all. Helm there; steady, as thou goest, and hast been going. What a lovely day again! were it a new-made world, and made for a summer-house to the angels, and this morning the first of its throwing open to them, a fairer day could not dawn upon that world. Here's food for thought, had Ahab time to think; but Ahab never thinks; he only feels, feels, feels, *that's* tingling enough for mortal man! to think's audacity. God only has that right and privilege. Thinking is, or ought to be, a coolness and a calmness; and our poor hearts throb, and our poor brains beat too much for that. And yet, I've sometimes thought my brain was very calm—frozen calm, this old skull cracks so, like a glass in which the contents turn to ice, and shiver it. And still this hair is growing now; this moment growing, and heat must breed it; but no, it's like that sort of common grass that will grow anywhere, between the earthly clefts of Greenland ice or in Vesuvius lava. How the wild winds blow it; they whip it about me as the torn shreds of split sails lash the tossed ship they cling to. A vile wind that has no doubt blown ere this through prison corridors and cells, and wards of

hospitals, and ventilated them, and now comes blowing hither as innocent as fleeces. Out upon it!—it's tainted. Were I the wind, I'd blow no more on such a wicked, miserable world. I'd crawl somewhere to a cave, and slink there. And yet, 'tis a noble and heroic thing, the wind! who ever conquered it? In every fight it has the last and bitterest blow. Run tilting at it, and you but run through it. Ha! a coward wind that strikes stark naked men, but will not stand to receive a single blow. Even Ahab is a braver thing—a nobler thing than *that*. Would now the wind but had a body; but all the things that most exasperate and outrage mortal man, all these things are bodiless, but only bodiless as objects, not as agents. There's a most special, a most cunning, oh, a most malicious difference! And yet, I say again, and swear it now, that there's something all glorious and gracious in the wind. These warm Trade Winds, at least, that in the clear heavens blow straight on, in strong and steadfast, vigorous mildness; and veer not from their mark, however the baser currents of the sea may turn and tack, and mightiest Mississippis of the land shift and swerve about, uncertain where to go at last. And by the eternal Poles! these same Trades that so directly blow my good ship on; these Trades, or something like them—something so unchangeable, and full as strong, blow my keeled soul along! To it! Aloft there! What d'ye see?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Nothing! and noon at hand! The doubloon goes a-begging! See the sun! Aye, aye, it must be so. I've oversailed him. How, got the start? Aye, he's chasing *me* now; not I, *him*—that's bad; I might have known it, too. Fool! the lines—the harpoons he's towing. Aye, aye, I have run him by last night. About! about! Come down, all of ye, but the regular lookouts! Man the braces!"

Steering as she had done, the wind had been somewhat on the *Pequod's* quarter, so that now being pointed in the reverse direction, the braced ship sailed hard upon the breeze as she recharged the cream in her own white wake.

"Against the wind he now steers for the open jaw," murmured Starbuck to himself, as he coiled the new-hauled main-brace

upon the rail. "God keep us, but already my bones feel damp within me, and from the inside wet my flesh. I misdoubt me that I disobey my God in obeying him!"

"Stand by to sway me up!" cried Ahab, advancing to the hempen basket. "We should meet him soon."

"Aye, aye, sir," and straightway Starbuck did Ahab's bidding, and once more Ahab swung on high.

A whole hour now passed; gold-beaten out to ages. Time itself now held long breaths with keen suspense. But at last, some three points off the weather-bow, Ahab descried the spout again, and instantly from the three mastheads three shrieks went up as if the tongues of fire had voiced it.

"Forehead to forehead I meet thee, this third time, Moby Dick! On deck there!—brace sharper up; crowd her into the wind's eye. He's too far off to lower yet, Mr. Starbuck. The sails shake! Stand over that helmsman with a topmaul! So, so; he travels fast, and I must down. But let me have one more good round look aloft here at the sea; there's time for that. An old, old sight, and yet somehow so young; aye, and not changed a wink since I first saw it, a boy, from the sandhills of Nantucket! The same!—the same!—the same to Noah as to me. There's a soft shower to leeward. Such lovely leewardings! They must lead somewhere—to something else than common land, more palmy than the palms. Leeward! the white whale goes that way; look to windward, then; the better if the bitterer quarter. But good-bye, good-bye, old masthead! What's this?—green? ay, tiny mosses in these warped cracks. No such green weather stains on Ahab's head! There's the difference now between man's old age and matter's. But aye, old mast, we both grow old together; sound in our hulls, though, are we not, my ship? Aye, minus a leg, that's all. By heaven! this dead wood has the better of my live flesh every way. I can't compare with it; and I've known some ships made of dead trees outlast the lives of men made of the most vital stuff of vital fathers. What's that he said? he should still go before me, my pilot; and yet to be seen again? But where? Shall I have eyes at the bottom of the sea, supposing I descend those endless stairs?

and all night I've been sailing from him, wherever he did sink to. Aye, aye, like many more thou told'st direful truth as touching thyself, O Parsee; but, Ahab, there thy shot fell short. Good-bye, mast-head—keep a good eye upon the whale, the while I'm gone. We'll talk to-morrow, nay, to-night, when the white whale lies down there, tied by head and tail."

He gave the word; and still gazing round him, was steadily lowered through the cloven blue air to the deck.

In due time the boats were lowered; but as standing in his shallop's stern, Ahab just hovered upon the point of the descent, he waved to the mate,—who held one of the tackle-ropes on deck—and bade him pause.

"Starbuck!"

"Sir?"

"For the third time my soul's ship starts upon this voyage, Starbuck."

"Aye, sir, thou wilt have it so."

"Some ships sail from their ports, and ever afterwards are missing, Starbuck!"

"Truth, sir: saddest truth."

"Some men die at ebb tide; some at low water; some at the full of the flood;—and I feel now like a billow that's all one crested comb, Starbuck. I am old;—shake hands with me, man."

Their hands met; their eyes fastened; Starbuck's tears the glue.

"Oh, my captain, my captain!—noble heart—go not—go not!—see, it's a brave man that weeps; how great the agony of the persuasion then!"

"Lower away!"—cried Ahab, tossing the mate's arm from him. "Stand by the crew!"

In an instant the boat was pulling round close under the stern.

"The sharks! the sharks!" cried a voice from the low cabin-window there; "O master, my master, come back!"

But Ahab heard nothing; for his own voice was high-lifted then; and the boat leaped on.

Yet the voice spake true; for scarce had he pushed from the ship, when numbers of sharks, seemingly rising from out the dark waters beneath the hull, maliciously snapped at the blades of the oars, every time they dipped in the water; and in this way accompanied the boat with their bites. It is a

thing not uncommonly happening to the whale-boats in those swarming seas; the sharks at times apparently following them in the same prescient way that vultures hover over the banners of marching regiments in the east. But these were the first sharks that had been observed by the *Pequod* since the White Whale had been first descried; and whether it was that Ahab's crew were all such tiger-yellow barbarians, and therefore their flesh more musky to the senses of the sharks—a matter sometimes well known to affect them,—however it was, they seemed to follow that one boat without molesting the others.

"Heart of wrought steel!" murmured Starbuck, gazing over the side, and following with his eyes the receding boat—"canst thou yet ring boldly to that sight?—lowering thy keel among ravening sharks, and followed by them, open-mouthed, to the chase; and this the critical third day?—For when three days flow together in one continuous intense pursuit; be sure the first is the morning, the second the noon, and the third the evening and the end of that thing—be that end what it may. Oh! my God! what is this that shoots through me, and leaves me so deadly calm, yet expectant,—fixed at the top of a shudder! Future things swim before me, as in empty outlines and skeletons; all the past is somehow grown dim. Mary, girl! thou fadest in pale glories behind me; boy! I seem to see but thy eyes grown wondrous blue. Strangest problems of life seem clearing; but clouds sweep between—Is my journey's end coming? My legs feel faint; like his who has footed it all day. Feel thy heart,—beats it yet?—Stir thyself, Starbuck!—stave it off—move, move! speak aloud!—Masthead there! See ye my boy's hand on the hill?—Crazed;—aloft there!—keep thy keenest eye upon the boats:—mark well the whale!—Ho! again!—drive off that hawk! see! he pecks—he tears the vane"—pointing to the red flag flying at the main-truck—"Ha! he soars away with it!—Where's the old man now? sees't thou that sight, oh Ahab!—shudder, shudder!"

The boats had not gone very far, when by a signal from the mastheads—a downward pointed arm, Ahab knew that the whale had sounded; but intending to be near him at

the next rising, he held on his way a little sideways from the vessel; the becharmed crew maintaining the profoundest silence, as the head-beat waves hammered and hammered against the opposing bow.

"Drive, drive in your nails, oh ye waves! to their uttermost heads drive them in! ye but strike a thing without a lid; and no coffin and no hearse can be mine:—and hemp only can kill me! Ha! ha!"

Suddenly the waters around them slowly swelled in broad circles; then quickly upheaved, as if sideways sliding from a submerged berg of ice, swiftly rising to the surface. A low rumbling sound was heard; a subterranean hum; and then all held their breaths; as bedraggled with trailing ropes, and harpoons, and lances, a vast form shot lengthwise, but obliquely from the sea. Shrouded in a thin drooping veil of mist, it hovered for a moment in the rainbowed air; and then fell swamping back into the deep. Crushed thirty feet upwards, the waters flashed for an instant like heaps of fountains, then brokenly sank in a shower of flakes, leaving the circling surface creamed like new milk round the marble trunk of the whale.

"Give way!" cried Ahab to the oarsmen and the boats darted forward to the attack; but maddened by yesterday's fresh irons that corroded in him, Moby Dick seemed combinedly possessed by all the angels that fell from heaven. The wide tiers of welded tendons overspreading his broad white forehead, beneath the transparent skin, looked knitted together; as head on, he came churning his tail among the boats; and once more flailed them apart; spilling out the irons and lances from the two mates' boats, and dashing in one side of the upper part of their bows, but leaving Ahab's almost without a scar.

While Daggoo and Queequeg were stopping the strained planks; and as the whale swimming out from them, turned, and showed one entire flank as he shot by them again; at that moment a quick cry went up. Lashed round and round to the fish's back; pinioned in the turns upon turns in which, during the past night, the whale had reeled the involutions of the lines around him, the half torn body of the Parsee was seen; his sable raiment frayed to shreds; his distended eyes turned full upon old Ahab.

The harpoon dropped from his hand.

"Befooled, befooled!"—drawing in a long lean breath—"Aye, Parsee! I see thee again.—Aye, and thou goest before; and this, *this* then is the hearse that thou didst promise. But I hold thee to the last letter of thy word. Where is the second hearse? Away, mates, to the ship! those boats are useless now; repair them if ye can in time, and return to me; if not, Ahab is enough to die—Down, men! the first thing that but offers to jump from this boat I stand in, that thing I harpoon. Ye are not other men, but my arms and my legs; and so obey me.—Where's the whale? gone down again?"

But he looked too nigh the boat; for as if bent upon escaping with the corpse he bore, and as if the particular place of the last encounter had been but a stage in his leeward voyage, Moby Dick was now again steadily swimming forward; and had almost passed the ship,—which thus far had been sailing in the contrary direction to him, though for the present her headway had been stopped. He seemed swimming with his utmost velocity, and now only intent upon pursuing his own straight path in the sea.

"Oh! Ahab," cried Starbuck, "not too late is it, even now, the third day, to desist. See! Moby Dick seeks thee not. It is thou, thou, that madly seekest him!"

Setting sail to the rising wind, the lonely boat was swiftly impelled to leeward, by both oars and canvas. And at last when Ahab was sliding by the vessel, so near as plainly to distinguish Starbuck's face as he leaned over the rail, he hailed him to turn the vessel about, and follow him, not too swiftly, at a judicious interval. Glancing upwards, he saw Tashtego, Queequeg, and Daggoo, eagerly mounting to the three mast-heads; while the oarsmen were rocking in the two staved boats which had just been hoisted to the side, and were busily at work in repairing them. One after the other, through the port-holes, as he sped, he also caught flying glimpses of Stubb and Flask, busying themselves on deck among bundles of new irons and lances. As he saw all this; as he heard the hammers in the broken boats; far other hammers seemed driving a nail into his heart. But he rallied. And now marking that the vane or flag was gone from the main masthead, he shouted to Tashtego,

who had just gained that perch, to descend again for another flag, and a hammer and nails, and so nail it to the mast.

Whether fagged by the three days' running chase, and the resistance to his swimming in the knotted hamper he bore; or whether it was some latent deceitfulness and malice in him: whichever was true, the White Whale's way now began to abate, as it seemed, from the boat so rapidly nearing him once more; though indeed the whale's last start had not been so long a one as before. And still as Ahab glided over the waves the un pitying sharks accompanied him; and so pertinaciously stuck to the boat; and so continually bit at the plying oars, that the blades became jagged and crunched, and left small splinters in the sea, at almost every dip.

"Heed them not! those teeth but give new rowlocks to your oars. Pull on! 'tis the better rest, the shark's jaw than the yielding water."

"But at every bite, sir, the thin blades grow smaller and smaller!"

"They will last long enough! pull on!—But who can tell"—he muttered—"whether these sharks swim to feast on the whale or on Ahab?—But pull on! Aye, all alive, now—we near him. The helm! take the helm; let me pass,"—and so saying, two of the oarsmen helped him forward to the bows of the still flying boat.

At length as the craft was cast to one side, and ran ranging along with the White Whale's flank, he seemed strangely oblivious of its advance—as the whale sometimes will—and Ahab was fairly within the smoky mountain mist, which, thrown off from the whale's spout, curled round his great Monadnock hump. He was even thus close to him; when, with body arched back, and both arms lengthwise high-lifted to the poise, he darted his fierce iron, and his far fiercer curse into the hated whale. As both steel and curse sank to the socket, as if sucked into a morass, Moby Dick sideways writhed; spasmodically rolled his nigh flank against the bow, and, without staving a hole in it, so suddenly canted the boat over, that had it not been for the elevated part of the gunwale to which he then clung, Ahab would once more have been tossed into the sea. As it was, three of the oarsmen—who foreknew

not the precise instant of the dart, and were therefore unprepared for its effects—these were flung out; but so fell, that, in an instant two of them clutched the gunwale again, and rising to its level on a combing wave, hurled themselves bodily inboard again; the third man helplessly dropping astern, but still afloat and swimming.

Almost simultaneously, with a mighty volition of ungraduated, instantaneous swiftness, the White Whale darted through the weltering sea. But when Ahab cried out to the steersman to take new turns with the line, and hold it so; and commanded the crew to turn round on their seats, and tow the boat up to the mark; the moment the treacherous line felt that double strain and tug, it snapped in the empty air!

"What breaks in me? Some sinew cracks!—'tis whole again; oars! oars! Burst in upon him!"

Hearing the tremendous rush of the sea-crashing boat, the whale wheeled round to present his blank forehead at bay; but in that evolution, catching sight of the nearing black hull of the ship; seemingly seeing in it the source of all his persecutions; bethinking it—it may be—a larger and nobler foe; of a sudden, he bore down upon its advancing prow, smiting his jaws amid fiery showers of foam.

Ahab staggered; his hand smote his forehead. "I grow blind; hands! stretch out before me that I may yet grope my way. Is't night?"

"The whale! The ship!" cried the cringing oarsmen.

"Oars! oars! Slope downwards to thy depths, O sea, that ere it be for ever too late, Ahab may slide this last, last time upon his mark! I see: the ship! the ship! Dash on, my men! Will ye not save my ship?"

But as the oarsmen violently forced their boat through the sledge-hammering seas, the before whale-smitten bow-ends of two planks burst through, and in an instant almost, the temporarily disabled boat lay nearly level with the waves; its half-wading, splashing crew, trying hard to stop the gap and bale out the pouring water.

Meantime, for that one beholding instant, Tashtego's masthead hammer remained suspended in his hand; and the red flag, half-wrapping him as with a plaid, then streamed

itself straight out from him, as his own forward-flowing heart; while Starbuck and Stubb, standing upon the bowsprit beneath, caught sight of the down-coming monster just as soon as he.

"The whale, the whale! Up helm, up helm! Oh, all ye sweet powers of air, now hug me close! Let not Starbuck die, if die he must, in a woman's fainting fit. Up helm, I say—ye fools, the jaw! the jaw! Is this the end of all my bursting prayers? all my life-long fidelities? Oh, Ahab, Ahab, lo, thy work. Steady! helmsman, steady. Nay, nay! Up helm again! He turns to meet us! Oh, his unappeasable brow drives on towards one, whose duty tells him he cannot depart. My God, stand by me now!

"Stand not by me, but stand under me, whoever you are that will now help Stubb; for Stubb, too, sticks here. I grin at thee, thou grinning whale! Whoever helped Stubb, or kept Stubb awake, but Stubb's own unwinking eye? And now poor Stubb goes to bed upon a mattress that is all too soft; would it were stuffed with brushwood! I grin at thee, thou grinning whale! Look ye, sun, moon, and stars! I call ye assassins of as good a fellow as ever spouted up his ghost. For all that, I would yet ring glasses with ye, would ye but hand the cup! Oh, oh, oh! thou grinning whale, but there'll be plenty of gulping soon! Why fly ye not, O Ahab? For me, off shoes and jacket to it; let Stubb die in his drawers! A most moldy and over-salted death, though;—cherries! cherries! cherries! Oh, Flask, for one red cherry ere we die!"

"Cherries? I only wish that we were where they grow. Oh, Stubb, I hope my poor mother's drawn my part-pay ere this; if not, few coppers will come to her now, for the voyage is up."

From the ship's bows, nearly all the seamen now hung inactive; hammers, bits of plank, lances, and harpoons, mechanically retained in their hands, just as they had darted from their various employments; all their enchanted eyes intent upon the whale, which from side to side strangely vibrating his predestinating head, sent a broad band of overspreading semicircular foam before him as he rushed. Retribution, swift vengeance, eternal malice were in his whole aspect, and spite of all that mortal man

could do, the solid white buttress of his forehead smote the ship's starboard bow, till men and timbers reeled. Some fell flat upon their faces. Like dislodged trucks, the heads of the harpooners aloft shook on their bull-like necks. Through the breach, they heard the waters pour, as mountain torrents down a flume.

"The ship! The hearse!—the second hearse!" cried Ahab from the boat; "its wood could only be American!"

Diving beneath the settling ship, the Whale ran quivering along its keel; but turning under water, swiftly shot to the surface again, far off the other bow, but within a few yards of Ahab's boat, where, for a time, he lay quiescent.

"I turn my body from the sun. What ho, Tashtego! let me hear thy hammer. Oh! ye three unsundered spires of mine; thou uncracked keel; the only god-bullied hull; thou firm deck, and haughty helm, and Pole-pointed prow,—death-glorious ship! must ye then perish, and without me? Am I cut off from the last fond pride of meanest shipwrecked captains? Oh, lonely death on lonely life! Oh, now I feel my topmost greatness lies in my topmost grief. Ho, ho! from all your furthest bounds, pour ye now in, ye bold billows of my whole foregone life, and top this one piled comber of my death! Towards thee I roll, thou all-destroying but unconquering whale; to the last I grapple with thee; from hell's heart I stab at thee; for hate's sake I spit my last breath at thee. Sink all coffins and all hearses to one common pool! and since neither can be mine let me then tow to pieces, while still chasing thee, though tied to thee, thou damned whale! *Thus, I give up the spear!*"

The harpoon was darted; the stricken whale flew forward; with igniting velocity the line ran through the groove; ran foul. Ahab stooped to clear it; he did clear it; but the flying turn caught him round the neck and, voicelessly as Turkish mutes bow-string their victim, he was shot out of the boat, ere the crew knew he was gone. Next instant, the heavy eyesplice in the rope's final end flew out of the stark-empty tub, knocked down an oarsman, and smiting the sea, disappeared in its depths.

For an instant, the tranced boat's crew stood still; then turned. "The ship?

Great God, where is the ship? Soon they through dim, bewildering mediums saw her sidelong fading phantom, as in the gaseous *Fata Morgana*; only the uppermost masts out of water; while fixed by infatuation, or fidelity, or fate, to their once lofty perches, the pagan harpooners still maintained their sinking lookouts on the sea. And now, concentric circles seized the lone boat itself, and all its crew, and each floating oar, and every lance-pole, and spinning, animate and inanimate, all round and round in one vortex, carried the smallest chip of the *Pequod* out of sight.

But as the last whelmings intermixingly poured themselves over the sunken head of the Indian at the mainmast, leaving a few inches of the erect spar yet visible, together with long streaming yards of the flag, which calmly undulated, with ironical coincidings, over the destroying billows they almost touched;—at that instant, a red arm and a hammer hovered backwardly uplifted in the open air, in the act of nailing the flag faster and yet faster to the subsiding spar. A sky-hawk that tauntingly had followed the main-truck downwards from its natural home among the stars, pecking at the flag, and incommoding Tashtego there; this bird now chanced to intercept its broad fluttering wing between the hammer and the wood; and simultaneously feeling that ethereal thrill, the submerged savage beneath, in his death-gasp, kept his hammer frozen there; and so the bird of heaven, with arch-angelic shrieks, and his imperial beak thrust upwards, and his whole captive form folded in the flag of Ahab, went down with his ship, which, like Satan, would not sink to hell till she had dragged a living part of heaven along with her, and helmeted herself with it.

Now small fowls flew screaming over the yet yawning gulf; a sullen white surf beat against its steep sides; then all collapsed, and the great shroud of the sea rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago.

EPILOGUE

And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.—*Job*.

THE drama's done. Why then here does anyone step forth?—Because one did survive the wreck.

It so chanced, that after the Parsee's dis-

appearance, I was he whom the Fates ordained to take the place of Ahab's bowsman, when that bowsman assumed the vacant post; the same, who, when on the last day the three men were tossed from out the rocking boat, was dropped astern. So, floating on the margin of the ensuing scene, and in full sight of it, when the half-spent suction of the sunk ship reached me, I was then, but slowly, drawn towards the closing vortex. When I reached it, it had subsided to a creamy pool. Round and round, then, and ever contracting towards the button-like black bubble at the axis of that slowly wheeling circle, like another Ixion I did revolve. Till, gaining that vital center, the black bubble upward burst; and now, liberated by reason of its cunning spring, and, owing to its great

buoyancy, rising with great force, the coffin life-buoy shot lengthwise from the sea, fell over, and floated by my side. Buoyed up by that coffin, for almost one whole day and night, I floated on a soft and dirge-like main. The unharmed sharks, they glided by as if with padlocks on their mouths; the savage sea-hawks sailed with sheathed beaks. On the second day, a sail drew near, nearer, and picked me up at last. It was the devious-cruising *Rachel*,¹ that in her retracing search after her missing children, only found another orphan.

¹ A whaler whose meeting with the *Pequod* is told in Chap. CXXVIII. The *Rachel* had encountered Moby Dick, and one of her boats had disappeared in pursuing the White Whale. In the boat was a son of the *Rachel's* captain, and he was still searching for it.

WALT WHITMAN (1819-1892)

Of mingled Dutch and English ancestry, Whitman was born on 31 May, 1819, at West Hills, a small village near Huntington, Long Island. His father at this time was a farmer. Some time between 1823 and 1825 the family moved in to Brooklyn, and thereafter Whitman's father earned his living as a carpenter and housebuilder. The boy attended Brooklyn schools for several years without showing any promise, and then, at about the age of eleven, became an office-boy to a lawyer, and later to a physician. When he was twelve he was employed by a printer and, after he had learned to set type, he found work as a compositor in the printing establishments of several newspapers in Brooklyn and New York. In 1836 for some reason he turned back to the country and for several years was a school-teacher—neither a very competent nor a very successful one—in a number of country schools on Long Island. In the summer of 1838 he attempted to start a newspaper at Huntington, but was so irregular in his work that after some months those who were supporting the project dismissed him. Again he became a school-teacher, and in Jamaica from 1839 to 1841 he combined teaching with work in a printing-office. At this time he was regarded as a lazy and ineffectual young man; he was certainly discontented, but seemed to be given over to hazy reverie rather than to be following, or even planning, any active method of bettering his condition. He was, however, already dreaming, if vaguely, of writing a book of some kind to recall men to the truth of their nature. He wanted to warn them against "the mania of owning things." He was perhaps beginning to have those mystical experiences which later became more definite and complete, and which gave him increasing confidence in the inner light which guided him as, presumably, it had guided his Quaker ancestors. It was only gradually, however, that his inner light became strong enough to compel obedience;—that is, to compel him to direct, confident, and energetic pursuit of a definitely conceived purpose. Meanwhile his activities were to remain for some years miscellaneous in character. They constituted, on the whole, a good preparation for his later work, but there is no reason to suppose that they were part of a deliberate, comprehensive plan.

In 1841 Whitman returned to the city, working during the next seven years on many periodicals and newspapers, in both New York and Brooklyn. He took what work he could get, as compositor, or contributor, or editor. As a writer he supported reforms which at this time were being plentifully urged upon the American people, and he became, for the moment, an indiscriminating sentimental humanitarian. Stimulated by gin-punch, he produced *Franklin Evans* (1842), a cheap, melodramatic narrative exhibiting—perhaps to himself as well as to others—the evils of drinking. He wrote, too, against the use of tea, coffee, and tobacco. As a reformer, however, he soon developed lines of his own, showing good sense and insight, and urging his causes with courage and persistence. He contended in his editorial writings for a more generous support and more careful supervision of education, for the use of milder methods of teaching than the usual flogging system, and for changes in the school-curriculum designed to adapt it to the actual needs of future citizens of a modern democracy. And "his hatred for sham in education was matched by his disgust at sham everywhere. Another subject of frequent recurrence was America's tendency to ape the Old World in music, art, literature, manners, and the drama. Another was the dangers of materialism, whether in the form of African slavery or in the more alluring guise of ordinary money-making. Other favorite themes were: the abolition of capital punishment, the evils of intemperance, sympathy for the unfortunate and the criminal, a living wage for working women, the ennobling influence of the gentler sex, the beauty and educative function of nature, the greatness and the origin and destiny of America, the free spirit of the West, the necessity of the Union, the need of personal cleanliness and of æsthetic surroundings, the opportunities for civic improvement, the absurdities of fashion, the mission of democracy, and the blessing of good books." (E. Holloway, *Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman*, I, lxxviii.) He also during this period wrote a number of book-reviews, two of which show that he was acquainted with the writings of Carlyle at least as early as 1846 and with those of Emerson at least as early as 1847. But not all of his time went directly into his work. For "he missed nothing that was to be seen. He attended the theater and the opera; he studied the fairs and exhibitions; he patronized the public baths; he was familiar with all the police courts and the slums; he wrote crude special articles on Sing Sing, on the hospitals, the asylums, the schools; he attended picnics, went on steamboat and railway excursions, and was present to take part in political meetings and celebrations. He attended

lectures and concerts, gazed in awe at the great city fires, and loitered amidst the shipping and on the ferries. Wherever human life was 'magnificently moving in vast masses,' there was he to feel and absorb it." (E. Holloway, as above, I, xl-xli.)

The most important post which Whitman held during these years was that of editor of *The Daily Brooklyn Eagle* (1846-1848), and when he was dismissed from this position because of his irregular manner of working and also because of his "progressive politics" he secured another on a newly-established New Orleans newspaper. He remained in New Orleans about three months, and he may have formed, while there, a connection with an unknown woman, probably married, which resulted in his becoming a father. Little is known about this aspect of Whitman's life, practically all information concerning it coming, in the vaguest terms, from Whitman himself. On one occasion he admitted that he was the father of six children, and added that "their fortune and benefit" precluded his having intimate relations with them. Probably he meant that their mothers were married women. Further, he told John Burroughs that in the years before he went to New Orleans he had "sounded all experiences of life, with all their passions, pleasures, and abandonments." And it appears certain that during the period of his Washington residence he established a connection with a married woman there. But beyond this meager knowledge all is conjecture concerning Whitman's relations with women and concerning his children.

Upon his return from New Orleans Whitman again took up newspaper work in Brooklyn, editing the *Brooklyn Freeman* until September, 1849, when he parted from the paper with these last editorial words: "To those who have been my friends, I take occasion to proffer the warmest thanks of a grateful heart. My enemies—and old hunkers generally—I disdain and defy the same as ever." He continued newspaper work in following years, perhaps went again to New Orleans, perhaps assisted his father for a time in housebuilding, and certainly spent much time in reading, loafing, and writing the new kind of poetry which, as his notebooks show, he had begun to compose as early as 1847. In 1855 twelve of the new poems, carefully revised and rewritten, were printed in a thin volume in Brooklyn, under the title *Leaves of Grass*. It is not known exactly what earlier writings may have aided Whitman in the invention of his irregular poetic form. The Bible and Macpherson's *Ossian* probably helped him to its discovery, and perhaps the blank verse of Shakespeare and Bryant and the prose of Carlyle and Emerson, but, whatever sources of suggestion he was conscious of, he was really the inventor of the form he used. He expected his book to be attacked, and attacked it was, but it received little notice of any kind; and he would have had cause only for discouragement over the fate of his long-prepared effort "to loosen the mind of still-to-be-formed America from the folds, the superstitions, and all the long, tenacious, and stifling anti-democratic authorities of Asiatic and European past," had it not been that he received a warmly congratulatory letter from Emerson, who thus recognized the discipleship which Whitman proclaimed. He proceeded in 1856 to print a second edition of *Leaves of Grass*, in which he included twenty new poems, and Emerson's letter together with his reply, and some press notices, and on the back of the cover he had stamped a sentence from Emerson's letter: "I greet you at the beginning of a great career, R. W. Emerson." This annoyed Emerson and probably did not much help the book. At intervals Whitman continued through the rest of his life to issue new editions of *Leaves of Grass*, constantly revising it and making important additions of new poems or groups of poems, and slowly winning a larger public as well as many warmly sympathetic friends in both England and America.

Meanwhile he still had his living to earn, and he resumed newspaper work in Brooklyn for several years. He planned to deliver lectures in the late 1850's, but nothing came of the project. In 1860 he was in Boston, seeing something of Emerson and other friends made through *Leaves of Grass*, and issuing there the third edition of that volume. The Civil War was, of course, a profound and tragic challenge to Whitman's faith in democracy, but it seems never to have shaken that faith, while it gradually deepened his insight into life and chastened and ennobled his nature. At the end of 1862 he went down into Virginia to care for a wounded brother, and thus drifted into work for the relief and comfort of other sick and wounded soldiers—work which took all his time and strength and tenderness during the next several years, as well as all the money he could earn through newspaper correspondence and clerical employment and all that he could secure through friends. He continued to live in Washington, where most of his great work for the soldiers was done, supported by a government clerkship, until an attack of paralysis in 1873 compelled him to give up his position. He then went to live in Camden, New Jersey, with a brother, and there he lived until his death. He gradually recovered a portion of his strength, and was able in 1879 to travel to Colorado and in the following year to Canada, and later to undertake shorter journeys, to see John Burroughs, to revisit Long Island, and the like, and he continued to write, but he never fully recovered and he was never able to complete his projected sequel to *Leaves of Grass*, in which he wished to treat of the spiritual aspect of life and to show that "the unseen soul governs absolutely at last." In 1884 he bought a small house in

Camden with the profits from the 1882 edition of the *Leaves*, and here he died, serene and still hopeful despite long illness, some persecution, and other trials enough, on 26 March, 1892. He lived sufficiently long to see his work fairly accepted; and while controversy over it has continued since his death, and is not likely soon to cease, still, it is at least evident that he has taken his place near the head of American writers. No other American save Emerson has exercised such an influence as he has over later thought, and he stands alone in the extent and importance of his influence over later poetry.

SHUT NOT YOUR DOORS ¹

SHUT not your doors to me proud libraries,
For that which was lacking on all your well-filled shelves, yet needed most, I bring,
Forth from the war emerging, a book I have made,
The words of my book nothing, the drift of it every thing,
A book separate, not linked with the rest nor felt by the intellect,
But you ye untold latencies will thrill to every page.

POETS TO COME

POETS to come! orators, singers, musicians to come!
Not to-day is to justify me and answer what I am for,
But you, a new brood, native, athletic, continental, greater than before known,
Arouse! for you must justify me.

I myself but write one or two indicative words for the future,
I but advance a moment only to wheel and hurry back in the darkness.

I am a man who, sauntering along without fully stopping, turns a casual look upon you and
then averts his face,
Leaving it to you to prove and define it,
Expecting the main things from you.

STARTING FROM PAUMANOK ²

I

STARTING from fish-shape Paumanok where I was born,
Well-begotten, and raised by a perfect mother,
After roaming many lands, lover of populous pavements,

¹ It has seemed best to follow, not the chronological order, but Whitman's own arrangement of his poems, in reprinting these selections from *Leaves of Grass*. The chronological order can be determined, by those who wish to do so, from the footnotes. From the beginning Whitman regarded his poems, not as separate wholes, but as parts of a comprehensive picture of "the deliberate and progressive unfolding of the conscious life of a man who is at once individual and typical," and *Leaves of Grass* is "so arranged as to present first the foundations and implications of such a life and to fill in afterwards the various stages of experience and reflection." (B. de Sélincourt.) The scheme was loose, it was not followed with entire consistency, and it was left uncompleted. Obviously for ideal completeness the poet had to live his book before he wrote it, and it could be completed only with death, so that a measure of incompleteness was inevitable; but this was increased because after 1873 Whitman was unable to work continuously at his highest level. Nevertheless, the poems are best studied and understood in the order in which Whitman deliberately placed them. The introduction to the book comprises a group of short pieces having the general title *Inscriptions*, from which the first two poems above are taken, and the important longer poem, *Starting from Paumanok*, which immediately follows them. *Shut Not Your Doors* was first published in 1865, and appeared in *Leaves of Grass* in its present form in 1881. (The date corresponding to the second of these two will in subsequent cases be given in parentheses following the first, with L. G. placed before it.) *Poets to Come* was first published in 1860 (L. G., 1867).

The selections from Whitman are reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Doubleday, Page, and Company, the authorized publishers of Whitman's writings. For the poems the Inclusive Edition of *Leaves of Grass*, edited by Emory Holloway, has been followed.

² First published 1860 (L. G., 1881). "Paumanok" is Long Island. This "important and noble poem . . . expounds the whole purpose of *Leaves of Grass*, sounding together its three harmonizing notes of individualism and religion and love." (B. de Sélincourt.)

Dweller in Mannahatta my city, or on southern savannas,
 Or a soldier camped or carrying my knapsack and gun, or a miner in California,
 Or rude in my home in Dakota's woods, my diet meat, my drink from the spring,
 Or withdrawn to muse and meditate in some deep recess,
 Far from the clank of crowds intervals passing rapt and happy,
 Aware of the fresh free giver the flowing Missouri, aware of mighty Niagara,
 Aware of the buffalo herds grazing the plains, the hirsute and strong-breasted bull, 10
 Of earth, rocks, Fifth-month flowers experienced, stars, rain, snow, my amaze,
 Having studied the mocking-bird's tones and the flight of the mountain-hawk,
 And heard at dawn the unrivaled one, the hermit thrush from the swamp-cedars,
 Solitary, singing in the West, I strike up for a New World.

II

Victory, union, faith, identity, time,
 The indissoluble compacts, riches, mystery,
 Eternal progress, the kosmos, and the modern reports.

This then is life,
 Here is what has come to the surface after so many throes and convulsions

How curious! how real!
 Underfoot the divine soil, overhead the sun. 20

See revolving the globe,
 The ancestor-continent away grouped together,
 The present and future continents north and south, with the isthmus between.

See, vast trackless spaces,
 As in a dream they change, they swiftly fill,
 Countless masses debouch upon them,
 They are now covered with the foremost people, arts, institutions, known.

See, projected through time,
 For me an audience interminable. 30

With firm and regular step they wend, they never stop,
 Successions of men, Americanos, a hundred millions,
 One generation playing its part and passing on,
 Another generation playing its part and passing on in its turn,
 With faces turned sideways or backward towards me to listen,
 With eyes retrospective towards me.

III

Americanos! conquerors! marches humanitarian!
 Foremost! century marches! Libertad! masses!
 For you a programme of chants.

Chants of the prairies, 40
 Chants of the long-running Mississippi, and down to the Mexican sea,
 Chants of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota,
 Chants going forth from the center from Kansas, and thence equidistant,
 Shooting in pulses of fire ceaseless to vivify all.

IV

Take my leaves America, take them South and take them North,
 Make welcome for them everywhere, for they are your own offspring,
 Surround them East and West, for they would surround you,
 And you precedents, connect lovingly with them, for they connect lovingly with you.

I conned old times,
 I sat studying at the feet of the great masters,
 Now if eligible O that the great masters might return and study me.

50

In the name of these States shall I scorn the antique?
 Why these are the children of the antique to justify it.

V

Dead poets, philosophers, priests,
 Martyrs, artists, inventors, governments long since,
 Language-shapers on other shores,
 Nations once powerful, now reduced, withdrawn, or desolate,
 I dare not proceed till I respectfully credit what you have left wafted hither,
 I have perused it, own it is admirable (moving awhile among it),
 Think nothing can ever be greater, nothing can ever deserve more than it deserves,
 Regarding it all intently a long while, then dismissing it,
 I stand in my place with my own day here.

60

Here lands female and male,
 Here the heir-ship and heiress-ship of the world, here the flame of materials,
 Here spirituality the translatress, the openly-avowed,
 The ever-tending, the finale of visible forms,
 The satisfier, after due long-waiting now advancing,
 Yes here comes my mistress the soul.

VI

The soul,
 Forever and forever—longer than soil is brown and solid—longer than water ebbs and
 flows.

70

I will make the poems of materials, for I think they are to be the most spiritual poems,
 And I will make the poems of my body and of mortality,
 For I think I shall then supply myself with the poems of my soul and of immortality.

I will make a song for these States that no one State may under any circumstances be sub-
 jected to another State,
 And I will make a song that there shall be comity by day and by night between all the States
 and between any two of them,
 And I will make a song for the ears of the President, full of weapons with menacing points,
 And behind the weapons countless dissatisfied faces;
 And a song make I of the One formed out of all,
 The fanged and glittering One whose head is over all,
 Resolute warlike One including and over all
 (However high the head of any else that head is over all).

80

I will acknowledge contemporary lands,
 I will trail the whole geography of the globe and salute courteously every city large and small,
 And employments! I will put in my poems that with you is heroism upon land and sea.
 And I will report all heroism from an American point of view.

I will sing the song of companionship,
 I will show what alone must finally compact these,
 I believe these are to found their own ideal of manly love, indicating it in me,
 I will therefore let flame from me the burning fires that were threatening to consume me,
 I will lift what has too long kept down those smoldering fires, 90
 I will give them complete abandonment,
 I will write the evangel-poem of comrades and of love,
 For who but I should understand love with all its sorrow and joy?
 And who but I should be the poet of comrades?

VII

I am the credulous man of qualities, ages, races,
 I advance from the people in their own spirit,
 Here is what sings unrestricted faith.

Omnes! omnes! let others ignore what they may,
 I make the poem of evil also, I commemorate that part also, 99
 I am myself just as much evil as good, and my nation is—and I say there is in fact no evil
 (Or if there is I say it is just as important to you, to the land or to me, as any thing else).

I too, following many and followed by many, inaugurate a religion, I descend into the arena
 (It may be I am destined to utter the loudest cries there, the winner's pealing shouts,
 Who knows? they may rise from me yet, and soar above every thing).

Each is not for its own sake,
 I say the whole earth and all the stars in the sky are for religion's sake.

I say no man has ever yet been half devout enough,
 None has ever yet adored or worshiped half enough,
 None has begun to think how divine he himself is, and how certain the future is.

I say that the real and permanent grandeur of these States must be their religion, 110
 Otherwise there is no real and permanent grandeur
 (Nor character nor life worthy the name without religion,
 Nor land nor man or woman without religion).

VIII

What are you doing young man?
 Are you so earnest, so given up to literature, science, art, amours?
 These ostensible realities, politics, points?
 Your ambition or business whatever it may be?

It is well—against such I say not a word, I am their poet also,
 But behold! such swiftly subside, burnt up for religion's sake,
 For not all matter is fuel to heat, impalpable flame, the essential life of the earth, 120
 Any more than such are to religion.

IX

What do you seek so pensive and silent?
 What do you need camerado?
 Dear son do you think it is love?

Listen dear son—listen America, daughter or son,
 It is a painful thing to love a man or woman to excess, and yet it satisfies, it is great,
 But there is something else very great, it makes the whole coincide,
 It, magnificent, beyond materials, with continuous hands sweeps and provides for all.

X

Know you, solely to drop in the earth the germs of a greater religion,
The following chants each for its kind I sing.

130

My comrade!

For you to share with me two greatnesses, and a third one rising inclusive and more re-
splendent,

The greatness of Love and Democracy, and the greatness of Religion.

Melange mine own, the unseen and the seen,
Mysterious ocean where the streams empty,
Prophetic spirit of materials shifting and flickering around me,
Living beings, identities now doubtless near us in the air that we know not of,
Contact daily and hourly that will not release me,
These selecting, these in hints demanded of me.

Not he with a daily kiss onward from childhood kissing me,
Has winded and twisted around me that which holds me to him,
Any more than I am held to the heavens and all the spiritual world,
After what they have done to me, suggesting themes.

140

O such themes—equalities! O divine average!
Warblings under the sun, ushered as now, or at noon, or setting,
Strains musical flowing through ages, now reaching hither,
I take to your reckless and composite chords, add to them, and cheerfully pass them forward.

XI

As I have walked in Alabama my morning walk,
I have seen where the she-bird the mocking-bird sat on her nest in the briers hatching her
brood.

I have seen the he-bird also,
I have paused to hear him near at hand inflating his throat and joyfully singing.

150

And while I paused it came to me that what he really sang for was not there only,
Nor for his mate nor himself only, nor all sent back by the echoes,
But subtle, clandestine, away beyond,
A charge transmitted and gift occult for those being born.

XII

Democracy! near at hand to you a throat is now inflating itself and joyfully singing.

Ma femme! for the brood beyond us and of us,
For those who belong here and those to come,
I exultant to be ready for them will now shake out carols stronger and haughtier than have
ever yet been heard upon earth.

I will make the songs of passion to give them their way,
And your songs outlawed offenders, for I scan you with kindred eyes, and carry you with
me the same as any.

160

I will make the true poem of riches,
To earn for the body and the mind whatever adheres and goes forward and is not dropped
by death;

I will effuse egotism and show it underlying all, and I will be the bard of personality,
 And I will show of male and female that either is but the equal of the other,
 And sexual organs and acts! do you concentrate in me, for I am determined to tell you with
 courageous clear voice to prove you illustrious,
 And I will show that there is no imperfection in the present, and can be none in the future,
 And I will show that whatever happens to anybody it may be turned to beautiful results,
 And I will show that nothing can happen more beautiful than death,
 And I will thread a thread through my poems that time and events are compact, 170
 And that all the things of the universe are perfect miracles, each as profound as any.

I will not make poems with reference to parts,
 But I will make poems, songs, thoughts, with reference to ensemble,
 And I will not sing with reference to a day, but with reference to all days,
 And I will not make a poem nor the least part of a poem but has reference to the soul,
 Because having looked at the objects of the universe, I find there is no one nor any particle
 of one but has reference to the soul.

XIII

Was somebody asking to see the soul?
 See, your own shape and countenance, persons, substances, beasts, the trees, the running
 rivers, the rocks and sands.

All hold spiritual joys and afterwards loosen them;
 How can the real body ever die and be buried? 180

Of your real body and any man's or woman's real body,
 Item for item it will elude the hands of the corpse-cleaners and pass to fitting spheres,
 Carrying what has accrued to it from the moment of birth to the moment of death.

Not the types set up by the printer return their impression, the meaning, the main concern,
 Any more than a man's substance and life or a woman's substance and life return in the
 body and the soul,
 Indifferently before death and after death.

Behold, the body includes and is the meaning, the main concern, and includes and is the soul;
 Whoever you are, how superb and how divine is your body, or any part of it!

XIV

Whoever you are, to you endless announcements!

Daughter of the lands did you wait for your poet? 190
 Did you wait for one with a flowing mouth and indicative hand?
 Toward the male of the States, and toward the female of the States,
 Exulting words, words to Democracy's lands.

Interlinked, food-yielding lands!
 Land of coal and iron! land of gold! land of cotton, sugar, rice!
 Land of wheat, beef, pork! land of wool and hemp! land of the apple and the grape!
 Land of the pastoral plains, the grass-fields of the world! land of those sweet-aired intermin-
 able plateaus!
 Land of the herd, the garden, the healthy house of adobie!
 Lands where the north-west Columbia winds, and where the south-west Colorado winds!
 Land of the eastern Chesapeake! land of the Delaware! 200
 Land of Ontario, Erie, Huron, Michigan!
 Land of the Old Thirteen! Massachusetts land! land of Vermont and Connecticut!
 Land of the ocean shores! land of sierras and peaks!

Land of boatmen and sailors! fishermen's land!
 Inextricable lands! the clutched together! the passionate ones!
 The side by side! the elder and younger brothers! the bony-limbed!
 The great women's land! the feminine! the experienced sisters and the inexperienced sisters!
 Far breathed land! Arctic braced! Mexican breezed! the diverse! the compact!
 The Pennsylvanian! the Virginian! the double Carolinian!
 O all and each well-loved by me! my intrepid nations! O I at any rate include you all with
 perfect love! 210

I cannot be discharged from you! not from one any sooner than another!
 O death! O for all that, I am yet of you unseen this hour with irrepressible love,
 Walking New England, a friend, a traveler,
 Splashing my bare feet in the edge of the summer ripples on Paumanok's sands,
 Crossing the prairies, dwelling again in Chicago, dwelling in every town,
 Observing shows, births, improvements, structures, arts,
 Listening to orators and oratresses in public halls,
 Of and through the States as during life, each man and woman my neighbor,
 The Louisianian, the Georgian, as near to me, and I as near to him and her,
 The Mississippian and Arkansian yet with me, and I yet with any of them, 220
 Yet upon the plains west of the spinal river, yet in my house of adobie,
 Yet returning eastward, yet in the Seaside State or in Maryland,
 Yet Kanadian cheerily braving the winter, the snow and ice welcome to me,
 Yet a true son either of Maine or of the Granite State, or the Narragansett Bay State, or
 the Empire State,
 Yet sailing to other shores to annex the same, yet welcoming every new brother,
 Hereby applying these leaves to the new ones from the hour they unite with the old ones,
 Coming among the new ones myself to be their companion and equal, coming personally
 to you now,
 Enjoining you to acts, characters, spectacles, with me.

XV

With me with firm holding, yet haste, haste on.

For your life adhere to me 230
 (I may have to be persuaded many times before I consent to give myself really to you, but
 what of that?
 Must not Nature be persuaded many times?).

No dainty dolce affettuoso I,
 Bearded, sun-burnt, gray-necked, forbidding, I have arrived,
 To be wrestled with as I pass for the solid prizes of the universe,
 For such I afford whoever can persevere to win them.

XVI

On my way a moment I pause,
 Here for you! and here for America!
 Still the present I raise aloft, still the future of the States I harbinge glad and sublime,
 And for the past I pronounce what the air holds of the red aborigines. 240

The red aborigines,
 Leaving natural breaths, sounds of rain and winds, calls as of birds and animals in the
 woods, syllabled to us for names,
 Okonee, Koosa, Ottawa, Monongahela, Sauk, Natchez, Chattahoochee, Kaqueta, Oronoco,
 Wabash, Miami, Saginaw, Chippewa, Oshkosh, Walla-Walla,
 Leaving such to the States they melt, they depart, charging the water and the land with
 names.

XVII

Expanding and swift, henceforth,
 Elements, breeds, adjustments, turbulent, quick and audacious,
 A world primal again, vistas of glory incessant and branching,
 A new race dominating previous ones and grander far, with new contests,
 New politics, new literatures and religions, new inventions and arts.

250

These, my voice announcing—I will sleep no more but arise,
 You oceans that have been calm within me! how I feel you, fathomless, stirring, preparing
 unprecedented waves and storms.

XVIII

See, steamers steaming through my poems,
 See, in my poems immigrants continually coming and landing,
 See, in arriere, the wigwam, the trail, the hunter's hut, the flatboat, the maize-leaf, the
 claim, the rude fence, and the backwoods village,
 See, on the one side the Western Sea and on the other the Eastern Sea, how they advance
 and retreat upon my poems as upon their own shores,
 See, pastures and forests in my poems—see, animals wild and tame—see, beyond the Kaw,
 countless herds of buffalo feeding on short curly grass,
 See, in my poems, cities, solid, vast, inland, with paved streets, with iron and stone edifices,
 ceaseless vehicles, and commerce,
 See, the many-cylindere steam printing-press—see, the electric telegraph stretching across
 the continent,
 See, through Atlantica's depths pulses American Europe reaching, pulses of Europe duly
 returned, 260
 See, the strong and quick locomotive as it departs, panting, blowing the steam-whistle,
 See, ploughmen ploughing farms—see, miners digging mines—see, the numberless factories,
 See, mechanics busy at their benches with tools—see from among them superior judges,
 philosophs, Presidents, emerge, dressed in working dresses,
 See, lounging through the shops and fields of the States, me well-belov'd, close-held by day
 and night,
 Hear the loud echoes of my songs there—read the hints come at last.

XIX

O camerado close! O you and me at last, and us two only.
 O a word to clear one's path ahead endlessly!
 O something ecstatic and undemonstrable! O music wild!
 O now I triumph—and you shall also;
 O hand in hand—O wholesome pleasure—O one more desirer and lover!
 O to haste firm holding—to haste, haste on with me.

270

SONG OF MYSELF¹

I

I CELEBRATE myself, and sing myself,
 And what I assume you shall assume,
 For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

I loafe and invite my soul,
 I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

¹ First published 1855 (*L. G.*, 1881). This poem, following the introduction of the reader to the book, introduces the book's hero to the reader. It should be realized that Whitman sings himself because he regards himself as typical or representative—the incarnation of the “divine average.” See particularly stanza 17 of this poem.

My tongue, every atom of my blood, formed from this soil, this air,
 Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their parents the same,
 I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,
 Hoping to cease not till death.

Creeds and schools in abeyance,
 Retiring back a while sufficed at what they are, but never forgotten,
 I harbor for good or bad, I permit to speak at every hazard,
 Nature without check with original energy.

10

II

Houses and rooms are full of perfumes, the shelves are crowded with perfumes,
 I breathe the fragrance myself and know it and like it,
 The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.

The atmosphere is not a perfume, it has no taste of the distillation, it is odorless,
 It is for my mouth forever, I am in love with it,
 I will go to the bank by the wood and become undisguised and naked,
 I am mad for it to be in contact with me.

20

The smoke of my own breath,
 Echoes, ripples, buzzed whispers, love-root, silk-thread, crotch and vine,
 My respiration and inspiration, the beating of my heart, the passing of blood and air through
 my lungs,
 The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and dark-colored sea-rocks, and
 of hay in the barn,
 The sound of the belched words of my voice loosed to the eddies of the wind,
 A few light kisses, a few embraces, a reaching around of arms,
 The play of shine and shade on the trees as the supple boughs wag,
 The delight alone or in the rush of the streets, or along the fields and hill-sides,
 The feeling of health, the full-noon trill, the song of me rising from bed and meeting the sun.

Have you reckoned a thousand acres much? have you reckoned the earth much?
 Have you practiced so long to learn to read?
 Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?

30

Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems,
 You shall possess the good of the earth and sun (there are millions of suns left),
 You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes of the
 dead, nor feed on the specters in books,
 You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
 You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your self.

III

I have heard what the talkers were talking, the talk of the beginning and the end,
 But I do not talk of the beginning or the end.

There was never any more inception than there is now,
 Nor any more youth or age than there is now,
 And will never be any more perfection than there is now,
 Nor any more heaven or hell than there is now.

40

Urge and urge and urge,
 Always the procreant urge of the world.
 Out of the dimness opposite equals advance, always substance and increase, always sex,
 Always a knit of identity, always distinction, always a breed of life.

To elaborate is no avail, learn'd and unlearn'd feel that it is so.

Sure as the most certain sure, plumb in the uprights, well entretied, braced in the beams,
Stout as a horse, affectionate, haughty, electrical, 50
I and this mystery here we stand.

Clear and sweet is my soul, and clear and sweet is all that is not my soul.

Lack one lacks both, and the unseen is proved by the seen,
Till that becomes unseen and receives proof in its turn.

Showing the best and dividing it from the worst age vexes age,
Knowing the perfect fitness and equanimity of things, while they discuss I am silent, and
go bathe and admire myself.

Welcome is every organ and attribute of me, and of any man hearty and clean,
Not an inch nor a particle of an inch is vile, and none shall be less familiar than the rest.

I am satisfied—I see, dance, laugh, sing;
As the hugging and loving bed-fellow sleeps at my side through the night, and withdraws
at the peep of the day with stealthy tread, 60
Leaving me baskets covered with white towels swelling the house with their plenty,
Shall I postpone my acceptation and realization and scream at my eyes,
That they turn from gazing after and down the road,
And forthwith cipher and show me to a cent,
Exactly the value of one and exactly the value of two, and which is ahead?

IV

Trippers and askers surround me,
People I meet, the effect upon me of my early life or the ward and city I live in, or the nation,
The latest dates, discoveries, inventions, societies, authors old and new,
My dinner, dress, associates, looks, compliments, dues,
The real or fancied indifference of some man or woman I love, 70
The sickness of one of my folks or of myself, or ill-doing or loss or lack of money, or depressions or exaltations,
Battles, the horrors of fratricidal war, the fever of doubtful news, the fitful events;
These come to me days and nights and go from me again,
But they are not the Me myself.

Apart from the pulling and hauling stands what I am,
Stands amused, complacent, compassionating, idle, unitary,
Looks down, is erect, or bends an arm on an impalpable certain rest,
Looking with side-curved head curious what will come next,
Both in and out of the game and watching and wondering at it.

Backward I see in my own days where I sweated through fog with linguists and contenders, 80
I have no mockings or arguments, I witness and wait.

V

I believe in you my soul, the other I am must not abase itself to you,
And you must not be abased to the other.

Loafe with me on the grass, loose the stop from your throat,
Not words, not music or rhyme I want, not custom or lecture, not even the best,
Only the lull I like, the hum of your valvèd voice.

I mind how once we lay such a transparent summer morning,
 How you settled your head athwart my hips and gently turned over upon me,
 And parted the shirt from my bosom-bone, and plunged your tongue to my bare-stripped
 heart,
 And reached till you felt my beard, and reached till you held my feet. 90

Swiftly arose and spread around me the peace and knowledge that pass all the argument
 of the earth,
 And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own,
 And I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own,
 And that all the men ever born are also my brothers, and the women my sisters and lovers,
 And that a kelson of the creation is love,
 And limitless are leaves stiff or drooping in the fields,
 And brown ants in the little wells beneath them,
 And mossy scabs of the worm fence, heaped stones, elder, mullein and poke-weed.

VI

A child said *What is the grass?* fetching it to me with full hands,
 How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any more than he. 100

I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.

Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,
 A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropped,
 Bearing the owner's name someway in the corners, that we may see and remark, and say
Whose?

Or I guess the grass is itself a child, the produced babe of the vegetation.

Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic,
 And it means, Sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow zones,
 Growing among black folks as among white,
 Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the same, I receive them the same.

And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves. 110

Tenderly will I use you curling grass,
 It may be you transpire from the breasts of young men,
 It may be if I had known them I would have loved them,
 It may be you are from old people, or from offspring taken soon out of their mothers' laps,
 And here you are the mothers' laps.

This grass is very dark to be from the white heads of old mothers,
 Darker than the colorless beards of old men,
 Dark to come from under the faint red roofs of mouths.

O I perceive after all so many uttering tongues,
 And I perceive they do not come from the roofs of mouths for nothing. 120

I wish I could translate the hints about the dead young men and women,
 And the hints about old men and mothers, and the offspring taken soon out of their laps.

What do you think has become of the young and old men?
 And what do you think has become of the women and children?

They are alive and well somewhere,
 The smallest sprout shows there is really no death,
 And if ever there was it led forward life, and does not wait at the end to arrest it,
 And ceased the moment life appeared.

All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,
 And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.

130

VII

Has any one supposed it lucky to be born?
 I hasten to inform him or her it is just as lucky to die, and I know it.

I pass death with the dying and birth with the new-washed babe, and am not contained
 between my hat and boots,
 And peruse manifold objects, no two alike and every one good,
 The earth good and the stars good, and their adjuncts all good.

I am not an earth nor an adjunct of an earth,
 I am the mate and companion of people, all just as immortal and fathomless as myself
 (They do not know how immortal, but I know).

Every kind for itself and its own, for me mine male and female,
 For me those that have been boys and that love women, 140
 For me the man that is proud and feels how it stings to be slighted,
 For me the sweet-heart and the old maid, for me mothers and the mothers of mothers,
 For me lips that have smiled, eyes that have shed tears,
 For me children and the begetters of children.

Undrape! you are not guilty to me, nor stale nor discarded,
 I see through the broadcloth and gingham whether or no,
 And am around, tenacious, acquisitive, tireless, and cannot be shaken away.

VIII

The little one sleeps in its cradle,
 I lift the gauze and look a long time, and silently brush away flies with my hand.

The youngster and the red-faced girl turn aside up the bushy hill, 150
 I peeringly view them from the top.

The suicide sprawls on the bloody floor of the bedroom,
 I witness the corpse with its dabbled hair, I note where the pistol has fallen.

The blab of the pave, tires of carts, sluff of boot-soles, talk of the promenaders,
 The heavy omnibus, the driver with his interrogating thumb, the clank of the shod horses
 on the granite floor,

The snow-sleighs, clinking, shouted jokes, pelts of snow-balls,
 The hurrahs for popular favorites, the fury of roused mobs,
 The flap of the curtained litter, a sick man inside borne to the hospital,
 The meeting of enemies, the sudden oath, the blows and fall,
 The excited crowd, the policeman with his star quickly working his passage to the center
 of the crowd, 160

The impassive stones that receive and return so many echoes,
 What groans of over-fed or half-starved who fall sunstruck or in fits,
 What exclamations of women taken suddenly who hurry home and give birth to babes,
 What living and buried speech is always vibrating here, what howls restrained by decorum,
 Arrests of criminals, slights, adulterous offers made, acceptances, rejections with convex lips,
 I mind them or the show or resonance of them—I come and I depart.

IX

The big doors of the country barn stand open and ready,
 The dried grass of the harvest-time loads the slow-drawn wagon,
 The clear light plays on the brown gray and green intertinged,
 The armfuls are packed to the sagging mow.

170

I am there, I help, I came stretched atop of the load,
 I felt its soft jolts, one leg reclined on the other,
 I jump from the cross-beams and seize the clover and timothy,
 And roll head over heels and tangle my hair full of wisps.

X

Alone far in the wilds and mountains I hunt,
 Wandering amazed at my own lightness and glee,
 In the late afternoon choosing a safe spot to pass the night,
 Kindling a fire and broiling the fresh-killed game,
 Falling asleep on the gathered leaves with my dog and gun by my side.

The Yankee clipper is under her sky-sails, she cuts the sparkle and scud,
 My eyes settle the land, I bend at her prow or shout joyously from the deck.

180

The boatmen and clam-diggers arose early and stopped for me,
 I tucked my trowser-ends in my boots and went and had a good time;
 You should have been with us that day round the chowder-kettle.

I saw the marriage of the trapper in the open air in the far west, the bride was a red girl,
 Her father and his friends sat near cross-legged and dumbly smoking, they had moccasins
 to their feet and large thick blankets hanging from their shoulders,
 On a bank lounged the trapper, he was dressed mostly in skins, his luxuriant beard and
 curls protected his neck, he held his bride by the hand,
 She had long eyelashes, her head was bare, her coarse straight locks descended upon her
 voluptuous limbs and reached to her feet.

The runaway slave came to my house and stopped outside,
 I heard his motions crackling the twigs of the woodpile,
 Through the swung half-door of the kitchen I saw him limpsy and weak,
 And went where he sat on a log and led him in and assured him,
 And brought water and filled a tub for his sweated body and bruised feet,
 And gave him a room that entered from my own, and gave him some coarse clean clothes,
 And remember perfectly well his revolving eyes and his awkwardness,
 And remember putting plasters on the galls of his neck and ankles;
 He stayed with me a week before he was recuperated and passed north,
 I had him sit next me at table, my fire-lock leaned in the corner.

190

XI

Twenty-eight young men bathe by the shore,
 Twenty-eight young men and all so friendly;
 Twenty-eight years of womanly life and all so lonesome.

200

She owns the fine house by the rise of the bank,
 She hides handsome and richly dressed aft the blinds of the window.

Which of the young men does she like the best?
 Ah the homeliest of them is beautiful to her.

Where are you off to, lady? for I see you,
You splash in the water there, yet stay stock still in your room.

Dancing and laughing along the beach came the twenty-ninth bather,
The rest did not see her, but she saw them and loved them.

The beards of the young men glistened with wet, it ran from their long hair,
Little streams passed all over their bodies. 210

An unseen hand also passed over their bodies,
It descended tremblingly from their temples and ribs.

The young men float on their backs, their white bellies bulge to the sun, they do not ask
who seizes fast to them,
They do not know who puffs and declines with pendant and bending arch,
They do not think whom they souse with spray.

XII

The butcher-boy puts off his killing-clothes, or sharpens his knife at the stall in the market,
I loiter enjoying his repartee and his shuffle and break-down.

Blacksmiths with grimed and hairy chests environ the anvil,
Each has his main-sledge, they are all out, there is a great heat in the fire. 220

From the cinder-strewed threshold I follow their movements,
The lithe sheer of their waists plays even with their massive arms,
Overhand the hammers swing, overhand so slow, overhand so sure,
They do not hasten, each man hits in his place.

XIII

The negro holds firmly the reins of his four horses, the block swags underneath on its tied-
over chain,
The negro that drives the long dray of the stone-yard, steady and tall he stands poised on
one leg on the string-piece,
His blue shirt exposes his ample neck and breast and loosens over his hip-band,
His glance is calm and commanding, he tosses the slouch of his hat away from his forehead,
The sun falls on his crispy hair and mustache, falls on the black of his polished and perfect
limbs.

I behold the picturesque giant and love him, and I do not stop there,
I go with the team also. 230

In me the caresser of life wherever moving, backward as well as forward sluing,
To niches aside and junior bending, not a person or object missing,
Absorbing all to myself and for this song.

Oxen that rattle the yoke and chain or halt in the leafy shade, what is that you express in
your eyes?

It seems to me more than all the print I have read in my life.

My tread scares the wood-drake and wood-duck on my distant and day-long ramble,
They rise together, they slowly circle around.

I believe in those wing'd purposes,
 And acknowledge red, yellow, white, playing within me,
 And consider green and violet and the tufted crown intentional,
 And do not call the tortoise unworthy because she is not something else,
 And the jay in the woods never studied the gamut, yet trills pretty well to me,
 And the look of the bay mare shames silliness out of me.

240

XIV

The wild gander leads his flock through the cool night,
Ya-honk he says, and sounds it down to me like an invitation,
 The pert may suppose it meaningless, but I listening close,
 Find its purpose and place up there toward the wintry sky.

The sharp-hoofed moose of the north, the cat on the house-sill, the chickadee, the prairie-dog,
 The litter of the grunting sow as they tug at her teats,
 The brood of the turkey-hen and she with her half-spread wings,
 I see in them and myself the same old law.

250

The press of my foot to the earth springs a hundred affections,
 They scorn the best I can do to relate them.

I am enamored of growing out-doors,
 Of men that live among cattle or taste of the ocean or woods,
 Of the builders and steerers of ships and the wielders of axes and mauls, and the drivers of
 horses,
 I can eat and sleep with them week in and week out.

What is commonest, cheapest, nearest, easiest, is Me,
 Me going in for my chances, spending for vast returns,
 Adorning myself to bestow myself on the first that will take me,
 Not asking the sky to come down to my good will,
 Scattering it freely forever.

260

XV

The pure contralto sings in the organ loft,
 The carpenter dresses his plank, the tongue of his foreplane whistles its wild ascending lisp,
 The married and unmarried children ride home to their Thanksgiving dinner,
 The pilot seizes the king-pin, he heaves down with a strong arm,
 The mate stands braced in the whale-boat, lance and harpoon are ready,
 The duck-shooter walks by silent and cautious stretches,
 The deacons are ordained with crossed hands at the altar,
 The spinning-girl retreats and advances to the hum of the big wheel,
 The farmer stops by the bars as he walks on a First-day loafe and looks at the oats and rye,
 The lunatic is carried at last to the asylum a confirmed case
 (He will never sleep any more as he did in the cot in his mother's bedroom);
 The jour printer with gray head and gaunt jaws works at his case,
 He turns his quid of tobacco while his eyes blurr with the manuscript;
 The malformed limbs are tied to the surgeon's table,
 What is removed drops horribly in a pail;
 The quadroon girl is sold at the auction-stand, the drunkard nods by the bar-room stove,
 The machinist rolls up his sleeves, the policeman travels his beat, the gate-keeper marks who
 pass,
 The young fellow drives the express-wagon (I love him, though I do not know him);

270

280

The half-breed straps on his light boots to compete in the race,
 The western turkey-shooting draws old and young, some lean on their rifles, some sit on logs,
 Out from the crowd steps the marksman, takes his position, levels his piece;
 The groups of newly-come immigrants cover the wharf or levee,
 As the woolly-pates hoe in the sugar-field, the overseer views them from his saddle,
 The bugle calls in the ball-room, the gentlemen run for their partners, the dancers bow to
 each other;
 The youth lies awake in the cedar-roofed garret and harks to the musical rain,
 The Wolverine sets traps on the creek that helps fill the Huron,
 The squaw wrapped in her yellow-hemmed cloth is offering moccasins and bead-bags for
 sale, 290
 The connoisseur peers along the exhibition-gallery with half-shut eyes bent sideways,
 As the deck-hands make fast the steamboat the plank is thrown for the shore-going passengers,
 The young sister holds out the skein while the elder sister winds it off in a ball, and stops
 now and then for the knots,
 The one-year wife is recovering and happy having a week ago borne her first child,
 The clean-haired Yankee girl works with her sewing-machine or in the factory or mill,
 The paving-man leans on his two-handed rammer, the reporter's lead flies swiftly over the
 note-book, the sign-painter is lettering with blue and gold,
 The canal boy trots on the tow-path, the book-keeper counts at his desk, the shoemaker
 waxes his thread,
 The conductor beats time for the band and all the performers follow him,
 The child is baptized, the convert is making his first professions,
 The regatta is spread on the bay, the race is begun (how the white sails sparkle!), 300
 The drover watching his drove sings out to them that would stray,
 The pedler sweats with his pack on his back (the purchaser higgling about the odd cent);
 The bride unrumple her white dress, the minute-hand of the clock moves slowly,
 The opium-eater reclines with rigid head and just-opened lips,
 The prostitute draggles her shawl, her bonnet bobs on her tipsy and pimpled neck,
 The crowd laugh at her blackguard oaths, the men jeer and wink to each other
 (Miserable! I do not laugh at your oaths nor jeer you);
 The President holding a cabinet council is surrounded by the great Secretaries,
 On the piazza walk three matrons stately and friendly with twined arms,
 The crew of the fish-smack pack repeated layers of halibut in the hold, 310
 The Missourian crosses the plains toting his wares and his cattle,
 As the fare-collector goes through the train he gives notice by the jingling of loose change,
 The floor-men are laying the floor, the tinnerns are tinning the roof, the masons are calling
 for mortar,
 In single file each shouldering his hod pass onward the laborers;
 Seasons pursuing each other the indescribable crowd is gathered, it is the fourth of Seventh-
 month (what salutes of cannon and small arms!),
 Seasons pursuing each other the plougher ploughs, the mower mows, and the winter-grain
 falls in the ground;
 Off on the lakes the pike-fisher watches and waits by the hole in the frozen surface,
 The stumps stand thick round the clearing, the squatter strikes deep with his ax,
 Flatboatmen make fast towards dusk near the cotton-wood or pecan-trees,
 Coon-seekers go through the regions of the Red River or through those drained by the
 Tennessee, or through those of the Arkansas, 320
 Torches shine in the dark that hangs on the Chattahoochee or Altamahaw,
 Patriarchs sit at supper with sons and grandsons and great grandsons around them,
 In walls of adobie, in canvas tents, rest hunters and trappers after their day's sport,
 The city sleeps and the country sleeps,
 The living sleep for their time, the dead sleep for their time,
 The old husband sleeps by his wife and the young husband sleeps by his wife;

And these tend inward to me, and I tend outward to them,
 And such as it is to be of these more or less I am,
 And of these one and all I weave the song of myself.

XVI

I am of old and young, of the foolish as much as the wise, 330
 Regardless of others, ever regardful of others,
 Maternal as well as paternal, a child as well as a man,
 Stuffed with the stuff that is coarse and stuffed with the stuff that is fine,
 One of the Nation of many nations, the smallest the same and the largest the same,
 A Southerner soon as a Northerner, a planter nonchalant and hospitable down by the Oconee
 I live,
 A Yankee bound my own way ready for trade, my joints the limberest joints on earth and
 the sternest joints on earth,
 A Kentuckian walking the vale of the Elkhorn in my deer-skin leggings, a Louisianian or
 Georgian,
 A boatman over lakes or bays or along coasts, a Hoosier, Badger, Buckeye;
 At home on Kanadian snow-shoes or up in the bush, or with fishermen off Newfoundland,
 At home in the fleet of ice-boats, sailing with the rest and tacking, 340
 At home on the hills of Vermont or in the woods of Maine, or the Texan ranch,
 Comrade of Californians, comrade of free North-Westerners (loving their big proportions),
 Comrade of raftsmen and coalmen, comrade of all who shake hands and welcome to drink
 and meat,
 A learner with the simplest, a teacher of the thoughtfulest,
 A novice beginning yet experient of myriads of seasons,
 Of every hue and caste am I, of every rank and religion,
 A farmer, mechanic, artist, gentleman, sailor, quaker,
 Prisoner, fancy-man, rowdy, lawyer, physician, priest.

I resist any thing better than my own diversity,
 Breathe the air but leave plenty after me, 350
 And am not stuck up, and am in my place.

(The moth and the fish-eggs are in their place,
 The bright suns I see and the dark suns I cannot see are in their place,
 The palpable is in its place and the impalpable is in its place.)

XVII

These are really the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands, they are not original with me,
 If they are not yours as much as mine they are nothing, or next to nothing,
 If they are not the riddle and the untying of the riddle they are nothing,
 If they are not just as close as they are distant they are nothing.

This is the grass that grows wherever the land is and the water is,
 This the common air that bathes the globe. 360

XVIII

With music strong I come, with my cornets and my drums,
 I play not marches for accepted victors only, I play marches for conquered and slain persons.
 Have you heard that it was good to gain the day?
 I also say it is good to fall, battles are lost in the same spirit in which they are won.

I beat and pound for the dead,
I blow through my embouchures my loudest and gayest for them.

Vivas to those who have failed!
And to those whose war-vessels sank in the sea!
And to those themselves who sank in the sea!
And to all generals that lost engagements, and all overcome heroes!
And the numberless unknown heroes equal to the greatest heroes known!

370

XIX

This is the meal equally set, this the meat for natural hunger,
It is for the wicked just the same as the righteous, I make appointments with all,
I will not have a single person slighted or left away,
The kept-woman, sponger, thief, are hereby invited,
The heavy-lipped slave is invited, the venerealee is invited;
There shall be no difference between them and the rest.

This is the press of a bashful hand, this the float and odor of hair,
This the touch of my lips to yours, this the murmur of yearning,
This the far-off depth and height reflecting my own face,
This the thoughtful merge of myself, and the outlet again.

380

Do you guess I have some intricate purpose?
Well I have, for the Fourth-month showers have, and the mica on the side of a rock has.

Do you take it I would astonish?
Does the daylight astonish? does the early redstart twittering through the woods?
Do I astonish more than they?

This hour I tell things in confidence,
I might not tell everybody, but I will tell you.

XX

Who goes there? hankering, gross, mystical, nude;
How is it I extract strength from the beef I eat?

390

What is a man anyhow? what am I? what are you?

All I mark as my own you shall offset it with your own,
Else it were time lost listening to me.

I do not snivel that snivel the world over,
That months are vacuums and the ground but wallow and filth.

Whimpering and truckling fold with powders for invalids, conformity goes to the fourth-
removed,
I wear my hat as I please indoors or out.

Why should I pray? why should I venerate and be ceremonious?

Having pried through the strata, analyzed to a hair, counseled with doctors and calculated
close,
I find no sweeter fat than sticks to my own bones.

400

In all people I see myself, none more and not one a barley-corn less,
And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them.

I know I am solid and sound,
To me the converging objects of the universe perpetually flow,
All are written to me, and I must get what the writing means.

I know I am deathless,
I know this orbit of mine cannot be swept by a carpenter's compass,
I know I shall not pass like a child's carlacue cut with a burnt stick at night.

I know I am august,
I do not trouble my spirit to vindicate itself or be understood, 410
I see that the elementary laws never apologize
(I reckon I behave no prouder than the level I plant my house by, after all).

I exist as I am, that is enough,
If no other in the world be aware I sit content,
And if each and all be aware I sit content.

One world is aware and by far the largest to me, and that is myself,
And whether I come to my own to-day or in ten thousand or ten million years,
I can cheerfully take it now, or with equal cheerfulness I can wait.

My foothold is tenoned and mortised in granite,
I laugh at what you call dissolution, 420
And I know the amplitude of time.

XXI

I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the Soul,
The pleasures of heaven are with me and the pains of hell are with me,
The first I graft and increase upon myself, the latter I translate into a new tongue.

I am the poet of the woman the same as the man,
And I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man,
And I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men.

I chant the chant of dilation or pride,
We have had ducking and deprecating about enough, 430
I show that size is only development.

Have you outstripped the rest? are you the President?
It is a trifle, they will more than arrive there every one, and still pass on.

I am he that walks with the tender and growing night,
I call to the earth and sea half-held by the night.

Press close bare-bosomed night—press close magnetic nourishing night!
Night of south winds—night of the large few stars!
Still nodding night—mad naked summer night.

Smile O voluptuous cool-breathed earth!
Earth of the slumbering and liquid trees!
Earth of departed sunset—earth of the mountains misty-topped! 440

Earth of the vitreous pour of the full moon just tinged with blue!
 Earth of shine and dark mottling the tide of the river!
 Earth of the limpid gray of clouds brighter and clearer for my sake!
 Far-swooping elbowed earth—rich apple-blossomed earth!
 Smile, for your lover comes.

Prodigal, you have given me love—therefore I to you give love!
 O unspeakable passionate love.

XXII

You sea! I resign myself to you also—I guess what you mean,
 I behold from the beach your crooked inviting fingers,
 I believe you refuse to go back without feeling of me, 450
 We must have a turn together, I undress, hurry me out of sight of the land,
 Cushion me soft, rock me in billowy drowse,
 Dash me with amorous wet, I can repay you.

Sea of stretched ground-swells,
 Sea breathing broad and convulsive breaths,
 Sea of the brine of life and of unshoveled yet always-ready graves,
 Howler and scooper of storms, capricious and dainty sea,
 I am integral with you, I too am of one phase and of all phases.

Partaker of influx and efflux, I, extoller of hate and conciliation,
 Extoller of amies and those that sleep in each others' arms, 460

I am he attesting sympathy
 (Shall I make my list of things in the house and skip the house that supports them?).

I am not the poet of goodness only, I do not decline to be the poet of wickedness also.

What blurt is this about virtue and about vice?
 Evil propels me and reform of evil propels me, I stand indifferent,
 My gait is no fault-finder's or rejecter's gait,
 I moisten the roots of all that has grown.

Did you fear some scrofula out of the unflagging pregnancy?
 Did you guess the celestial laws are yet to be worked over and rectified?

I find one side a balance and the antipodal side a balance, 470
 Soft doctrine as steady help as stable doctrine,
 Thoughts and deeds of the present our rouse and early start.

This minute that comes to me over the past decillions,
 There is no better than it and now.

What behaved well in the past or behaves well to-day is not such a wonder,
 The wonder is always and always how there can be a mean man or an infidel.

XXIII

Endless unfolding of words of ages!
 And mine a word of the modern, the word En-Masse.

A word of the faith that never balks,
 Here or henceforward it is all the same to me, I accept Time absolutely. 480

It alone is without flaw, it alone rounds and completes all,
That mystic baffling wonder alone completes all.

I accept Reality and dare not question it,
Materialism first and last imbuing.

Hurrah for positive science! long live exact demonstration!
Fetch stonecrop mixed with cedar and branches of lilac,
This is the lexicographer, this the chemist, this made a grammar of the old cartouches,
These mariners put the ship through dangerous unknown seas,
This is the geologist, this works with the scalpel, and this is a mathematician.

Gentlemen, to you the first honors always! 490
Your facts are useful, and yet they are not my dwelling,
I but enter by them to an area of my dwelling.

Less the reminders of properties told my words,
And more the reminders they of life untold, and of freedom and extrication,
And make short account of neuters and geldings, and favor men and women fully equipped,
And beat the gong of revolt, and stop with fugitives and them that plot and conspire.

XXIV

Walt Whitman, a kosmos, of Manhattan the son,
Turbulent, fleshy, sensual, eating, drinking and breeding,
No sentimentalist, no stander above men and women or apart from them,
No more modest than immodest. 500

Unscrew the locks from the doors!
Unscrew the doors themselves from their jambs!

Whoever degrades another degrades me,
And whatever is done or said returns at last to me.

Through me the afflatus surging and surging, through me the current and index.

I speak the pass-word primeval, I give the sign of democracy,
By God! I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms.

Through me many long dumb voices,
Voices of the interminable generations of prisoners and slaves,
Voices of the diseased and despairing and of thieves and dwarfs, 510
Voices of cycles of preparation and accretion,
And of the threads that connect the stars, and of wombs and of the father-stuff,
And of the rights of them the others are down upon,
Of the deformed, trivial, flat, foolish, despised,
Fog in the air, beetles rolling balls of dung.

Through me forbidden voices,
Voices of sexes and lusts, voices veiled and I remove the veil,
Voices indecent by me clarified and transfigured.

I do not press my fingers across my mouth,
I keep as delicate around the bowels as around the head and heart, 520
Copulation is no more rank to me than death is.

I believe in the flesh and the appetites,
Seeing, hearing, feeling, are miracles, and each part and tag of me is a miracle.

Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever I touch or am touched from,
The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer,
This head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds.

If I worship one thing more than another it shall be the spread of my own body, or any
part of it,

Translucent mold of me it shall be you!

Shaded ledges and rests it shall be you!

Firm masculine colter it shall be you!

530

Whatever goes to the tilth of me it shall be you!

You my rich blood! your milky stream pale strippings of my life!

Breast that presses against other breasts it shall be you!

My brain it shall be your occult convolutions!

Root of washed sweet-flag! timorous pond-snipe! nest of guarded duplicate eggs! it shall
be you!

Mixed tussled hay of head, beard, brawn, it shall be you!

Trickling sap of maple, fiber of manly wheat, it shall be you!

Sun so generous it shall be you!

Vapors lighting and shading my face it shall be you!

You sweaty brooks and dews it shall be you!

540

Winds whose soft-tickling genitals rub against me it shall be you!

Broad muscular fields, branches of live oak, loving lounge in my winding paths, it shall
be you!

Hands I have taken, face I have kissed, mortal I have ever touched, it shall be you.

I dote on myself, there is that lot of me and all so luscious,

Each moment and whatever happens thrills me with joy,

I cannot tell how my ankles bend, nor whence the cause of my faintest wish,

Nor the cause of the friendship I emit, nor the cause of the friendship I take again.

That I walk up my stoop, I pause to consider if it really be,

A morning-glory at my window satisfies me more than the metaphysics of books.

To behold the day-break!

550

The little light fades the immense and diaphanous shadows,

The air tastes good to my palate.

Hefts of the moving world at innocent gambols silently rising, freshly exuding,
Scooting obliquely high and low.

Something I cannot see puts upward libidinous prongs,

Seas of bright juice suffuse heaven.

The earth by the sky stayed with, the daily close of their junction,

The heaved challenge from the east that moment over my head,

The mocking taunt, See then whether you shall be master!

XXV

Dazzling and tremendous how quick the sun-rise would kill me,
If I could not now and always send sun-rise out of me.

560

We also ascend dazzling and tremendous as the sun,
We found our own O my soul in the calm and cool of the daybreak.

My voice goes after what my eyes cannot reach,
With the twirl of my tongue I encompass worlds and volumes of worlds.

Speech is the twin of my vision, it is unequal to measure itself,
It provokes me forever, it says sarcastically,
Walt you contain enough, why don't you let it out then?

Come now I will not be tantalized, you conceive too much of articulation,
Do you not know O speech how the buds beneath you are folded? 570
Waiting in gloom, protected by frost,
The dirt receding before my prophetic screams,
I underlying causes to balance them at last,
My knowledge my live parts, it keeping tally with the meaning of all things,
Happiness (which whoever hears me let him or her set out in search of this day).

My final merit I refuse you, I refuse putting from me what I really am,
Encompass worlds, but never try to encompass me,
I crowd your sleekest and best by simply looking toward you.

Writing and talk do not prove me,
I carry the plenum of proof and every thing else in my face, 580
With the hush of my lips I wholly confound the skeptic.

XXVI

Now I will do nothing but listen,
To accrue what I hear into this song, to let sounds contribute toward it.

I hear bravuras of birds, bustle of growing wheat, gossip of flames, clack of sticks cooking
my meals.

I hear the sound I love, the sound of the human voice,
I hear all sounds running together, combined, fused or following,
Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city, sounds of the day and night,
Talkative young ones to those that like them, the loud laugh of work-people at their meals,
The angry base of disjointed friendship, the faint tones of the sick,
The judge with hands tight to the desk, his pallid lips pronouncing a death-sentence, 590
The heave'e'yo of stevedores unlading ships by the wharves, the refrain of the anchor-lifters,
The ring of alarm-bells, the cry of fire, the whirr of swift-streaking engines and hose-carts
with premonitory tinkles and colored lights,

The steam-whistle, the solid roll of the train of approaching cars,
The slow march played at the head of the association marching two and two
(They go to guard some corpse, the flag-tops are draped with black muslin).

I hear the violoncello ('tis the young man's heart's complaint),
I hear the keyed cornet, it glides quickly in through my ears,
It shakes mad-sweet pangs through my belly and breast.

I hear the chorus, it is a grand opera,
Ah this indeed is music—this suits me. 600

A tenor large and fresh as the creation fills me,
The orbic flex of his mouth is pouring and filling me full.

I hear the trained soprano (what work with hers is this?)
 The orchestra whirls me wider than Uranus flies,
 It wrenches such ardors from me I did not know I possessed them,
 It sails me, I dab with bare feet, they are licked by the indolent waves,
 I am cut by bitter and angry hail, I lose my breath,
 Steeped amid honeyed morphine, my windpipe throttled in fakes of death,
 At length let up again to feel the puzzle of puzzles,
 And that we call Being.

610

XXVII

To be in any form, what is that?
 (Round and round we go, all of us, and ever come back thither)
 If nothing lay more developed the quahaug in its callous shell were enough.

Mine is no callous shell,
 I have instant conductors all over me whether I pass or stop,
 They seize every object and lead it harmlessly through me.

I merely stir, press, feel with my fingers, and am happy,
 To touch my person to some one else's is about as much as I can stand.

XXVIII

Is this then a touch? quivering me to a new identity,
 Flames and ether making a rush for my veins, 620
 Treacherous tip of me reaching and crowding to help them,
 My flesh and blood playing out lightning to strike what is hardly different from myself,
 On all sides prurient provokers stiffening my limbs,
 Straining the udder of my heart for its withheld drip,
 Behaving licentious toward me, taking no denial,
 Depriving me of my best as for a purpose,
 Unbuttoning my clothes, holding me by the bare waist,
 Deluding my confusion with the calm of the sunlight and pasture-fields,
 Immodestly sliding the fellow-senses away,
 They bribed to swap off with touch and go and graze at the edges of me, 630
 No consideration, no regard for my draining strength or my anger,
 Fetching the rest of the herd around to enjoy them a while,
 Then all uniting to stand on a headland and worry me.

The sentries desert every other part of me,
 They have left me helpless to a red marauder,
 They all come to the headland to witness and assist against me.

I am given up by traitors,
 I talk wildly, I have lost my wits, I and nobody else am the greatest traitor,
 I went myself first to the headland, my own hands carried me there.

You villain touch! what are you doing? my breath is tight in its throat,
 Unclench your floodgates, you are too much for me.

640

XXIX

Blind loving wrestling touch, sheathed hooded sharp-toothed touch!
 Did it make you ache so, leaving me?

Parting tracked by arriving, perpetual payment of perpetual loan,
Rich showering rain, and recompense richer afterward.

Sprouts take and accumulate, stand by the curb prolific and vital,
Landscapes projected masculine, full-sized and golden.

XXX

All truths wait in all things,
They neither hasten their own delivery nor resist it,
They do not need the obstetric forceps of the surgeon,
The insignificant is as big to me as any
(What is less or more than a touch?).

650

Logic and sermons never convince,
The damp of the night drives deeper into my soul.

(Only what proves itself to every man and woman is so,
Only what nobody denies is so.)

A minute and a drop of me settle my brain,
I believe the soggy clods shall become lovers and lamps,
And a compend of compends is the meat of a man or woman,
And a summit and flower there is the feeling they have for each other,
And they are to branch boundlessly out of that lesson until it becomes omnific,
And until one and all shall delight us, and we them.

660

XXXI

I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars,
And the pismire is equally perfect, and a grain of sand, and the egg of the wren,
And the tree-toad is a chef-d'œuvre for the highest,
And the running blackberry would adorn the parlors of heaven,
And the narrowest hinge in my hand puts to scorn all machinery,
And the cow crunching with depressed head surpasses any statue,
And a mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels.

I find I incorporate gneiss, coal, long-threaded moss, fruits, grains, esculent roots,
And am stuccoed with quadrupeds and birds all over,
And have distanced what is behind me for good reasons,
But call any thing back again when I desire it.

670

In vain the speeding or shyness,
In vain the plutonic rocks send their old heat against my approach,
In vain the mastodon retreats beneath its own powdered bones,
In vain objects stand leagues off and assume manifold shapes,
In vain the ocean settling in hollows and the great monsters lying low,
In vain the buzzard houses herself with the sky,
In vain the snake slides through the creepers and logs,
In vain the elk takes to the inner passes of the woods,
In vain the razor-billed auk sails far north to Labrador,
I follow quickly, I ascend to the nest in the fissure of the cliff.

680

XXXII

I think I could turn and live with animals, they're so placid and self-contained,
I stand and look at them long and long.

They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
 They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,
 They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
 Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania of owning things,
 Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago,
 Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth. 690

So they show their relations to me and I accept them,
 They bring me tokens of myself, they evince them plainly in their possession.

I wonder where they get those tokens,
 Did I pass that way huge times ago and negligently drop them?

Myself moving forward then and now and forever,
 Gathering and showing more always and with velocity,
 Infinite and omnigenous, and the like of these among them,
 Not too exclusive toward the reachers of my remembrancers,
 Picking out here one that I love, and now go with him on brotherly terms. 700

A gigantic beauty of a stallion, fresh and responsive to my caresses,
 Head high in the forehead, wide between the ears,
 Limbs glossy and supple, tail dusting the ground,
 Eyes full of sparkling wickedness, ears finely cut, flexibly moving.

His nostrils dilate as my heels embrace him,
 His well-built limbs tremble with pleasure as we race around and return.
 I but use you a minute, then I resign you, stallion,
 Why do I need your paces when I myself out-gallop them?
 Even as I stand or sit passing faster than you.

XXXIII

Space and Time! now I see it is true, what I guessed at, 710
 What I guessed when I loafed on the grass,
 What I guessed while I lay alone in my bed,
 And again as I walked the beach under the paling stars of the morning.

My ties and ballasts leave me, my elbows rest in sea-gaps,
 I skirt sierras, my palms cover continents,
 I am afoot with my vision.

By the city's quadrangular houses—in log huts, camping with lumbermen,
 Along the ruts of the turnpike, along the dry gulch and rivulet bed,
 Weeding my onion-patch or hoeing rows of carrots and parsnips, crossing savannas, trailing
 in forests,
 Prospecting, gold-digging, girdling the trees of a new purchase, 720
 Scorched ankle-deep by the hot sand, hauling my boat down the shallow river,
 Where the panther walks to and fro on a limb overhead, where the buck turns furiously at
 the hunter,
 Where the rattlesnake suns his flabby length on a rock, where the otter is feeding on fish,
 Where the alligator in his tough pimples sleeps by the bayou,
 Where the black bear is searching for roots or honey, where the beaver pats the mud with
 his paddle-shaped tail;
 Over the growing sugar, over the yellow-flowered cotton plant, over the rice in its low moist
 field,

Over the sharp-peaked farm house, with its scalloped scum and slender shoots from the
 gutters,
 Over the western persimmon, over the long-leaved corn, over the delicate blue-flower flax,
 Over the white and brown buckwheat, a hummer and buzzer there with the rest,
 Over the dusky green of the rye as it ripples and shades in the breeze; 730
 Scaling mountains, pulling myself cautiously up, holding on by low scragged limbs,
 Walking the path worn in the grass and beat through the leaves of the brush,
 Where the quail is whistling betwixt the woods and the wheat-lot,
 Where the bat flies in the Seventh-month eve, where the great gold-bug drops through the
 dark,
 Where the brook puts out of the roots of the old tree and flows to the meadow,
 Where cattle stand and shake away flies with the tremulous shuddering of their hides,
 Where the cheese-cloth hangs in the kitchen, where andirons straddle the hearth-slab, where
 cobwebs fall in festoons from the rafters;
 Where trip-hammers crash, where the press is whirling its cylinders,
 Where the human heart beats with terrible throes under its ribs,
 Where the pear-shaped balloon is floating aloft (floating in it myself and looking composedly
 down), 740
 Where the life-car is drawn on the slip-noose, where the heat hatches pale-green eggs in the
 dented sand,
 Where the she-whale swims with her calf and never forsakes it,
 Where the steam-ship trails hind-ways its long pennant of smoke,
 Where the fin of the shark cuts like a black chip out of the water,
 Where the half-burned brig is riding on unknown currents,
 Where shells grow to her slimy deck, where the dead are corrupting below;
 Where the dense-starred flag is borne at the head of the regiments,
 Approaching Manhattan up by the long-stretching island,
 Under Niagara, the cataract falling like a veil over my countenance,
 Upon a door-step, upon the horse-block of hard wood outside, 750
 Upon the race-course, or enjoying picnics or jigs or a good game of base-ball,
 At he-festivals, with blackguard gibes, ironical license, bull-dances, drinking, laughter,
 At the cider-mill tasting the sweets of the brown mash, sucking the juice through a straw,
 At apple-peelings wanting kisses for all the red fruit I find,
 At musters, beach-parties, friendly bees, huskings, house-raising;
 Where the mocking-bird sounds his delicious gurgles, cackles, screams, weeps,
 Where the hay-rick stands in the barn-yard, where the dry-stalks are scattered, where the
 brood-cow waits in the hovel,
 Where the bull advances to do his masculine work, where the stud to the mare, where the
 cock is treading the hen,
 Where the heifers browse, where geese nip their food with short jerks,
 Where sun-down shadows lengthen over the limitless and lonesome prairie, 760
 Where herds of buffalo make a crawling spread of the square miles far and near,
 Where the humming-bird shimmers, where the neck of the long-lived swan is curving and
 winding,
 Where the laughing-gull scoots by the shore, where she laughs her near-human laugh,
 Where bee-hives range on a gray bench in the garden half hid by the high weeds,
 Where band-necked partridges roost in a ring on the ground with their heads out,
 Where burial coaches enter the arched gates of a cemetery,
 Where winter wolves bark amid wastes of snow and icicled trees,
 Where the yellow-crowned heron comes to the edge of the marsh at night and feeds upon
 small crabs,
 Where the splash of swimmers and divers cools the warm noon,
 Where the katy-did works her chromatic reed on the walnut-tree over the well, 770
 Through patches of citrons and cucumbers with silver-wired leaves,

Through the salt-lick or orange glade, or under conical firs,
 Through the gymnasium, through the curtained saloon, through the office or public hall;
 Pleased with the native and pleased with the foreign, pleased with the new and old,
 Pleased with the homely woman as well as the handsome,
 Pleased with the quakeress as she puts off her bonnet and talks melodiously,
 Pleased with the tune of the choir of the whitewashed church,
 Pleased with the earnest words of the sweating Methodist preacher, impressed seriously at
 the camp-meeting;
 Looking in at the shop-windows of Broadway the whole forenoon, flattening the flesh of my
 nose on the thick plate glass,
 Wandering the same afternoon with my face turned up to the clouds, or down a lane or along
 the beach, 780
 My right and left arms round the sides of two friends, and I in the middle;
 Coming home with the silent and dark-cheeked bush-boy (behind me he rides at the drape
 of the day),
 Far from the settlements studying the print of animals' feet, or the moccasin print,
 By the cot in the hospital reaching lemonade to a feverish patient,
 Nigh the confined corpse when all is still, examining with a candle;
 Voyaging to every port to dicker and adventure,
 Hurrying with the modern crowd as eager and fickle as any,
 Hot toward one I hate, ready in my madness to knife him,
 Solitary at midnight in my back yard, my thoughts gone from me a long while,
 Walking the old hills of Judæa with the beautiful gentle God by my side, 790
 Speeding through space, speeding through heaven and the stars,
 Speeding amid the seven satellites and the broad ring, and the diameter of eighty thousand
 miles,
 Speeding with tailed meteors, throwing fire-balls like the rest,
 Carrying the crescent child that carries its own full mother in its belly,
 Storming, enjoying, planning, loving, cautioning,
 Backing and filling, appearing and disappearing,
 I tread day and night such roads.

I visit the orchards of spheres and look at the product,
 And look at quintillions ripened and look at quintillions green.

I fly those flights of a fluid and swallowing soul, 800
 My course runs below the soundings of plummets.

I help myself to material and immaterial,
 No guard can shut me off, no law prevent me.

I anchor my ship for a little while only,
 My messengers continually cruise away or bring their returns to me.

I go hunting polar furs and the seal, leaping chasms with a pike-pointed staff, clinging to
 topples of brittle and blue.

I ascend to the foretruck,
 I take my place late at night in the crow's-nest,
 We sail the arctic sea, it is plenty light enough,
 Through the clear atmosphere I stretch around on the wonderful beauty, 810
 The enormous masses of ice pass me and I pass them, the scenery is plain in all directions.
 The white-topped mountains show in the distance, I fling out my fancies toward them,
 We are approaching some great battle-field in which we are soon to be engaged,

We pass the colossal outposts of the encampment, we pass with still feet and caution,
Or we are entering by the suburbs some vast and ruined city,
The blocks and fallen architecture more than all the living cities of the globe.

I am a free companion, I bivouac by invading watchfires,
I turn the bridegroom out of bed and stay with the bride myself,
I tighten her all night to my thighs and lips.

My voice is the wife's voice, the screech by the rail of the stairs, 820
They fetch my man's body up dripping and drowned.

I understand the large hearts of heroes,
The courage of present times and all times,
How the skipper saw the crowded and rudderless wreck of the steamship, and Death chasing
it up and down the storm,
How he knuckled tight and gave not back an inch, and was faithful of days and faithful of
nights,
And chalked in large letters on a board, *Be of good cheer, we will not desert you;*
How he followed with them and tacked with them three days and would not give it up,
How he saved the drifting company at last,
How the lank loose-gowned women looked when boated from the side of their prepared graves,
How the silent old-faced infants and the lifted sick, and the sharp-lipped unshaved men; 830
All this I swallow, it tastes good, I like it well, it becomes mine,
I am the man, I suffered, I was there.

The disdain and calmness of martyrs,
The mother of old, condemned for a witch, burnt with dry wood, her children gazing on,
The hounded slave that flags in the race, leans by the fence, blowing, covered with sweat,
The twinges that sting like needles his legs and neck, the murderous buckshot and the bullets,
All these I feel or am.

I am the hounded slave, I wince at the bite of the dogs,
Hell and despair are upon me, crack and again crack the marksmen,
I clutch the rails of the fence, my gore dribs, thinned with the ooze of my skin, 840
I fall on the weeds and stones,
The riders spur their unwilling horses, haul close,
Taunt my dizzy ears and beat me violently over the head with whip-stocks.

Agonies are one of my changes of garments.
I do not ask the wounded person how he feels, I myself become the wounded person,
My hurts turn livid upon me as I lean on a cane and observe.

I am the mashed fireman with breast-bone broken,
Tumbling walls buried me in their debris,
Heat and smoke I inspired, I heard the yelling shouts of my comrades,
I heard the distant click of their picks and shovels, 850
They have cleared the beams away, they tenderly lift me forth.

I lie in the night air in my red shirt, the pervading hush is for my sake,
Painless after all I lie exhausted but not so unhappy,
White and beautiful are the faces around me, the heads are bared of their fire-caps,
The kneeling crowd fades with the light of the torches.

Distant and dead resuscitate,
They show as the dial or move as the hands of me, I am the clock myself.

I am an old artillerist, I tell of my fort's bombardment,
I am there again.

Again the long roll of the drummers, 860
Again the attacking cannon, mortars,
Again to my listening ears the cannon responsive.

I take part, I see and hear the whole,
The cries, curses, roar, the plaudits for well-aimed shots,
The ambulanza slowly passing trailing its red drip,
Workmen searching after damages, making indispensable repairs,
The fall of grenades through the rent roof, the fan-shaped explosion,
The whizz of limbs, heads, stone, wood, iron, high in the air.

Again gurgles the mouth of my dying general, he furiously waves with his hand,
He gasps through the clot *Mind not me—mind—the entrenchments.* 870

XXXIV

Now I tell what I knew in Texas in my early youth
(I tell not the fall of Alamo,
Not one escaped to tell the fall of Alamo,
The hundred and fifty are dumb yet at Alamo),
'Tis the tale of the murder in cold blood of four hundred and twelve young men.

Retreating they had formed in a hollow square with their baggage for breastworks,
Nine hundred lives out of the surrounding enemy's, nine times their number, was the price
they took in advance,
Their colonel was wounded and their ammunition gone,
They treated for an honorable capitulation, received writing and seal, gave up their arms
and marched back prisoners of war.

They were the glory of the race of rangers, 880
Matchless with horse, rifle, song, supper, courtship,
Large, turbulent, generous, handsome, proud, and affectionate,
Bearded, sunburnt, dressed in the free costume of hunters,
Not a single one over thirty years of age.

The second First-day morning they were brought out in squads and massacred, it was
beautiful early summer,
The work commenced about five o'clock and was over by eight.

None obeyed the command to kneel,
Some made a mad and helpless rush, some stood stark and straight,
A few fell at once, shot in the temple or heart, the living and dead lay together,
The maimed and mangled dug in the dirt, the new-comers saw them there, 890
Some half-killed attempted to crawl away,
These were dispatched with bayonets or battered with the blunts of muskets.
A youth not seventeen years old seized his assassin till two more came to release him.
The three were all torn and covered with the boy's blood.

At eleven o'clock began the burning of the bodies;
That is the tale of the murder of the four hundred and twelve young men.

XXXV

Would you hear of an old-time sea-fight?
 Would you learn who won by the light of the moon and stars?
 List to the yarn, as my grandmother's father the sailor told it to me.

Our foe was no skulk in his ship I tell you (said he), 900
 His was the surly English pluck, and there is no tougher or truer, and never was, and never
 will be;
 Along the lowered eve he came horribly raking us.

We closed with him, the yards entangled, the cannon touched,
 My captain lashed fast with his own hands.

We had received some eighteen pound shots under the water,
 On our lower-gun-deck two large pieces had burst at the first fire, killing all around and blowing up overhead.

Fighting at sun-down, fighting at dark,
 Ten o'clock at night, the full moon well up, our leaks on the gain, and five feet of water
 reported,
 The master-at-arms loosing the prisoners confined in the after-hold to give them a chance
 for themselves.

The transit to and from the magazine is now stopped by the sentinels, 910
 They see so many strange faces they do not know whom to trust.

Our frigate takes fire,
 The other asks if we demand quarter?
 If our colors are struck and the fighting done?

Now I laugh content, for I hear the voice of my little captain,
We have not struck, he composedly cries, *we have just begun our part of the fighting*.

Only three guns are in use,
 One is directed by the captain himself against the enemy's main-mast,
 Two well served with grape and canister silence his musketry and clear his decks.

The tops alone second the fire of this little battery, especially the main-top, 920
 They hold out bravely during the whole of the action.

Not a moment's cease,
 The leaks gain fast on the pumps, the fire eats toward the powder-magazine.

One of the pumps has been shot away, it is generally thought we are sinking.

Serene stands the little captain,
 He is not hurried, his voice is neither high nor low,
 His eyes give more light to us than our battle-lanterns.

Toward twelve there in the beams of the moon they surrender to us.

XXXVI

Stretched and still lies the midnight,
 Two great hulls motionless on the breast of the darkness,

Our vessel riddled and slowly sinking, preparations to pass to the one we have conquered,
The captain on the quarter-deck coldly giving his orders through a countenance white as
a sheet,

Near by the corpse of the child that served in the cabin,
The dead face of an old salt with long white hair and carefully curled whiskers,
The flames spite of all that can be done flickering aloft and below,
The husky voices of the two or three officers yet fit for duty,
Formless stacks of bodies and bodies by themselves, dabs of flesh upon the masts and spars,
Cut of cordage, dangle of rigging, slight shock of the soothe of waves,
Black and impassive guns, litter of powder-parcels, strong scent,
A few large stars overhead, silent and mournful shining, 940
Delicate sniffs of sea-breeze, smells of sedgy grass and fields by the shore, death-messages
given in charge to survivors,
The hiss of the surgeon's knife, the gnawing teeth of his saw,
Wheeze, cluck, swash of falling blood, short wild scream, and long, dull, tapering groan,
These so, these irretrievable.

XXXVII

You laggards there on guard! look to your arms!
In at the conquered doors they crowd! I am possessed!
Embody all presences outlawed or suffering,
See myself in prison shaped like another man,
And feel the dull unintermitted pain.

For me the keepers of convicts shoulder their carbines and keep watch, 950
It is I let out in the morning and barred at night.

Not a mutineer walks handcuffed to jail but I am handcuffed to him and walk by his side
(I am less the jolly one there, and more the silent one with sweat on my twitching lips).

Not a youngster is taken for larceny but I go up too, and am tried and sentenced.

Not a cholera patient lies at the last gasp but I also lie at the last gasp,
My face is ash-colored, my sinews gnarl, away from me people retreat.

Askers embody themselves in me and I am embodied in them,
I project my hat, sit shame-faced, and beg.

XXXVIII

Enough! enough! enough!
Somehow I have been stunned. Stand back! 960
Give me a little time beyond my cuffed head, slumbers, dreams, gaping,
I discover myself on the verge of a usual mistake.

That I could forget the mockers and insults!
That I could forget the trickling tears and the blows of the bludgeons and hammers!
That I could look with a separate look on my own crucifixion and bloody crowning!

I remember now,
I resume the overstaid fraction,
The grave of rock multiplies what has been confided to it, or to any graves,
Corpses rise, gashes heal, fastenings roll from me.

I troop forth replenished with supreme power, one of an average unending procession, 970
 Inland and sea-coast we go, and pass all boundary lines,
 Our swift ordinances on their way over the whole earth,
 The blossoms we wear in our hats the growth of thousands of years.

Eleves, I salute you! come forward!
 Continue your annotations, continue your questionings.

XXXIX

The friendly and flowing savage, who is he?
 Is he waiting for civilization, or past it and mastering it?

Is he some Southwesterner raised outdoors? is he Kanadian?
 Is he from the Mississippi country? Iowa, Oregon, California?
 The mountains? prairie-life, bush-life? or sailor from the sea? 980

Wherever he goes men and women accept and desire him,
 They desire he should like them, touch them, speak to them, stay with them.

Behavior lawless as snowflakes, woods simple as grass, uncombed head, laughter, and naivetè,
 Slow-stepping feet, common features, common modes and emanations,
 They descend in new forms from the tips of his fingers,
 They are wafted with the odor of his body or breath, they fly out of the glance of his eyes.

XL

Flaunt of the sunshine I need not your bask—lie over!
 You light surfaces only, I force surfaces and depths also.

Earth! you seem to look for something at my hands,
 Say, old top-knot, what do you want? 990

Man or woman, I might tell how I like you, but cannot,
 And might tell what it is in me and what it is in you, but cannot,
 And might tell that pining I have, that pulse of my nights and days.

Behold, I do not give lectures or a little charity,
 When I give I give myself.

You there, impotent, loose in the knees,
 Open your scarfed chops till I blow grit within you,
 Spread your palms and lift the flaps of your pockets,
 I am not to be denied, I compel, I have stores plenty and to spare,
 And any thing I have I bestow. 1000

I do not ask who you are, that is not important to me,
 You can do nothing and be nothing but what I will infold you.

To cotton-field drudge or cleaner of privies I lean,
 On his right cheek I put the family kiss,
 And in my soul I swear I never will deny him.

On women fit for conception I start bigger and nimbler babes
 (This day I am jetting the stuff of far more arrogant republics).

To any one dying, thither I speed and twist the knob of the door,
 Turn the bed-clothes toward the foot of the bed,
 Let the physician and the priest go home.

1010

I seize the descending man and raise him with resistless will,
 O despairer, here is my neck,
 By God, you shall not go down! hang your whole weight upon me.

I dilate you with tremendous breath, I buoy you up,
 Every room of the house do I fill with an armed force,
 Lovers of me, bafflers of graves.

Sleep—I and they keep guard all night,
 Not doubt, not disease shall dare to lay finger upon you,
 I have embraced you, and henceforth possess you to myself,
 And when you rise in the morning you will find what I tell you is so.

1020

XLI

I am he bringing help for the sick as they pant on their backs,
 And for strong upright men I bring yet more needed help.

I heard what was said of the universe,
 Heard it and heard it of several thousand years;
 It is middling well as far as it goes—but is that all?

Magnifying and applying come I,
 Outbidding at the start the old cautious hucksters,
 Taking myself the exact dimensions of Jehovah,
 Lithographing Kronos, Zeus his son, and Hercules his grandson,
 Buying drafts of Osiris, Isis, Belus, Brahma, Buddha,
 In my portfolio placing Manito loose, Allah on a leaf, the crucifix engraved
 With Odin and the hideous-faced Mexitli and every idol and image,
 Taking them all for what they are worth and not a cent more,
 Admitting they were alive and did the work of their days
 (They bore mites as for unfledged birds who have now to rise and fly and sing for themselves),
 Accepting the rough deific sketches to fill out better in myself, bestowing them freely on
 each man and woman I see,
 Discovering as much or more in a framer framing a house,
 Putting higher claims for him there with his rolled-up sleeves driving the mallet and chisel,
 Not objecting to special revelations, considering a curl of smoke or a hair on the back of my
 hand just as curious as any revelation,
 Lads ahold of fire-engines and hook-and-ladder ropes no less to me than the gods of the
 antique wars,
 Minding their voices peal through the crash of destruction,
 Their brawny limbs passing safe over charred laths, their white foreheads whole and unhurt
 out of the flames;
 By the mechanic's wife with her babe at her nipple interceding for every person born,
 Three scythes at harvest whizzing in a row from three lusty angels with shirts bagged out
 at their waists,
 The snag-toothed hostler with red hair redeeming sins past and to come,
 Selling all he possesses, traveling on foot to fee lawyers for his brother and sit by him while
 he is tried for forgery;
 What was strewn in the amplest strewing the square rod about me, and not filling the square
 rod then,

1030

1040

The bull and the bug never worshiped half enough,
 Dung and dirt more admirable than was dreamed,
 The supernatural of no account, myself waiting my time to be one of the supremes, 1050
 The day getting ready for me when I shall do as much good as the best, and be as prodigious;
 By my life-lumps! becoming already a creator,
 Putting myself here and now to the ambushed womb of the shadows.

XLII

A call in the midst of the crowd,
 My own voice, orotund sweeping and final.

Come my children,
 Come my boys and girls, my women, household and intimates,
 Now the performer launches his nerve, he has passed his prelude on the reeds within.

Easily written loose-fingered chords—I feel the thrum of your climax and close.

My head slues round on my neck, 1060
 Music rolls, but not from the organ,
 Folks are around me, but they are no household of mine.

Ever the hard unsunk ground,
 Ever the eaters and drinkers, ever the upward and downward sun, ever the air and the
 ceaseless tides,
 Ever myself and my neighbors, refreshing, wicked, real,
 Ever the old inexplicable query, ever that thorned thumb, that breath of itches and thirsts,
 Ever the vexer's *hoot! hoot!* till we find where the sly one hides and bring him forth,
 Ever love, ever the sobbing liquid of life,
 Ever the bandage under the chin, ever the trestles of death.

Here and there with dimes on the eyes walking, 1070
 To feed the greed of the belly the brains liberally spooning,
 Tickets buying, taking, selling, but in to the feast never once going,
 Many sweating, ploughing, thrashing, and then the chaff for payment receiving,
 A few idly owning, and they the wheat continually claiming.

This is the city and I am one of the citizens,
 Whatever interests the rest interests me, politics, wars, markets, newspapers, schools,
 The mayor and councils, banks, tariffs, steamships, factories, stocks, stores, real estate and
 personal estate.

The little plentiful manikins skipping around in collars and tailed coats,
 I am aware who they are (they are positively not worms or fleas),
 I acknowledge the duplicates of myself, the weakest and shallowest is deathless with me, 1080
 What I do and say the same waits for them,
 Every thought that flounders in me the same flounders in them.

I know perfectly well my own egotism,
 Know my omnivorous lines and must not write any less,
 And would fetch you whoever you are flush with myself.

Not words of routine this song of mine,
 But abruptly to question, to leap beyond yet nearer bring;
 This printed and bound book—but the printer and the printing-office boy?

The well-taken photographs—but your wife or friend close and solid in your arms?
 The black ship mailed with iron, her mighty guns in her turrets—but the pluck of the captain
 and engineers? 1090
 In the houses the dishes and fare and furniture—but the host and hostess, and the look
 out of their eyes?
 The sky up there—yet here or next door, or across the way?
 The saints and sages in history—but you yourself?
 Sermons, creeds, theology—but the fathomless human brain,
 And what is reason? and what is love? and what is life?

XLIII

I do not despise you priests, all time, the world over,
 My faith is the greatest of faiths and the least of faiths,
 Enclosing worship ancient and modern and all between ancient and modern,
 Believing I shall come again upon the earth after five thousand years,
 Waiting responses from oracles, honoring the gods, saluting the sun, 1100
 Making a fetch of the first rock or stump, powowing with sticks in the circle of obis,
 Helping the llama or brahmin as he trims the lamps of the idols,
 Dancing yet through the streets in a phallic procession, rapt and austere in the woods a
 gymnosophist,
 Drinking mead from the skull-cup, to Shastas and Vedas admirant, minding the Koran,
 Walking the teokallis, spotted with gore from the stone and knife, beating the serpent-
 skin drum,
 Accepting the Gospels, accepting him that was crucified, knowing assuredly that he is divine,
 To the mass kneeling or the puritan's prayer rising, or sitting patiently in a pew,
 Ranting and frothing in my insane crisis, or waiting dead-like till my spirit arouses me,
 Looking forth on pavement and land, or outside of pavement and land,
 Belonging to the winders of the circuit of circuits. 1110

One of that centripetal and centrifugal gang I turn and talk like a man leaving charges
 before a journey.

Down-hearted doubters dull and excluded,
 Frivolous, sullen, moping, angry, affected, disheartened, atheistical,
 I know every one of you, I know the sea of torment, doubt, despair and unbelief.

How the flukes splash!
 How they contort rapid as lightning, with spasms and spouts of blood!

Be at peace bloody flukes of doubters and sullen mopers,
 I take my place among you as much as among any,
 The past is the push of you, me, all, precisely the same,
 And what is yet untried and afterward is for you, me, all precisely the same. 1120

I do not know what is untried and afterward,
 But I know it will in its turn prove sufficient, and cannot fail.

Each who passes is considered, each who stops is considered, not a single one can it fail.

It cannot fail the young man who died and was buried,
 Nor the young woman who died and was put by his side,
 Nor the little child that peeped in at the door, and then drew back and was never seen again,
 Nor the old man who has lived without purpose, and feels it with bitterness worse than gall,

Nor him in the poor house tubercled by rum and the bad disorder,
 Nor the numberless slaughtered and wrecked, nor the brutish koboo called the ordure of
 humanity,
 Nor the sacs merely floating with open mouths for food to slip in, 1130
 Nor any thing in the earth, or down in the oldest graves of the earth,
 Nor any thing in the myriads of spheres, nor the myriads of myriads that inhabit them,
 Nor the present, nor the least wisp that is known.

XLIV

It is time to explain myself—let us stand up.

What is known I strip away,
 I launch all men and women forward with me into the Unknown.

The clock indicates the moment—but what does eternity indicate?

We have thus far exhausted trillions of winters and summers,
 There are trillions ahead, and trillions ahead of them.

Births have brought us richness and variety, 1140
 And other births will bring us richness and variety.

I do not call one greater and one smaller,
 That which fills its period and place is equal to any.

Were mankind murderous or jealous upon you, my brother, my sister?
 I am sorry for you, they are not murderous or jealous upon me,
 All has been gentle with me, I keep no account with lamentation
 (What have I to do with lamentation?).

I am an acme of things accomplished, and I an encloser of things to be.

My feet strike an apex of the apices of the stairs,
 On every step bunches of ages, and larger bunches between the steps, 1150
 All below duly traveled, and still I mount and mount.

Rise after rise bow the phantoms behind me,
 Afar down I see the huge first Nothing, I know I was even there,
 I waited unseen and always, and slept through the lethargic mist,
 And took my time, and took no hurt from the fetid carbon.

Long I was hugged close—long and long.

Immense have been the preparations for me,
 Faithful and friendly the arms that have helped me.

Cycles ferried my cradle, rowing and rowing like cheerful boatmen,
 For room to me stars kept aside in their own rings, 1160
 They sent influences to look after what was to hold me.

Before I was born out of my mother generations guided me,
 My embryo has never been torpid, nothing could overlay it.

For it the nebula cohered to an orb,
 The long slow strata piled to rest it on,
 Vast vegetables gave it sustenance,
 Monstrous sauroids transported it in their mouths and deposited it with care

All forces have been steadily employed to complete and delight me,
 Now on this spot I stand with my robust soul.

XLV

O span of youth! ever-pushed elasticity.
 O manhood, balanced, florid and full.

1170

My lovers suffocate me,
 Crowding my lips, thick in the pores of my skin,
 Jostling me through streets and public halls, coming naked to me at night,
 Crying by day *Ahoy!* from the rocks of the river, swinging and chirping over my head,
 Calling my name from flower-beds, vines, tangled underbrush,
 Lighting on every moment of my life,
 Bussing my body with soft balsamic busses,
 Noiselessly passing handfuls out of their hearts and giving them to be mine.

Old age superbly rising! O welcome, ineffable grace of dying days!

1180

Every condition promulges not only itself, it promulges what grows after and out of itself,
 And the dark hush promulges as much as any.

I open my scuttle at night and see the far-sprinkled systems,
 And all I see multiplied as high as I can cipher edge but the rim of the farther systems.

Wider and wider they spread, expanding, always expanding,
 Outward and outward and forever outward.

My sun has his sun and round him obediently wheels,
 He joins with his partners a group of superior circuit,
 And greater sets follow, making specks of the greatest inside them.

There is no stoppage and never can be stoppage,
 If I, you, and the worlds, and all beneath or upon their surfaces, were this moment reduced
 back to a pallid float, it would not avail in the long run,
 We should surely bring up again where we now stand,
 And surely go as much farther, and then farther and farther.

1190

A few quadrillions of eras, a few octillions of cubic leagues, do not hazard the span or make
 it impatient,
 They are but parts, any thing is but a part.

See ever so far, there is limitless space outside of that,
 Count ever so much, there is limitless time around that.

My rendezvous is appointed, it is certain,
 The Lord will be there and wait till I come on perfect terms,
 The great Camerado, the lover true for whom I pine will be there.

1200

XLVI

I know I have the best of time and space, and was never measured and never will be measured.

I tramp a perpetual journey (come listen all!),
 My signs are a rain-proof coat, good shoes, and a staff cut from the woods,
 No friend of mine takes his ease in my chair,
 I have no chair, no church, no philosophy,
 I lead no man to a dinner-table, library, exchange,
 But each man and each woman of you I lead upon a knoll,
 My left hand hooking you round the waist,
 My right hand pointing to landscapes of continents and the public road.

Not I, not any one else can travel that road for you,
 You must travel it for yourself.

1210

It is not far, it is within reach,
 Perhaps you have been on it since you were born and did not know,
 Perhaps it is everywhere on water and on land.

Shoulder your duds dear son, and I will mine, and let us hasten forth,
 Wonderful cities and free nations we shall fetch as we go.

If you tire, give me both burdens, and rest the chuff of your hand on my hip,
 And in due time you shall repay the same service to me,
 For after we start we never lie by again.

This day before dawn I ascended a hill and looked at the crowded heaven,
 And I said to my spirit *When we become the enfolders of those orbs, and the pleasure and knowl- 1220*
edge of every thing in them, shall we be filled and satisfied then?
 And my spirit said *No, we but level that lift to pass and continue beyond.*

You are also asking me questions and I hear you,
 I answer that I cannot answer, you must find out for yourself.

Sit a while dear son,
 Here are biscuits to eat and here is milk to drink,
 But as soon as you sleep and renew yourself in sweet clothes, I kiss you with a good-by
 kiss and open the gate for your egress hence.

Long enough have you dreamed contemptible dreams,
 Now I wash the gum from your eyes,
 You must habit yourself to the dazzle of the light and of every moment of your life. 1230

Long have you timidly waded holding a plank by the shore,
 Now I will you to be a bold swimmer,
 To jump off in the midst of the sea, rise again, nod to me, shout, and laughingly dash with
 your hair.

XLVII

I am the teacher of athletes,
 He that by me spreads a wider breast than my own proves the width of my own,
 He most honors my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher.

The boy I love, the same becomes a man not through derived power, but in his own right,
 Wicked rather than virtuous out of conformity or fear,
 Fond of his sweetheart, relishing well his steak,
 Unrequited love or a slight cutting him worse than sharp steel cuts, 1240
 First-rate to ride, to fight, to hit the bull's eye, to sail a skiff, to sing a song or play on the
 banjo,
 Preferring scars and the beard and faces pitted with small-pox over all latherers,
 And those well-tanned to those that keep out of the sun.

I teach straying from me, yet who can stray from me?
 I follow you whoever you are from the present hour,
 My words itch at your ears till you understand them.

I do not say these things for a dollar or to fill up the time while I wait for a boat
 (It is you talking just as much as myself, I act as the tongue of you,
 Tied in your mouth, in mine it begins to be loosened).

I swear I will never again mention love or death inside a house, 1250
 And I swear I will never translate myself at all, only to him or her who privately stays with
 me in the open air.

If you would understand me go to the heights or water-shore,
 The nearest gnat is an explanation, and a drop or motion of waves a key,
 The maul, the oar, the hand-saw, second my words.

No shuttered room or school can commune with me,
 But roughs and little children better than they.

The young mechanic is closest to me, he knows me well,
 The woodman that takes his ax and jug with him shall take me with him all day,
 The farm-boy ploughing in the field feels good at the sound of my voice,
 In vessels that sail my words sail, I go with fishermen and seamen and love them. 1260

The soldier camped or upon the march is mine,
 On the night ere the pending battle many seek me, and I do not fail them,
 On that solemn night (it may be their last) those that know me seek me.

My face rubs to the hunter's face when he lies down alone in his blanket,
 The driver thinking of me does not mind the jolt of his wagon,
 The young mother and old mother comprehend me,
 The girl and the wife rest the needle a moment and forget where they are,
 They and all would resume what I have told them.

XLVIII

I have said that the soul is not more than the body,
 And I have said that the body is not more than the soul, 1270
 And nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's self is,
 And whoever walks a furlong without sympathy walks to his own funeral dressed in his
 shroud,
 And I or you pocketless of a dime may purchase the pick of the earth,
 And to glance with an eye or show a bean in its pod confounds the learning of all times,
 And there is no trade or employment but the young man following it may become a hero,
 And there is no object so soft but it makes a hub for the wheeled universe,
 And I say to any man or woman, Let your soul stand cool and composed before a million
 universes.

And I say to mankind, Be not curious about God,
 For I who am curious about each am not curious about God
 (No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about God and about death). 1280
 I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand God not in the least,
 Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful than myself.

Why should I wish to see God better than this day?
 I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and each moment then,
 In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass,
 I find letters from God dropped in the street, and every one is signed by God's name,
 And I leave them where they are, for I know that wheresoe'er I go
 Others will punctually come for ever and ever.

XLIX

And as to you Death, and you bitter hug of mortality, it is idle to try to alarm me.

To his work without flinching the accoucheur comes, 1290
 I see the elder-hand pressing receiving supporting,
 I recline by the sills of the exquisite flexible doors,
 And mark the outlet, and mark the relief and escape.

And as to you Corpse I think you are good manure, but that does not offend me,
 I smell the white roses sweet-scented and growing,
 I reach to the leafy lips, I reach to the polished breasts of melons.

And as to you Life I reckon you are the leavings of many deaths
 (No doubt I have died myself ten thousand times before).

I hear you whispering there O stars of heaven,
 O suns—O grass of graves—O perpetual transfers and promotions, 1300
 If you do not say any thing how can I say any thing?

Of the turbid pool that lies in the autumn forest,
 Of the moon that descends the steep of the soughing twilight,
 Toss, sparkles of day and dusk—toss on the black stems that decay in the muck,
 Toss to the moaning gibberish of the dry limbs.

I ascend from the moon, I ascend from the night,
 I perceive that the ghastly glimmer is noonday sunbeams reflected,
 And debouch to the steady and central from the offspring great or small.

L

There is that in me—I do not know what it is—but I know it is in me.

Wrenched and sweaty—calm and cool then my body becomes, 1310
 I sleep—I sleep long.

I do not know it—it is without name—it is a word unsaid.
 It is not in any dictionary, utterance, symbol.

Something it swings on more than the earth I swing on,
 To it the creation is the friend whose embracing awakes me.

Perhaps I might tell more. Outlines! I plead for my brothers and sisters.

Do you see O my brothers and sisters?

It is not chaos or death—it is form, union, plan—it is eternal life—it is Happiness.

LI

The past and present wilt—I have filled them, emptied them,
And proceed to fill my next fold of the future.

1320

Listener up there! what have you to confide to me?

Look in my face while I snuff the sidle of evening

(Talk honestly, no one else hears you, and I stay only a minute longer).

Do I contradict myself?

Very well then I contradict myself

(I am large, I contain multitudes).

I concentrate toward them that are nigh, I wait on the door-slab.

Who has done his day's work? who will soonest be through with his supper?

Who wishes to walk with me?

Will you speak before I am gone? will you prove already too late?

1330

LII

The spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me, he complains of my gab and my loitering.

I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable,

I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.

The last scud of day holds back for me,

It flings my likeness after the rest and true as any on the shadowed wilds,

It coaxes me to the vapor and the dusk.

I depart as air, I shake my white locks at the runaway sun,

I effuse my flesh in eddies, and drift it in lacy jags.

I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love,

It you want me again look for me under your boot-soles.

1340

You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,

But I shall be good health to you nevertheless,

And filter and fiber your blood.

Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,

Missing me one place search another,

I stop somewhere waiting for you.

ONE HOUR TO MADNESS AND JOY¹

ONE hour to madness and joy! O furious! O confine me not!

(What is this that frees me so in storms?

What do my shouts amid lightnings and raging winds mean?)

¹ First published 1860 (*L. G.*, 1881). This poem is taken from the group, following the *Song of Myself*, entitled *Children of Adam*. One of the many who visited Whitman during his last years in Camden asked: "Don't you on the whole regret having written your poems of sex?"—to which the poet replied, "Don't you on the whole regret that I am Walt Whitman?"

O to drink the mystic deliria deeper than any other man!
 O savage and tender achings! (I bequeath them to you, my children,
 I tell them to you, for reasons, O bridegroom and bride.)

 O to be yielded to you whoever you are, and you to be yielded to me in defiance of the world!
 O to return to Paradise! O bashful and feminine!
 O to draw you to me, to plant on you for the first time the lips of a determined man.

 O the puzzle, the thrice-tied knot, the deep and dark pool, all untied and illumined! 10
 O to speed where there is space enough and air enough at last!
 To be absolved from previous ties and conventions, I from mine and you from yours!
 To find a new unthought-of nonchalance with the best of Nature!
 To have the gag removed from one's mouth!
 To have the feeling to-day or any day I am sufficient as I am.

 O something unproved! something in a trance!
 To escape utterly from others' anchors and holds!
 To drive free! to love free! to dash reckless and dangerous!
 To court destruction with taunts, with invitations!
 To ascend, to leap to the heavens of the love indicated to me! 20
 To rise thither with my inebriate soul!
 To be lost if it must be so!
 To feed the remainder of life with one hour of fullness and freedom!
 With one brief hour of madness and joy.

WHOEVER YOU ARE HOLDING ME NOW IN HAND¹

WHOEVER you are holding me now in hand,
 Without one thing all will be useless,
 I give you fair warning before you attempt me further,
 I am not what you supposed, but far different.

 Who is he that would become my follower?
 Who would sign himself a candidate for my affections?

 The way is suspicious, the result uncertain, perhaps destructive,
 You would have to give up all else, I alone would expect to be your sole and exclu-
 sive standard,
 Your novitiate would even then be long and exhausting,
 The whole past theory of your life and all conformity to the lives around you would have to
 be abandoned, 10
 Therefore release me now before troubling yourself any further, let go your hand from my
 shoulders,
 Put me down and depart on your way.

 Or else by stealth in some wood for trial,
 Or back of a rock in the open air
 (For in any roofed room of a house I emerge not, nor in company,
 And in libraries I lie as one dumb, a gawk, or unborn, or dead),
 But just possibly with you on a high hill, first watching lest any person for miles around
 approach unawares,
 Or possibly with you sailing at sea, or on the beach of the sea or some quiet island,
 Here to put your lips upon mine I permit you,
 With the comrade's long-dwelling kiss or the new husband's kiss, 20
 For I am the new husband and I am the comrade.

¹ First published 1860 (*L. G.*, 1881). This and the following six poems are from the group entitled *Calamus*.

Or if you will, thrusting me beneath your clothing,
Where I may feel the throbs of your heart or rest upon your hip,
Carry me when you go forth over land or sea;
For thus merely touching you is enough, is best,
And thus touching you would I silently sleep and be carried eternally.

But these leaves conning you con at peril,
For these leaves and me you will not understand,
They will elude you at first and still more afterward, I will certainly elude you,
Even while you should think you had unquestionably caught me, behold!
Already you see I have escaped from you.

30

For it is not for what I have put into it that I have written this book,
Nor is it by reading it you will acquire it,
Nor do those know me best who admire me and vauntingly praise me,
Nor will the candidates for my love (unless at most a very few) prove victorious,
Nor will my poems do good only, they will do just as much evil, perhaps more,
For all is useless without that which you may guess at many times and not hit, that which
I hinted at;
Therefore release me and depart on your way.

OF THE TERRIBLE DOUBT OF APPEARANCES¹

Of the terrible doubt of appearances,
Of the uncertainty after all, that we may be deluded,
That may-be reliance and hope are but speculations after all,
That may-be identity beyond the grave is a beautiful fable only,
May-be the things I perceive, the animals, plants, men, hills, shining and flowing waters,
The skies of day and night, colors, densities, forms, may-be these are (as doubtless they
are) only apparitions, and the real something has yet to be known
(How often they dart out of themselves as if to confound me and mock me!
How often I think neither I know, nor any man knows, aught of them),
May-be seeming to me what they are (as doubtless they indeed but seem) as from my present
point of view, and might prove (as of course they would) nought of what they appear,
or nought anyhow, from entirely changed points of view;
To me these and the like of these are curiously answered by my lovers, my dear friends, 10
When he whom I love travels with me or sits a long while holding me by the hand,
When the subtle air, the impalpable, the sense that words and reason hold not, surround
us and pervade us,
Then I am charged with untold and untellable wisdom, I am silent, I require nothing further,
I cannot answer the question of appearances or that of identity beyond the grave,
But I walk or sit indifferent, I am satisfied,
He ahold of my hand has completely satisfied me.

THE BASE OF ALL METAPHYSICS²

AND now gentlemen,
A word I give to remain in your memories and minds,
As base and final too for all metaphysics.

(So to the students the old professor,
At the close of his crowded course.)

¹ First published 1860 (*L. G.*, 1867).

² First published 1871 (*L. G.*, 1871).

Having studied the new and antique, the Greek and Germanic systems,
 Kant having studied and stated, Fichte and Schelling and Hegel,
 Stated the lore of Plato, and Socrates greater than Plato,
 And greater than Socrates sought and stated, Christ divine having studied long,
 I see reminiscent to-day those Greek and Germanic systems, 10
 See the philosophies all, Christian churches and tenets see,
 Yet underneath Socrates clearly see, and underneath Christ the divine I see,
 The dear love of man for his comrade, the attraction of friend to friend,
 Of the well-married husband and wife, of children and parents,
 Of city for city and land for land.

RECORDERS AGES HENCE ¹

RECORDERS ages hence,
 Come, I will take you down underneath this impassive exterior, I will tell you what to say
 of me,
 Publish my name and hang up my picture as that of the tenderest lover,
 The friend the lover's portrait, of whom his friend his lover was fondest,
 Who was not proud of his songs, but of the measureless ocean of love within him, and freely
 poured it forth,
 Who often walked lonesome walks thinking of his dear friends, his lovers,
 Who pensive away from one he loved often lay sleepless and dissatisfied at night,
 Who knew too well the sick, sick dread lest the one he loved might secretly be indifferent to
 him,
 Whose happiest days were far away through fields, in woods, on hills, he and another wander-
 ing hand in hand, they twain apart from other men,
 Who oft as he sauntered the streets curved with his arm the shoulder of his friend, while
 the arm of his friend rested upon him also. 10

I HEAR IT WAS CHARGED AGAINST ME ²

I HEAR it was charged against me that I sought to destroy institutions,
 But really I am neither for nor against institutions
 (What indeed have I in common with them? or what with the destruction of them?),
 Only I will establish in the Mannahatta and in every city of these States inland and seaboard,
 And in the fields and woods, and above every keel little or large that dents the water,
 Without edifices or rules or trustees or any argument,
 The institution of the dear love of comrades.

WHEN I PERUSE THE CONQUERED FAME ³

WHEN I peruse the conquered fame of heroes and the victories of mighty generals, I do not
 envy the generals,
 Nor the President in his Presidency, nor the rich in his great house,
 But when I hear of the brotherhood of lovers, how it was with them,
 How together through life, through dangers, odium, unchanging, long and long,
 Through youth and through middle and old age, how unfaltering, how affectionate and
 faithful they were,
 Then I am pensive—I hastily walk away filled with the bitterest envy.

¹ First published 1860 (*L. G.*, 1867).

² First published 1860 (*L. G.*, 1867).

³ First published 1860 (*L. G.*, 1871).

NO LABOR-SAVING MACHINE¹

No labor-saving machine,
 Nor discovery have I made,
 Nor will I be able to leave behind me any wealthy bequest to found a hospital or library,
 Nor reminiscence of any deed of courage for America,
 Nor literary success nor intellect, nor book for the book-shelf,
 But a few carols vibrating through the air I leave,
 For comrades and lovers.

SONG OF THE OPEN ROAD²

I

Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
 Healthy, free, the world before me,
 The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.

Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself am good-fortune,
 Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need nothing,
 Done with indoor complaints, libraries, querulous criticisms,
 Strong and content I travel the open road.

The earth, that is sufficient,
 I do not want the constellations any nearer,
 I know they are very well where they are,
 I know they suffice for those who belong to them.

10

(Still here I carry my old delicious burdens,
 I carry them, men and women, I carry them with me wherever I go,
 I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them,
 I am filled with them; and I will fill them in return.)

II

You road I enter upon and look around, I believe you are not all that is here,
 I believe that much unseen is also here.

Here the profound lesson of reception, nor preference nor denial,
 The black with his woolly head, the felon, the diseased, the illiterate person, are not denied;
 The birth, the hasting after the physician, the beggar's tramp, the drunkard's stagger, the
 laughing party of mechanics, 20
 The escaped youth, the rich person's carriage, the fop, the eloping couple,
 The early market-man, the hearse, the moving of furniture into the town, the return back
 from the town,
 They pass, I also pass, any thing passes, none can be interdicted,
 None but are accepted, none but shall be dear to me.

III

You air that serves me with breath to speak!
 You objects that call from diffusion my meanings and give them shape!
 You light that wraps me and all things in delicate equable showers!
 You paths worn in the irregular hollows by the roadsides!
 I believe you are latent with unseen existences, you are so dear to me.

¹ First published 1860 (*L. G.*, 1881).² First published 1856 (*L. G.*, 1881).

You flagged walks of the cities! you strong curbs at the edges! 30
 You ferries! you planks and posts of wharves! you timber-lined sides! you distant ships!
 You rows of houses! you window-pierced façades! you roofs!
 You porches and entrances! you copings and iron guards!
 You windows whose transparent shells might expose so much!
 You doors and ascending steps! you arches!
 You gray stones of interminable pavements! you trodden crossings!
 From all that has touched you I believe you have imparted to yourselves, and now would
 impart the same secretly to me,
 From the living and the dead you have peopled your impassive surfaces, and the spirits
 thereof would be evident and amicable with me.

IV

The earth expanding right hand and left hand,
 The picture alive, every part in its best light, 40
 The music falling in where it is wanted, and stopping where it is not wanted,
 The cheerful voice of the public road, the gay fresh sentiment of the road."

O highway I travel, do you say to me *Do not leave me?*
 Do you say *Venture not—if you leave me you are lost?*
 Do you say *I am already prepared, I am well-beaten and undenied, adhere to me?*

O public road, I say back I am not afraid to leave you, yet I love you,
 You express me better than I can express myself,
 You shall be more to me than my poem.

I think heroic deeds were all conceived in the open air, and all free poems also,
 I think I could stop here myself and do miracles, 50
 I think whatever I shall meet on the road I shall like, and whoever beholds me shall like me,
 I think whoever I see must be happy.

V

From this hour I ordain myself loosed of limits and imaginary lines,
 Going where I list, my own master total and absolute,
 Listening to others, considering well what they say,
 Pausing, searching, receiving, contemplating,
 Gently, but with undeniable will, divesting myself of the holds that would hold me.

I inhale great draughts of space,
 The east and the west are mine, and the north and the south are mine.

I am larger, better than I thought, 60
 I did not know I held so much goodness.

All seems beautiful to me,
 I can repeat over to men and women You have done such good to me I would do the same
 to you,
 I will recruit for myself and you as I go,
 I will scatter myself among men and women as I go,
 I will toss a new gladness and roughness among them,
 Whoever denies me it shall not trouble me,
 Whoever accepts me he or she shall be blessed and shall bless me.

VI

Now if a thousand perfect men were to appear it would not amaze me,
 Now if a thousand beautiful forms of women appeared it would not astonish me. 70

Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,
 It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth.

Here a great personal deed has room
 (Such a deed seizes upon the hearts of the whole race of men,
 Its effusion of strength and will overwhelms law and mocks all authority and all argument
 against it).

Here is the test of wisdom,
 Wisdom is not finally tested in schools,
 Wisdom cannot be passed from one having it to another not having it,
 Wisdom is of the soul, is not susceptible of proof, is its own proof,
 Applies to all stages and objects and qualities and is content, 80
 Is the certainty of the reality and immortality of things, and the excellence of things;
 Something there is in the float of the sight of things that provokes it out of the soul.

Now I re-examine philosophies and religions,
 They may prove well in lecture-rooms, yet not prove at all under the spacious clouds and
 along the landscape and flowing currents.

Here is realization,
 Here is a man tallied—he realizes here what he has in him,
 The past, the future, majesty, love—if they are vacant of you, you are vacant of them.

Only the kernel of every object nourishes;
 Where is he who tears off the husks for you and me?
 Where is he that undoes stratagems and envelopes for you and me? 90

Here is adhesiveness, it is not previously fashioned, it is apropos;
 Do you know what it is as you pass to be loved by strangers?
 Do you know the talk of those turning eye-balls?

VII

Here is the efflux of the soul,
 The efflux of the soul comes from within through embowered gates, ever provoking questions,
 These yearnings why are they? these thoughts in the darkness why are they?
 Why are there men and women that while they are nigh me the sunlight expands my blood?
 Why when they leave me do my pennants of joy sink flat and lank?
 Why are there trees I never walk under but large and melodious thoughts descend upon me?
 (I think they hang there winter and summer on those trees and always drop fruit as
 I pass.) 100

What is it I interchange so suddenly with strangers?
 What with some driver as I ride on the seat by his side?
 What with some fisherman drawing his seine by the shore as I walk by and pause?
 What gives me to be free to a woman's and man's good-will? what gives them to be free to
 mine?

VIII

The efflux of the soul is happiness, here is happiness,
 I think it pervades the open air, waiting at all times,
 Now it flows unto us, we are rightly charged.

Here rises the fluid and attaching character,
 The fluid and attaching character is the freshness and sweetness of man and woman
 (The herbs of the morning sprout no fresher and sweeter every day out of the roots of them-
 selves, than it sprouts fresh and sweet continually out of itself). 110
 Toward the fluid and attaching character exudes the sweat of the love of young and old,
 From it falls distilled the charm that mocks beauty and attainments,
 Toward it heaves the shuddering longing ache of contact.

IX

Allons! whoever you are come travel with me!
 Traveling with me you find what never tires.

The earth never tires,
 The earth is rude, silent, incomprehensible at first, Nature is rude and incomprehensible
 at first,
 Be not discouraged, keep on, there are divine things well enveloped,
 I swear to you there are divine things more beautiful than words can tell.

Allons! we must not stop here, 120
 However sweet these laid-up stores, however convenient this dwelling we cannot remain here,
 However sheltered this port and however calm these waters we must not anchor here,
 However welcome the hospitality that surrounds us we are permitted to receive it but a
 little while.

X

Allons! the inducements shall be greater,
 We will sail pathless and wild seas,
 We will go where winds blow, waves dash, and the Yankee clipper speeds by under full sail.

Allons! with power, liberty, the earth, the elements,
 Health, defiance, gayety, self-esteem, curiosity;
 Allons! from all formules!
 From your formules, O bat-eyed and materialistic priests. 130

The stale cadaver blocks up the passage—the burial waits no longer.

Allons! yet take warning!
 He traveling with me needs the best blood, thews, endurance,
 None may come to the trial till he or she bring courage and health,
 Come not here if you have already spent the best of yourself,
 Only those may come who come in sweet and determined bodies,
 No diseased person, no rum-drinker or venereal taint is permitted here.

(I and mine do not convince by arguments, similes, rhymes,
 We convince by our presence.)

XI

Listen! I will be honest with you, 140
 I do not offer the old smooth prizes, but offer rough new prizes,
 These are the days that must happen to you:
 You shall not heap up what is called riches,
 *You shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or achieve,
 You but arrive at the city to which you were destined, you hardly settle yourself to satis-
 faction before you are called by an irresistible call to depart,
 You shall be treated to the ironical smiles and mockings of those who remain behind you,

What beckonings of love you receive you shall only answer with passionate kisses of parting,
You shall not allow the hold of those who spread their reached hands toward you.

XII

Allons! after the great Companions, and to belong to them!
They too are on the road—they are the swift and majestic men—they are the greatest
women, 150
Enjoyers of calms of seas and storms of seas,
Sailors of many a ship, walkers of many a mile of land,
Habitues of many distant countries, habitues of far-distant dwellings,
Trusters of men and women, observers of cities, solitary toilers,
Pausers and contemplators of tufts, blossoms, shells of the shore,
Dancers at wedding-dances, kissers of brides, tender helpers of children, bearers of children,
Soldiers of revolts, standers by gaping graves, lowerers-down of coffins,
Journeyers over consecutive seasons, over the years, the curious years each emerging from
that which preceded it,
Journeyers as with companions, namely their own diverse phases,
Forth-steppers from the latent unrealized baby-days, 160
Journeyers gayly with their own youth, journeyers with their bearded and well-grained
manhood,
Journeyers with their womanhood, ample, unsurpassed, content,
Journeyers with their own sublime old age of manhood or womanhood,
Old age, calm, expanded, broad with the haughty breadth of the universe,
Old age, flowing free with the delicious near-by freedom of death.

XIII

Allons! to that which is endless as it was beginningless,
To undergo much, tramps of days, rests of nights,
To merge all in the travel they tend to, and the days and nights they tend to,
Again to merge them in the start of superior journeys,
To see nothing anywhere but what you may reach it and pass it, 170
To conceive no time, however distant, but what you may reach it and pass it,
To look up or down no road but it stretches and waits for you, however long but it stretches
and waits for you,
To see no being, not God's or any, but you also go thither,
To see no possession but you may possess it, enjoying all without labor or purchase, abstract-
ing the feast yet not abstracting one particle of it,
To take the best of the farmer's farm and the rich man's elegant villa, and the chaste blessings
of the well-married couple, and the fruits of orchards and flowers of gardens,
To take to your use out of the compact cities as you pass through,
To carry buildings and streets with you afterward wherever you go,
To gather the minds of men out of their brains as you encounter them, to gather the love
out of their hearts,
To take your lovers on the road with you, for all that you leave them behind you,
To know the universe itself as a road, as many roads, as roads for traveling souls. 180

All parts away for the progress of souls,
All religion, all solid things, arts, governments—all that was or is apparent upon this globe
or any globe, falls into niches and corners before the procession of souls along the
grand roads of the universe.

Of the progress of the souls of men and women along the grand roads of the universe, all
other progress is the needed emblem and sustenance.

Forever alive, forever forward,
 Stately, solemn, sad, withdrawn, baffled, mad, turbulent, feeble, dissatisfied,
 Desperate, proud, fond, sick, accepted by men, rejected by men,
 They go! they go! I know that they go, but I know not where they go,
 But I know that they go toward the best—toward something great.

Whoever you are, come forth! or man or woman come forth!
 You must not stay sleeping and dallying there in the house, though you built it, or though
 it has been built for you. 190

Out of the dark confinement! out from behind the screen!
 It is useless to protest, I know all and expose it.

Behold through you as bad as the rest,
 Through the laughter, dancing, dining, supping, of people,
 Inside of dresses and ornaments, inside of those washed and trimmed faces,
 Behold a secret silent loathing and despair.

No husband, no wife, no friend, trusted to hear the confession,
 Another self; a duplicate of every one, skulking and hiding it goes,
 Formless and wordless through the streets of the cities, polite and bland in the parlors,
 In the cars of railroads, in steamboats, in the public assembly, 200
 Home to the houses of men and women, at the table, in the bedroom, everywhere,
 Smartly attired, countenance smiling, form upright, death under the breast-bones, hell
 under the skull-bones,
 Under the broadcloth and gloves, under the ribbons and artificial flowers,
 Keeping fair with the customs, speaking not a syllable of itself,
 Speaking of any thing else but never of itself.

XIV

Allons! through struggles and wars.
 The goal that was named cannot be countermanded.

Have the past struggles succeeded?
 What has succeeded? yourself? your nation? Nature?
 Now understand me well—it is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of
 success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle
 necessary. 210

My call is the call of battle, I nourish active rebellion,
 He going with me must go well armed,
 He going with me goes often with spare diet, poverty, angry enemies, desertions.

XV

Allons! the road is before us!
 It is safe—I have tried it—my own feet have tried it well—be not detained!
 Let the paper remain on the desk unwritten, and the book on the shelf unopened!
 Let the tools remain in the workshop! let the money remain unearned!
 Let the school stand! mind not the cry of the teacher!
 Let the preacher preach in his pulpit! let the lawyer plead in the court, and the judge expound
 the law.

Camerado, I give you my hand!
 I give you my love more precious than money,
 I give you myself before preaching or law;
 Will you give me yourself? will you come travel with me?
 Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?

CROSSING BROOKLYN FERRY¹

I

FLOOD-TIDE below me! I see you face to face!
 Clouds of the west—sun there half an hour high—I see you also face to face.

Crowds of men and women attired in the usual costumes, how curious you are to me!
 On the ferry-boats the hundreds and hundreds that cross, returning home, are more curious
 to me than you suppose,
 And you that shall cross from shore to shore years hence are more to me, and more in my
 meditations, than you might suppose.

II

The impalpable sustenance of me from all things at all hours of the day,
 The simple, compact, well-joined scheme, myself disintegrated, every one disintegrated yet
 part of the scheme,
 The similitudes of the past and those of the future,
 The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights and hearings, on the walk in the street
 and the passage over the river,
 The current rushing so swiftly and swimming with me far away, 10
 The others that are to follow me, the ties between me and them,
 The certainty of others, the life, love, sight, hearing of others.

Others will enter the gates of the ferry and cross from shore to shore,
 Others will watch the run of the flood-tide,
 Others will see the shipping of Manhattan north and west, and the heights of Brooklyn to
 the south and east,
 Others will see the islands large and small;
 Fifty years hence, others will see them as they cross, the sun half an hour high,
 A hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years hence, others will see them,
 Will enjoy the sunset, the pouring-in of the flood-tide, the falling-back to the sea of the
 ebb-tide.

III

It avails not, time nor place—distance avails not, 20
 I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence,
 Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt,
 Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one of a crowd,
 Just as you are refreshed by the gladness of the river and the bright flow, I was refreshed,
 Just as you stand and lean on the rail, yet hurry with the swift current, I stood yet was
 hurried,
 Just as you look on the numberless masts of ships and the thick-stemmed pipes of steam-
 boats, I looked.

I too many and many a time crossed the river of old,
 Watched the Twelfth-month sea-gulls, saw them high in the air floating with motionless
 wings, oscillating their bodies,
 Saw how the glistening yellow lit up parts of their bodies and left the rest in strong shadow,

¹ First published 1856 (*L. G.*, 1881). In *Specimen Days* Whitman has a paragraph entitled *My Passion for Ferries*. In it he says that when he lived in New York or Brooklyn his life was curiously identified with Fulton ferry, and that almost daily from 1850 to 1860 he crossed on the boats, often up in the pilot-houses where he could see and absorb everything. "What oceanic currents, eddies, underneath—the great tides of humanity also, with ever-shifting movements. Indeed, I have always had a passion for ferries; to me they afford inimitable, streaming, never-failing, living poems."

Saw the slow-wheeling circles and the gradual edging toward the south, 30
 Saw the reflection of the summer sky in the water,
 Had my eyes dazzled by the shimmering track of beams,
 Looked at the fine centrifugal spokes of light round the shape of my head in the sunlit water,
 Looked on the haze on the hills southward and south-westward,
 Looked on the vapor as it flew in fleeces tinged with violet,
 Looked toward the lower bay to notice the vessels arriving,
 Saw their approach, saw aboard those that were near me,
 Saw the white sails of schooners and sloops, saw the ships at anchor,
 The sailors at work in the rigging or out astride the spars,
 The round masts, the swinging motion of the hulls, the slender serpentine pennants, 40
 The large and small steamers in motion, the pilots in their pilot-houses,
 The white wake left by the passage, the quick tremulous whirl of the wheels,
 The flags of all nations, the falling of them at sunset,
 The scallop-edged waves in the twilight, the ladled cups, the frolicsome crests and glistening,
 The stretch afar growing dimmer and dimmer, the gray walls of the granite storehouses by
 the docks,
 On the river the shadowy group, the big steam-tug closely flanked on each side by the barges,
 the hay-boat, the belated lighter,
 On the neighboring shore the fires from the foundry chimneys burning high and glaringly
 into the night,
 Casting their flicker of black contrasted with wild red and yellow light over the tops of
 houses, and down into the clefts of streets.

IV

These and all else were to me the same as they are to you,
 I loved well those cities, loved well the stately and rapid river, 50
 The men and women I saw were all near to me,
 Others the same—others who look back on me because I looked forward to them
 (The time will come, though I stop here to-day and to-night).

V

What is it then between us?
 What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years between us?

Whatever it is, it avails not—distance avails not, and place avails not,
 I too lived, Brooklyn of ample hills was mine,
 I too walked the streets of Manhattan island, and bathed in the waters around it,
 I too felt the curious abrupt questionings stir within me.
 In the day among crowds of people sometimes they came upon me, 60
 In my walks home late at night or as I lay in my bed they came upon me,
 I too had been struck from the float forever held in solution,
 I too had received identity by my body,
 That I was I knew was of my body, and what I should be I knew I should be of my body.

VI

It is not upon you alone the dark patches fall,
 The dark threw its patches down upon me also,
 The best I had done seemed to me blank and suspicious,
 My great thoughts as I supposed them, were they not in reality meager?
 Nor is it you alone who know what it is to be evil,
 I am he who knew what it was to be evil, 70
 I too knitted the old knot of contrariety,

Blabbed, blushed, resented, lied, stole, grudged,
 Had guile, anger, lust, hot wishes I dared not speak,
 Was wayward, vain, greedy, shallow, sly, cowardly, malignant,
 The wolf, the snake, the hog, not wanting in me,
 The cheating look, the frivolous word, the adulterous wish, not wanting,
 Refusals, hates, postponements, meanness, laziness, none of these wanting,
 Was one with the rest, the days and haps of the rest,
 Was called by my nighest name by clear loud voices of young men as they saw me approach-
 ing or passing,
 Felt their arms on my neck as I stood, or the negligent leaning of their flesh against me as
 I sat, 80
 Saw many I loved in the street or ferry-boat or public assembly, yet never told them a word,
 Lived the same life with the rest, the same old laughing, gnawing, sleeping,
 Played the part that still looks back on the actor or actress,
 The same old role, the role that is what we make it, as great as we like,
 Or as small as we like, or both great and small.

VII

Closer yet I approach you,
 What thought you have of me now, I had as much of you—I laid in my stores in advance,
 I considered long and seriously of you before you were born.

Who was to know what should come home to me?
 Who knows but I am enjoying this? 90
 Who knows, for all the distance, but I am as good as looking at you now, for all you cannot
 see me?

VIII

Ah, what can ever be more stately and admirable to me than mast-hemmed Manhattan?
 River and sunset and scallop-edged waves of flood-tide?
 The sea-gulls oscillating their bodies, the hay-boat in the twilight, and the belated lighter?
 What gods can exceed these that clasp me by the hand, and with voices I love call
 me promptly and loudly by my nighest name as I approach?

What is more subtle than this which ties me to the woman or man that looks in my face?
 Which fuses me into you now, and pours my meaning into you?

We understand then do we not?
 What I promised without mentioning it, have you not accepted?
 What the study could not teach—what the preaching could not accomplish is accomplished,
 is it not? 100

IX

Flow on, river! flow with the flood-tide, and ebb with the ebb-tide!
 Frolic on, crested and scallop-edged waves!
 Gorgeous clouds of the sunset! drench with your splendor me, or the men and women
 generations after me!
 Cross from shore to shore, countless crowds of passengers!
 Stand up, tall masts of Mannahatta! stand up, beautiful hills of Brooklyn!
 Throb, baffled and curious brain! throw out questions and answers!
 Suspend here and everywhere, eternal float of solution!
 Gaze, loving and thirsting eyes, in the house or street or public assembly!
 Sound out, voices of young men! loudly and musically call me by my nighest name!
 Live, old life! play the part that looks back on the actor or actress!
 Play the old role, the role that is great or small according as one makes it! 110

Consider, you who peruse me, whether I may not in unknown ways be looking upon you;
 Be firm, rail over the river, to support those who lean idly, yet haste with the hasting current;
 Fly on, sea-birds! fly sideways, or wheel in large circles high in the air;
 Receive the summer sky, you water, and faithfully hold it till all downcast eyes have time to
 take it from you!

Diverge, fine spokes of light, from the shape of my head, or any one's head, in the sunlit
 water!

Come on, ships from the lower bay! pass up or down, white-sailed schooners, sloops, lighters!
 Flaunt away, flags of all nations! be duly lowered at sunset!

Burn high your fires, foundry chimneys! cast black shadows at night-fall! cast red and
 yellow light over the tops of the houses!

Appearances, now or henceforth, indicate what you are, 120

You necessary film, continue to envelop the soul,

About my body for me, and your body for you, be hung our divinest aromas,

Thrive, cities—bring your freight, bring your shows, ample and sufficient rivers,

Expand, being than which none else is perhaps more spiritual,

Keep your places, objects than which none else is more lasting.

You have waited, you always wait, you dumb, beautiful ministers,

We receive you with free sense at last, and are insatiate henceforward,

Not you any more shall be able to foil us, or withhold yourselves from us,

We use you, and do not cast you aside—we plant you permanently within us,

We fathom you not—we love you—there is perfection in you also, 130

You furnish your parts toward eternity,

Great or small, you furnish your parts toward the soul.

PIONEERS! O PIONEERS!¹

COME my tan-faced children,

Follow well in order, get your weapons ready,

Have you your pistols? have you your sharp-edged axes?

Pioneers! O pioneers!

For we cannot tarry here,

We must march my darlings, we must bear the brunt of danger,

We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,

Pioneers! O pioneers!

O you youths, Western youths,

So impatient, full of action, full of manly pride and friendship, 10

Plain I see you Western youths, see you tramping with the foremost,

Pioneers! O pioneers!

Have the elder races halted?

Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there beyond the seas?

We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,

Pioneers! O pioneers!

¹ First published 1865 (*L. G.*, 1881). This is one of a group of poems with the general title, *Birds of Passage*. In a passage in *Specimen Days* (written, however, in 1879 or later, "after traveling Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, and Colorado") Whitman says: "Grand as the thought that doubtless the child is already born who will see a hundred millions of people the most prosperous and advanced of the world, inhabiting these Prairies, the great Plains, and the valley of the Mississippi, I could not help thinking it would be grander still to see all those inimitable American areas fused in the alembic of a perfect poem, or other æsthetic work, entirely western, fresh and limitless—altogether our own, without a trace or taste of Europe's soil, reminiscence, technical letter or spirit. My days and nights, as I travel here—what an exhilaration!—not the air alone, and the sense of vastness, but every local sight and feature."

All the past we leave behind,
 We debouch upon a newer mightier world, varied world,
 Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the march,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

20

We detachments steady throwing,
 Down the edges, through the passes, up the mountains steep,
 Conquering, holding, daring, venturing as we go the unknown ways,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

We primeval forests felling,
 We the rivers stemming, vexing we and piercing deep the mines within,
 We the surface broad surveying, we the virgin soil upheaving,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

Colorado men are we,
 From the peaks gigantic, from the great sierras and the high plateaus,
 From the mine and from the gully, from the hunting trail we come,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

30

From Nebraska, from Arkansas,
 Central inland race are we, from Missouri, with the continental blood interveined,
 All the hands of comrades clasping, all the Southern, all the Northern,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

O resistless restless race!
 O beloved race in all! O my breast aches with tender love for all!
 O I mourn and yet exult, I am rapt with love for all,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

40

Raise the mighty mother mistress,
 Waving high the delicate mistress, over all the starry mistress (bend your heads all),
 Raise the fanged and warlike mistress, stern, impassive, weaponed mistress,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

See my children, resolute children,
 By those swarms upon our rear we must never yield or falter,
 Ages back in ghostly millions frowning there behind us urging,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

On and on the compact ranks,
 With accessions ever waiting, with the places of the dead quickly filled,
 Through the battle, through defeat, moving yet and never stopping,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

50

O to die advancing on!
 Are there some of us to droop and die? has the hour come?
 Then upon the march we fittest die, soon and sure the gap is filled,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the pulses of the world,
 Falling in they beat for us, with the Western movement beat,
 Holding single or together, steady moving to the front, all for us,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

60

Life's involved and varied pageants,
 All the forms and shows, all the workmen at their work,
 All the seamen and the landsmen, all the masters with their slaves,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the hapless silent lovers,
 All the prisoners in the prisons, all the righteous and the wicked,
 All the joyous, all the sorrowing, all the living, all the dying,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

I too with my soul and body,
 We, a curious trio, picking, wandering on our way,
 Through these shores amid the shadows, with the apparitions pressing,
 Pioneers! O pioneers! 70

Lo, the darting bowling orb!
 Lo, the brother orbs around, all the clustering suns and planets,
 All the dazzling days, all the mystic nights with dreams,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

These are of us, they are with us,
 All for primal needed work, while the followers there in embryo wait behind,
 We to-day's procession heading, we the route for travel clearing,
 Pioneers! O pioneers! 80

O you daughters of the West!
 O you young and elder daughters! O you mothers and you wives!
 Never must you be divided, in our ranks you move united,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

Minstrels latent on the prairies!
 (Shrouded bards of other lands, you may rest, you have done your work)
 Soon I hear you coming warbling, soon you rise and tramp amid us,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

Not for delectations sweet,
 Not the cushion and the slipper, not the peaceful and the studious,
 Not the riches safe and palling, not for us the tame enjoyment,
 Pioneers! O pioneers! 90

Do the feasters gluttonous feast?
 Do the corpulent sleepers sleep? have they locked and bolted doors?
 Still be ours the diet hard, and the blanket on the ground,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

Has the night descended?
 Was the road of late so toilsome? did we stop discouraged nodding on our way?
 Yet a passing hour I yield you in your tracks to pause oblivious,
 Pioneers! O pioneers! 100

Till with sound of trumpet,
 Far, far off the daybreak call—hark! how loud and clear I hear it wind,
 Swift! to the head of the army!—swift! spring to your places,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

OUT OF THE CRADLE ENDLESSLY ROCKING¹

Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,
 Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle,
 Out of the Ninth-month midnight,
 Over the sterile sands and the fields beyond, where the child leaving his bed wandered alone,
 bareheaded, barefoot,
 Down from the showered halo,
 Up from the mystic play of shadows twining and twisting as if they were alive,
 Out from the patches of briars and blackberries,
 From the memories of the bird that chanted to me,
 From your memories sad brother, from the fitful risings and fallings I heard,
 From under that yellow half-moon late-risen and swollen as if with tears, 10
 From those beginning notes of yearning and love there in the mist,
 From the thousand responses of my heart never to cease,
 From the myriad thence-aroused words,
 From the word stronger and more delicious than any,
 From such as now they start the scene revisiting,
 As a flock, twittering, rising, or overhead passing,
 Borne hither, ere all eludes me, hurriedly,
 A man, yet by these tears a little boy again,
 Throwing myself on the sand, confronting the waves,
 I, chanter of pains and joys, uniter of here and hereafter, 20
 Taking all hints to use them, but swiftly leaping beyond them,
 A reminiscence sing.

Once Paumanok,
 When the lilac-scent was in the air and Fifth-month grass was growing,
 Up this seashore in some briars,
 Two feathered guests from Alabama, two together,
 And their nest, and four light-green eggs spotted with brown,
 And every day the he-bird to and fro near at hand,
 And every day the she-bird crouched on her nest, silent, with bright eyes,
 And every day I, a curious boy, never too close, never disturbing them, 30
 Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

Shine! shine! shine!
Pour down your warmth, great sun!
While we bask, we two together,

¹ First published 1859 (*L. G.*, 1881). This and the two following poems are taken from the group entitled *Sea-Drift*. "In so far as Whitman is a great stylist, it is not his daring unconventionalities that make him so, though these in themselves are such as to argue greatness of a kind. He is great because, having chosen his method, he takes the consequences of his choice with consummate pliability and responsiveness. He has been reflecting on the uses of language, and has struck out a line of his own for the use of it. In spite of this his writing is free from the taint of theory, has none of the rigidity of conscious rebellion, is not the less easy because he has determined to make it so. He takes no word or phrase as having the weight, meaning, or implication he has decided shall attach to it; he does not dictate to language, but faithfully allows it to dictate to him, quite undisturbed by its fluidity, ready to interweave together and present as one the remotest aspects of his theme. The crowning example of his power in this is the song of the mocking-bird in *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking*. The bird, like his poet, counts over the natural objects which surround him, apostrophizing the sea, the breakers, the moon, the shore, the stars, the wind. But the items of the list, passing under the spell of personal passion, become as it were the instruments of an orchestra; each plays its individual part in a lyrical symphony, and each is in turn identified with the central motive of the whole. . . . Years before 'futurism' was heard or thought of, the core of aspiration in its incoherencies has been felt and rendered." (B. de Sélincourt.)

Two together!

*Winds blow south, or winds blow north,
Day come white, or night come black,
Home, or rivers and mountains from home,
Singing all time, minding no time,
While we two keep together.*

40

Till of a sudden,
May-be killed, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon the she-bird crouched not on the nest,
Nor returned that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appeared again.

And thenceforward all summer in the sound of the sea,
And at night under the full of the moon in calmer weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one, the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.

50

Blow! blow! blow!

*Blow up sea-winds along Paumanok's shore;
I wait and I wait till you blow my mate to me.*

Yes, when the stars glistened,
All night long on the prong of a moss-scalloped stake,
Down almost amid the slapping waves,
Sat the lone singer wonderful causing tears.

He called on his mate,
He poured forth the meanings which I of all men know.

60

Yes my brother I know,
The rest might not, but I have treasured every note,
For more than once dimly down to the beach gliding,
Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending myself with the shadows,
Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes, the sounds and sights after their sorts,
The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing,
I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,
Listened long and long.

Listened to keep, to sing, now translating the notes,
Following you my brother.

70

Soothe! soothe! soothe!

*Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,
And again another behind embracing and lapping, every one close,
But my love soothes not me, not me.*

*Low hangs the moon, it rose late,
It is lagging—O I think it is heavy with love, with love.*

*O madly the sea pushes upon the land,
With love, with love.*

*O night! do I not see my love fluttering out among the breakers?
What is that little black thing I see there in the white?*

80

*Loud! loud! loud!
Loud I call to you, my love!
High and clear I shoot my voice over the waves,
Surely you must know who is here, is here,
You must know who I am, my love.*

*Low-hanging moon!
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
O it is the shape, the shape of my mate!
O moon do not keep her from me any longer.*

*Land! land! O land!
Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give me my mate back again if you only would,
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way I look.*

90

*O rising stars!
Perhaps the one I want so much will rise, will rise with some of you.*

*O throat! O trembling throat!
Sound clearer through the atmosphere!
Pierce the woods, the earth,
Somewhere listening to catch you must be the one I want.*

*Shake out carols!
Solitary here, the night's carols!
Carols of lonesome love! death's carols!
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!
O under that moon where she droops almost down into the sea!
O reckless despairing carols.*

100

*But soft! sink low!
Soft! let me just murmur,
And do you wait a moment you husky-noised sea,
For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,
So faint, I must be still, be still to listen,
But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately to me.*

110

*Hither my love!
Here I am! here!
With this just-sustained note I announce myself to you,
This gentle call is for you my love, for you.*

*Do not be decoyed elsewhere,
That is the whistle of the wind, it is not my voice,
That is the fluttering, the fluttering of the spray,
Those are the shadows of leaves.*

*O darkness! O in vain!
O I am very sick and sorrowful.*

120

*O brown halo in the sky near the moon, drooping upon the sea!
O troubled reflection in the sea!
O throat! O throbbing heart!
And I singing uselessly, uselessly all the night.*

O past! O happy life! O songs of joy!
In the air, in the woods, over fields,
Loved! loved! loved! loved! loved!
But my mate no more, no more with me!
We two together no more.

The aria sinking, 130
 All else continuing, the stars shining,
 The winds blowing, the notes of the bird continuous echoing,
 With angry moans the fierce old mother incessantly moaning,
 On the sands of Paumanok's shore gray and rustling,
 The yellow half-moon enlarged, sagging down, drooping, the face of the sea almost touching,
 The boy ecstatic, with his bare feet the waves, with his hair the atmosphere dallying,
 The love in the heart long pent, now loose, now at last tumultuously bursting,
 The aria's meaning, the ears, the soul, swiftly depositing,
 The strange tears down the cheeks coursing,
 The colloquy there, the trio, each uttering, 140
 The undertone, the savage old mother incessantly crying,
 To the boy's soul's questions sullenly timing, some drowned secret hissing,
 To the outseting bard.

Demon or bird! (said the boy's soul)
 Is it indeed toward your mate you sing? or is it really to me?
 For I, that was a child, my tongue's use sleeping, now I have heard you,
 Now in a moment I know what I am for, I awake,
 And already a thousand singers, a thousand songs, clearer, louder and more sorrowful than
 yours,
 A thousand warbling echoes have startled to life within me, never to die.

O you singer solitary, singing by yourself, projecting me, 150
 O solitary me listening, never more shall I cease perpetuating you,
 Never more shall I escape, never more the reverberations,
 Never more the cries of unsatisfied love be absent from me,
 Never again leave me to be the peaceful child I was before what there in the night,
 By the sea under the yellow and sagging moon,
 The messenger there aroused, the fire, the sweet hell within,
 The unknown want, the destiny of me.

O give me the clew! (it lurks in the night here somewhere)
 O if I am to have so much, let me have more!

A word then (for I will conquer it), 160
 The word final, superior to all,
 Subtle, sent up—what is it?—I listen;
 Are you whispering it, and have been all the time, you sea waves?
 Is that it from your liquid rims and wet sands?

Whereto answering, the sea,
 Delaying not, hurrying not,
 Whispered me through the night, and very plainly before daybreak,
 Lispered to me the low and delicious word death,
 And again death, death, death, death,
 Hissing melodious, neither like the bird nor like my aroused child's heart, 170
 But edging near as privately for me rustling at my feet,
 Creeping thence steadily up to my ears and laving me softly all over,
 Death, death, death, death, death.

Which I do not forget,
 But fuse the song of my dusky demon and brother,
 That he sang to me in the moonlight on Paumanok's gray beach,
 With the thousand responsive songs at random,
 My own songs awaked from that hour,
 And with them the key, the word up from the waves,
 The word of the sweetest song and all songs, 180
 That strong and delicious word which, creeping to my feet
 (Or like some old crone rocking the cradle, swathed in sweet garments, bending aside),
 The sea whispered me.

TEARS ¹

TEARS! tears! tears!
 In the night, in solitude, tears,
 On the white shore dripping, dripping, sucked in by the sand,
 Tears, not a star shining, all dark and desolate,
 Moist tears from the eyes of a muffled head;
 O who is that ghost? that form in the dark, with tears?
 What shapeless lump is that, bent, crouched there on the sand?
 Streaming tears, sobbing tears, throes, choked with wild cries;
 O storm, embodied, rising, careering with swift steps along the beach!
 O wild and dismal night storm, with wind—O belching and desperate! 10
 O shade so sedate and decorous by day, with calm countenance and regulated pace,
 But away at night as you fly, none looking—O then the unloosened ocean,
 Of tears! tears! tears!

ON THE BEACH AT NIGHT ²

ON the beach at night,
 Stands a child with her father,
 Watching the east, the autumn sky.

Up through the darkness,
 While ravening clouds, the burial clouds, in black masses spreading,
 Lower sullen and fast athwart and down the sky,
 Amid a transparent clear belt of ether yet left in the east,
 Ascends large and calm the lord-star Jupiter,
 And nigh at hand, only a very little above,
 Swim the delicate sisters the Pleiades. 10

From the beach the child holding the hand of her father,
 Those burial clouds that lower victorious soon to devour all,
 Watching, silently weeps.

Weep not, child,
 Weep not, my darling,
 With these kisses let me remove your tears,
 The ravening clouds shall not long be victorious,
 They shall not long possess the sky, they devour the stars only in apparition,
 Jupiter shall emerge, be patient, watch again another night, the Pleiades shall emerge,
 They are immortal, all those stars both silvery and golden shall shine out again, 20
 The great stars and the little ones shall shine out again, they endure,
 The vast immortal suns and the long-enduring pensive moons shall again shine.

¹ First published 1867 (*L. G.*, 1871).

² First published 1871 (*L. G.*, 1871).

Then dearest child mournest thou only for Jupiter?
Considerest thou alone the burial of the stars?

Something there is
(With my lips soothing thee, adding I whisper,
I give thee the first suggestion, the problem and indirection),
Something there is more immortal even than the stars
(Many the burials, many the days and nights, passing away),
Something that shall endure longer even than lustrous Jupiter,
Longer than sun or any revolving satellite,
Or the radiant sisters the Pleiades.

30

WHEN I HEARD THE LEARN'D ASTRONOMER ¹

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wandered off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
Looked up in perfect silence at the stars.

THOUGHT ²

Of obedience, faith, adhesiveness;
As I stand aloof and look there is to me something profoundly affecting in large masses of
men following the lead of those who do not believe in men.

COME UP FROM THE FIELDS FATHER ³

Come up from the fields father, here's a letter from our Pete,
And come to the front door mother, here's a letter from thy dear son.

Lo, 'tis autumn,
Lo, where the trees, deeper green, yellower and redder,
Cool and sweeten Ohio's villages with leaves fluttering in the moderate wind,
Where apples ripe in the orchards hang and grapes on the trellised vines.
(Smell you the smell of the grapes on the vines?
Smell you the buckwheat where the bees were lately buzzing?)

Above all, lo, the sky so calm, so transparent after the rain, and with wondrous clouds,
Below too, all calm, all vital and beautiful, and the farm prospers well.

10

¹ First published 1865 (*L. G.*, 1867). This and the following poem come from a group entitled *By the Road-side*.

² First published 1860 (*L. G.*, 1860).

³ First published 1865 (*L. G.*, 1867). This and the following poem are taken from *Drum-Taps*. This, containing poems inspired by aspects of the Civil War, was published as a separate volume in 1865, but was included in *Leaves of Grass* in the edition of 1867.

Down in the fields all prospers well,
 But now from the fields come father, come at the daughter's call,
 And come to the entry mother, to the front door come right away.

Fast as she can she hurries, something ominous, her steps trembling,
 She does not tarry to smooth her hair nor adjust her cap.

Open the envelope quickly,
 O this is not our son's writing, yet his name is signed,
 O a strange hand writes for our dear son, O stricken mother's soul!
 All swims before her eyes, flashes with black, she catches the main words only,
 Sentences broken, *gunshot wound in the breast, cavalry skirmish, taken to hospital,*
At present low, but will soon be better. 20

Ah now the single figure to me,
 Amid all teeming and wealthy Ohio with all its cities and farms,
 Sickly white in the face and dull in the head, very faint,
 By the jamb of a door leans.

Grieve not so, dear mother (the just-grown daughter speaks through her sobs,
 The little sisters huddle around speechless and dismayed),
See, dearest mother, the letter says Pete will soon be better.

Alas poor boy, he will never be better (nor may-be needs to be better, that brave and simple
 soul),
 While they stand at home at the door he is dead already, 30
 The only son is dead.

But the mother needs to be better,
 She with thin form presently dressed in black,
 By day her meals untouched, then at night fitfully sleeping, often waking,
 In the midnight waking, weeping, longing with one deep longing,
 O that she might withdraw unnoticed, silent from life escape and withdraw,
 To follow, to seek, to be with her dear dead son.

AS I LAY WITH MY HEAD IN YOUR LAP CAMERADO¹

As I lay with my head in your lap camerado,
 The confession I made I resume, what I said to you and the open air I resume.
 I know I am restless and make others so,
 I know my words are weapons full of danger, full of death,
 For I confront peace, security, and all the settled laws, to unsettle them,
 I am more resolute because all have denied me than I could ever have been had all accepted
 me,
 I heed not and have never heeded either experience, cautions, majorities, nor ridicule,
 And the threat of what is called hell is little or nothing to me,
 And the lure of what is called heaven is little or nothing to me;
 Dear camerado! I confess I have urged you onward with me, and still urge you, without
 the least idea what is our destination, 10
 Or whether we shall be victorious, or utterly quelled and defeated.

¹ First published 1865-1866 (L. G., 1881).

WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOORYARD BLOOMED ¹

I

WHEN lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed,
And the great star early drooped in the western sky in the night,
I mourned, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.

Ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
And thought of him I love.

II

O powerful western fallen star!
O shades of night—O moody, tearful night!
O great star disappeared—O the black murk that hides the star!
O cruel hands that hold me powerless—O helpless soul of me!
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul.

10

III

In the dooryard fronting an old farm-house near the whitewashed palings,
Stands the lilac-bush tall-growing with heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the perfume strong I love,
With every leaf a miracle—and from this bush in the dooryard,
With delicate-colored blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
A sprig with its flower I break.

IV

In the swamp in secluded recesses,
A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.

Solitary the thrush,
The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
Sings by himself a song.

20

Song of the bleeding throat,
Death's outlet song of life (for well dear brother I know,
If thou wast not granted to sing thou would'st surely die).

V

Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities,
Amid lanes and through old woods, where lately the violets peeped from the ground, spotting
the gray debris,
Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lanes, passing the endless grass,
Passing the yellow-speared wheat, every grain from its shroud in the dark-brown fields
uprisen,
Passing the apple-tree blows of white and pink in the orchards,
Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,
Night and day journeys a coffin.

30

VI

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,
Through day and night with the great cloud darkening the land,
With the pomp of the inlooped flags with the cities draped in black,

¹ First published 1865–1866 (*L. G.*, 1881). This and the following poem are the first two of a group of four entitled *Memories of President Lincoln*.

With the show of the States themselves as of crape-veiled women standing,
 With processions long and winding and the flambeaus of the night,
 With the countless torches lit, with the silent sea of faces and the unbared heads,
 With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the somber faces,
 With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices rising strong and solemn, 40
 With all the mournful voices of the dirges poured around the coffin,
 The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs—where amid these you journey,
 With the tolling tolling bells' perpetual clang,
 Here, coffin that slowly passes,
 I give you my sprig of lilac.

VII

(Nor for you, for one alone,
 Blossoms and branches green to coffins all I bring,
 For fresh as the morning, thus would I chant a song for you O sane and sacred death.

All over bouquets of roses,
 O death, I cover you over with roses and early lilies, 50
 But mostly and now the lilac that blooms the first,
 Copious I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes,
 With loaded arms I come, pouring for you,
 For you and the coffins all of you O death.)

VIII

O western orb sailing the heaven,
 Now I know what you must have meant as a month since I walked,
 As I walked in silence the transparent shadowy night,
 As I saw you had something to tell as you bent to me night after night,
 As you drooped from the sky low down as if to my side (while the other stars all looked on),
 As we wandered together the solemn night (for something I know not what kept me from 60
 sleep),
 As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the west how full you were of woe,
 As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze in the cool transparent night,
 As I watched where you passed and was lost in the netherward black of the night,
 As my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as where you sad orb,
 Concluded, dropped in the night, and was gone.

IX

Sing on there in the swamp,
 O singer bashful and tender, I hear your notes, I hear your call,
 I hear, I come presently, I understand you,
 But a moment I linger, for the lustrous star has detained me,
 The star my departing comrade holds and detains me. 70

X

O how shall I warble myself for the dead one there I loved?
 And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that has gone?
 And what shall my perfume be for the grave of him I love?

Sea-winds blown from east and west,
 Blown from the Eastern sea and blown from the Western sea, till there on the prairies
 meeting,
 These and with these and the breath of my chant,
 I'll perfume the grave of him I love.

XI

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?
And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
To adorn the burial-house of him I love?

80

Pictures of growing spring and farms and homes,
With the Fourth-month eve at sundown, and the gray smoke lucid and bright,
With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent, sinking sun, burning, expanding
the air,
With the fresh sweet herbage under foot, and the pale green leaves of the trees prolific,
In the distance the flowing glaze, the breast of the river, with a wind-dapple here and there,
With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against the sky, and shadows,
And the city at hand with dwellings so dense, and stacks of chimneys,
And all the scenes of life and the workshops, and the workmen homeward returning.

XII

Lo, body and soul—this land,
My own Manhattan with spires, and the sparkling and hurrying tides, and the ships, 90
The varied and ample land, the South and the North in the light, Ohio's shores and flashing
Missouri,
And ever the far-spreading prairies covered with grass and corn.

Lo, the most excellent sun so calm and haughty,
The violet and purple morn with just-felt breezes,
The gentle soft-born measureless light,
The miracle spreading bathing all, the fulfilled noon,
The coming eve delicious, the welcome night and the stars,
Over my cities shining all, enveloping man and land.

XIII

Sing on, sing on you gray-brown bird,
Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from the bushes, 100
Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.

Sing on dearest brother, warble your reedy song,
Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe.

O liquid and free and tender!
O wild and loose to my soul—O wondrous singer!
You only I hear—yet the star holds me (but will soon depart),
Yet the lilac with mastering odor holds me.

XIV

Now while I sat in the day and looked forth,
In the close of the day with its light and the fields of spring, and the farmers preparing their
crops,
In the large unconscious scenery of my land with its lakes and forests, 110
In the heavenly aerial beauty (after the perturbed winds and the storms),
Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing, and the voices of children and
women,
The many-moving sea-tides, and I saw the ships how they sailed,
And the summer approaching with richness, and the fields all busy with labor,
And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on, each with its meals and minutia of
daily usages,

And the streets how their throbbings throbbed, and the cities pent—lo, then and there,
 Falling upon them all and among them all, enveloping me with the rest,
 Appeared the cloud, appeared the long black trail,
 And I knew death, its thought, and the sacred knowledge of death.

Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side of me,
 And the thought of death close-walking the other side of me,
 And I in the middle as with companions, and as holding the hands of companions,
 I fled forth to the hiding receiving night that talks not,
 Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in the dimness,
 To the solemn shadowy cedars and ghostly pines so still.

120

And the singer so shy to the rest received me,
 The gray-brown bird I know received us comrades three,
 And he sang the carol of death, and a verse for him I love.

From deep secluded recesses,
 From the fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still,
 Came the carol of the bird.

130

And the charm of the carol rapt me,
 As I held as if by their hands my comrades in the night,
 And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird.

*Come lovely and soothing death,
 Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
 In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
 Sooner or later delicate death.*

*Praised be the fathomless universe,
 For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
 And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
 For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.*

140

*Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
 Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
 Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
 I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.*

*Approach strong deliveress,
 When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing the dead,
 Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
 Laved in the flood of thy bliss O death.*

150

*From me to thee glad serenades,
 Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments and feastings for thee,
 And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread sky are fitting,
 And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.*

*The night in silence under many a star,
 The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
 And the soul turning to thee O vast and well-veiled death,
 And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.*

*Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields and the prairies wide,
Over the dense-packed cities all and the teeming wharves and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee O death.* 160

XV

To the tally of my soul,
Loud and strong kept up the gray-brown bird,
With pure deliberate notes spreading filling the night.

Loud in the pines and cedars dim,
Clear in the freshness moist and the swamp-perfume,
And I with my comrades there in the night.

While my sight that was bound in my eyes unclosed,
As to long panoramas of visions. 170

And I saw askant the armies,
I saw as in noiseless dreams hundreds of battle-flags,
Borne through the smoke of the battles and pierced with missiles I saw them,
And carried hither and yon through the smoke, and torn and bloody,
And at last but a few shreds left on the staffs (and all in silence),
And the staffs all splintered and broken.

I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,
And the white skeletons of young men, I saw them,
I saw the debris and debris of all the slain soldiers of the war,
But I saw they were not as was thought, 180
They themselves were fully at rest, they suffered not,
The living remained and suffered, the mother suffered,
And the wife and the child and the musing comrade suffered,
And the armies that remained suffered.

XVI

Passing the visions, passing the night,
Passing, unloosing the hold of my comrades' hands,
Passing the song of the hermit bird and the tallying song of my soul,
Victorious song, death's outlet song, yet varying ever-altering song,
As low and wailing, yet clear the notes, rising and falling, flooding the night,
Sadly sinking and fainting, as warning and warning, and yet again bursting with joy, 190
Covering the earth and filling the spread of the heaven,
As that powerful psalm in the night I heard from recesses,
Passing, I leave thee lilac with heart-shaped leaves,
I leave thee there in the door-yard, blooming, returning with spring.

I cease from my song for thee,
From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, communing with thee,
O comrade lustrous with silver face in the night.

Yet each to keep and all, retrievements out of the night,
The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird,
And the tallying chant, the echo aroused in my soul, 200
With the lustrous and drooping star with the countenance full of woe,
With the holders holding my hand nearing the call of the bird,

Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever to keep, for the dead I loved
so well,

For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—and this for his dear sake,
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!¹

O CAPTAIN! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
The arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

10

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won:
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

20

THERE WAS A CHILD WENT FORTH²

THERE was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he looked upon, that object he became,
And that object became part of him for the day or a certain part of the day,
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.

The early lilacs became part of this child,
And grass and white and red morning-glories, and white and red clover, and the song of the
phœbe-bird,
And the Third-month lambs and the sow's pink-faint litter, and the mare's foal and the
cow's calf,
And the noisy brood of the barnyard or by the mire of the pond-side,
And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there, and the beautiful curious
liquid,
And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads, all became part of him.

10

¹ First published 1865 (*L. G.*, 1871).

² First published 1855 (*L. G.*, 1871). This and the following poem come from a group entitled *Autumn Rivulets*.

The field-sprouts of Fourth-month and Fifth-month became part of him,
 Winter-grain sprouts and those of the light-yellow corn, and the esculent roots of the garden,
 And the apple-trees covered with blossoms and the fruit afterward, and wood-berries, and
 the commonest weeds by the road,
 And the old drunkard staggering home from the outhouse of the tavern whence he had
 lately risen,
 And the schoolmistress that passed on her way to the school,
 And the friendly boys that passed, and the quarrelsome boys,
 And the tidy and fresh-cheeked girls, and the barefoot negro boy and girl,
 And all the changes of city and country wherever he went.

His own parents, he that had fathered him and she that had conceived him in her womb
 and birthed him,
 They gave this child more of themselves than that, 10
 They gave him afterward every day, they became part of him.

The mother at home quietly placing the dishes on the supper-table,
 The mother with mild words, clean her cap and gown, a wholesome odor falling off her person
 and clothes as she walks by,
 The father, strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean, angered, unjust,
 The blow, the quick loud word, the tight bargain, the crafty lure,
 The family usages, the language, the company, the furniture, the yearning and swelling
 heart,
 Affection that will not be gainsaid, the sense of what is real, the thought if after all it should
 prove unreal,
 The doubts of day-time and the doubts of night-time, the curious whether and how,
 Whether that which appears so is so, or is it all flashes and specks?
 Men and women crowding fast in the streets, if they are not flashes and specks what are
 they? 20
 The streets themselves and the façades of houses, and goods in the windows,
 Vehicles, teams, the heavy-planked wharves, the huge crossing at the ferries,
 The village on the highland seen from afar at sunset, the river between,
 Shadows, aureola and mist, the light falling on roofs and gables of white or brown two miles
 off,
 The schooner near by sleepily dropping down the tide, the little boat slack-towed astern,
 The hurrying tumbling waves, quick-broken crests, slapping,
 The strata of colored clouds, the long bar of maroon-tint away solitary by itself, the spread
 of purity it lies motionless in,
 The horizon's edge, the flying sea-crow, the fragrance of salt marsh and shore mud,
 These became part of that child who went forth every day, and who now goes, and will
 always go forth every day.

WHO LEARNS MY LESSON COMPLETE?¹

Who learns my lesson complete?
 Boss, journeyman, apprentice, churchman and atheist,
 The stupid and the wise thinker, parents and offspring, merchant, clerk, porter and customer,
 Editor, author, artist, and schoolboy—draw nigh and commence;
 It is no lesson—it lets down the bars to a good lesson,
 And that to another, and every one to another still.

¹ First published 1855 (*L. G.*, 1867).

The great laws take and effuse without argument,
 I am of the same style, for I am their friend,
 I love them quits and quits, I do not halt and make salaams.

I lie abstracted and hear beautiful tales of things and the reasons of things, 10
 They are so beautiful I nudge myself to listen.

I cannot say to any person what I hear—I cannot say it to myself—it is very wonderful.

It is no small matter, this round and delicious globe moving so exactly in its orbit for ever
 and ever, without one jolt or the untruth of a single second,
 I do not think it was made in six days, nor in ten thousand years, nor ten billions of years,
 Nor planned and built one thing after another as an architect plans and builds a house.

I do not think seventy years is the time of a man or woman,
 Nor that seventy millions of years is the time of a man or woman,
 Nor that years will ever stop the existence of me, or any one else.

Is it wonderful that I should be immortal? as every one is immortal;
 I know it is wonderful, but my eyesight is equally wonderful, and how I was conceived in
 my mother's womb is equally wonderful, 20
 And passed from a babe in the creeping trance of a couple of summers and winters to articu-
 late and walk—all this is equally wonderful.

And that my soul embraces you this hour, and we affect each other without ever seeing
 each other, and never perhaps to see each other, is every bit as wonderful.

And that I can think such thoughts as these is just as wonderful,
 And that I can remind you, and you think them and know them to be true, is just
 as wonderful.

And that the moon spins round the earth and on with the earth, is equally wonderful,
 And that they balance themselves with the sun and stars is equally wonderful.

WHISPERS OF HEAVENLY DEATH¹

WHISPERS of heavenly death murmured I hear,
 Labial gossip of night, sibilant chorals,
 Footsteps gently ascending, mystical breezes wafted soft and low,
 Ripples of unseen rivers, tides of a current flowing, forever flowing
 (Or is it the plashing of tears? the measureless waters of human tears?).

I see, just see skyward, great cloud-masses,
 Mournfully slowly they roll, silently swelling and mixing,
 With at times a half-dimmed saddened far-off star,
 Appearing and disappearing.

(Some parturition rather, some solemn immortal birth; 10
 On the frontiers to eyes impenetrable,
 Some soul is passing over.)

¹ First published 1868 (*L. G.*, 1871). From a group which has a general title identical with the title of this poem.

PREFACE TO *LEAVES OF GRASS*, 1855¹

AMERICA does not repel the past, or what the past has produced under its forms, or amid other politics, or the idea of castes, or the old religions—accepts the lesson with calmness—is not impatient because the slough still sticks to opinions and manners and literature, while the life which served its requirements has passed into the new life of the new forms—perceives that the corpse is slowly borne from the eating and sleeping rooms of the house—perceives that it waits a little while in the door—that it was fittest for its days—that its action has descended to the stalwart and well-shaped heir who approaches—and that he shall be fittest for his days.

The Americans, of all nations at any time upon the earth, have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem. In the history of the earth hitherto, the largest and most stirring appear tame and orderly to their ampler largeness and stir. Here at last is something in the doings of man that corresponds with the broadcast doings of the day and night. Here is action untied from strings, necessarily blind to particulars and details, magnificently moving in masses. Here is the hospitality which for ever indicates heroes. Here the performance, disdaining the trivial, unapproached in the tremendous audacity of its crowds and groupings, and the push of its perspective, spreads with crampless and flowing breadth, and showers its prolific and splendid extravagance. One sees it must indeed own the riches of the summer and winter, and need never be bankrupt while corn grows from the ground, or the orchards drop

apples, or the bays contain fish, or men beget children upon women.

Other states indicate themselves in their deputies—but the genius of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors or authors, or colleges or churches or parlors, nor even in its newspapers or inventors—but always most in the common people, south, north, west, east, in all its States, through all its mighty amplitude. The largeness of the nation, however, were monstrous without a corresponding largeness and generosity of the spirit of the citizen. Not swarming states, nor streets and steamships, nor prosperous business, nor farms, nor capital, nor learning, may suffice for the ideal of man—nor suffice the poet. No reminiscences may suffice either. A live nation can always cut a deep mark, and can have the best authority the cheapest—namely, from its own soul. This is the sum of the profitable uses of individuals or states, and of present action and grandeur, and of the subjects of poets. (As if it were necessary to trot back generation after generation to the eastern records! As if the beauty and sacredness of the demonstrable must fall behind that of the mythical! As if men do not make their mark out of any times! As if the opening of the western continent by discovery, and what has transpired in North and South America, were less than the small theater of the antique, or the aimless sleep-walking of the middle ages!) The pride of the United States leaves the wealth and finesse of the cities, and all returns of commerce and agriculture, and all the magnitude of geography or shows of exterior victory, to enjoy the sight and realization of full-sized men, or one full-sized man unconquerable and simple.

The American poets are to enclose old and new, for America is the race of races. The expression of the American poet is to be transcendent and new. It is to be indirect, and not direct or descriptive or epic. Its quality goes through these to much more. Let the age and wars of other nations be chanted, and their eras and characters be illustrated, and that finish the verse. Not so the great psalm of the republic. Here the theme is creative, and has vista. Whatever stagnates in the flat of custom or

¹ This, the Preface to the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, is reprinted from Whitman's *Complete Prose Works*. When Whitman included the Preface in this volume he revised it, and it has seemed preferable, for the purposes of students, to print the revised version. Of this 1855 Preface Bliss Perry has said: "The book is scarcely to be understood without it, and in the long list of dissertations by poets upon the nature of poetry, it would be difficult to point to one more vigorous and impassioned, although much of it is as inconsecutive as the essays of Emerson which helped to inspire it. Its general theme is the inspiration which the United States offers to the great poet."

obedience or legislation, the great poet never stagnates. Obedience does not master him, he masters it. High up out of reach he stands, turning a concentrated light—he turns the pivot with his finger—he baffles the swiftest runners as he stands, and easily overtakes and envelops them. The time straying toward infidelity and confections and persiflage he withholds by steady faith. Faith is the antiseptic of the soul—it pervades the common people and preserves them—they never give up believing and expecting and trusting. There is that indescribable freshness and unconsciousness about an illiterate person, that humbles and mocks the power of the noblest expressive genius. The poet sees for a certainty how one not a great artist may be just as sacred and perfect as the greatest artist.

The power to destroy or remold is freely used by the greatest poet, but seldom the power of attack. What is past is past. If he does not expose superior models, and prove himself by every step he takes, he is not what is wanted. The presence of the great poet conquers—not parleying, or struggling, or any prepared attempts. Now he has passed that way, see after him! There is not left any vestige of despair, or misanthropy, or cunning, or exclusiveness, or the ignominy of a nativity or color, or delusion of hell or the necessity of hell—and no man thenceforward shall be degraded for ignorance or weakness or sin. The greatest poet hardly knows pettiness or triviality. If he breathes into anything that was before thought small, it dilates with the grandeur and life of the universe. He is a seer—he is individual—he is complete in himself—the others are as good as he, only he sees it, and they do not. He

have once just opened
pit, and given audience
to the sunset, and
electric swiftness, s
confusion or jostling

The land and sea
birds, the sky of h
forests, mountains
themes—but folks
indicate more than
which always attac
they expect him to i
reality and their s
perceive the beauty
as well as he. Th
hunters, woodmen,
of gardens and o
love of healthy wor
seafaring persons,
passion for light an
old varied sign of
of beauty, and of a
in out-door people
assisted by poets
but they never can
not marshaled in r
abstract addresses
choly complaints o
the life of these ar
the soul. The pro
drops seeds of a sw
rhyme, and of uni
itself into its own
of sight. The rhy
perfect poems show
cal laws, and bud
and loosely as lilac
and take shapes as
chestnuts and ora
pears, and shed the
form. The fluency

PREFACE TO *LEAVES OF GRASS*

and labor to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and indulgence toward the people, take off your hat to nothing known or unknown, or to any man or number of men—go freely with powerful uneducated persons, and with the young, and with the mothers of families—re-examine all you have been told in school or church or in any book, and dismiss whatever insults your own soul; and your very flesh shall be a great poem, and have the richest fluency, not only in its words, but in the silent lines of its lips and face, and between the lashes of your eyes, and in every motion and joint of your body. The poet shall not spend his time in unneeded work. He shall know that the ground is already ploughed and manured; others may not know it, but he shall. He shall go directly to the creation. His trust shall master the trust of everything he touches—and shall master all attachment.

The known universe has one complete lover, and that is the greatest poet. He consumes an eternal passion, and is indifferent which chance happens, and which possible contingency of fortune or misfortune, and persuades daily and hourly his delicious pay. What balks or breaks others is fuel for his burning progress to contact and amorous joy. Other proportions of the reception of pleasure dwindle to nothing to his proportions. All expected from heaven or from the highest, he is rapport with in the sight of the daybreak, or the scenes of the winter woods, or the presence of children playing, or with his arm round the neck of a man or woman. His love above all love has leisure and expanse—he leaves room ahead of himself. He is no

sight proceeds another, the hearing proceeds from the voice profoundly curious of touch with man. These unperfected in masses profuse and impartial minute of the light of the earth and sea, with the motion of the sky, nor the movement, nor any turn of reason that about the beauty there is precisely part does not need another. The best sight has the most lithe and pleasure of poems is the handsomest measure.

Without effort, and the least how it is done brings the spirit of a passions and scenes and some less, to be character as you hear well is to compete with and follow Time. You must surely be there, be there—and the faint indication of the best, clearest indication. The future are not disjointed, the greatest poet forms time is to be, from what drags the dead out of them again on their past, Rise and walk realize you. He learns himself where the future. The greatest poet of his rays over character

measureless as its pride, and the one balances the other, and neither can stretch too far while it stretches in company with the other. The inmost secrets of art sleep with the twain. The greatest poet has lain close betwixt both, and they are vital in his style and thoughts.

The art of art, the glory of expression and the sunshine of the light of letters, is simplicity. Nothing is better than simplicity—nothing can make up for excess, or for the lack of definiteness. To carry on the heave of impulse and pierce intellectual depths and give all subjects their articulations, are powers neither common nor very uncommon. But to speak in literature with the perfect rectitude and insouciance of the movements of animals, and the unimpeachableness of the sentiment of trees in the woods and grass by the roadside, is the flawless triumph of art. If you have looked on him who has achieved it you have looked on one of the masters of the artists of all nations and times. You shall not contemplate the flight of the gray gull over the bay, or the mettlesome action of the blood horse, or the tall leaning of sunflowers on their stalk, or the appearance of the sun journeying through heaven, or the appearance of the moon afterward, with any more satisfaction than you shall contemplate him. The great poet has less a marked style, and is more the channel of thoughts and things without increase or diminution, and is the free channel of himself. He swears to his art, I will not be meddling, I will not have in my writing any elegance, or effect, or originality, to hang in the way between me and the rest like curtains. I will have nothing hang in the way, not the richest curtains. What I tell I tell for precisely what it is. Let who may exalt or startle or fascinate or soothe, I will have purposes as health or heat or snow has, and be as regardless of observation. What I experience or portray shall go from my composition without a shred of my composition. You shall stand by my side and look in the mirror with me.

The old red blood and stainless gentility of great poets will be proved by their unconstraint. A heroic person walks at his ease through and out of that custom or precedent or authority that suits him not.

Of the traits of the brotherhood of first-class writers, savans, musicians, inventors and artists, nothing is finer than silent defiance advancing from new free forms. In the need of poems, philosophy, politics, mechanism, science, behavior, the craft of art, an appropriate native grand opera, shipcraft, or any craft, he is greatest for ever and ever who contributes the greatest original practical example. The cleanest expression is that which finds no sphere worthy of itself, and makes one.

The messages of great poems to each man and woman are, Come to us on equal terms, only then can you understand us. We are no better than you, what we inclose you inclose, what we enjoy you may enjoy. Did you suppose there could be only one Supreme? We affirm there can be unnumbered Supremes, and that one does not countervail another any more than one eyesight countervails another—and that men can be good or grand only of the consciousness of their supremacy within them. What do you think is the grandeur of storms and dismemberments, and the deadliest battles and wrecks, and the wildest fury of the elements, and the power of the sea, and the motion of nature, and the throes of human desires, and dignity and hate and love? It is that something in the soul which says, Rage on, whirl on, I tread master here and everywhere—Master of the spasms of the sky and of the shatter of the sea, Master of nature and passion and death, and of all terror and all pain.

The American bards shall be marked for generosity and affection, and for encouraging competitors. They shall be Kosmos, without monopoly or secrecy, glad to pass anything to any one—hungry for equals night and day. They shall not be careful of riches and privilege—they shall be riches and privilege—they shall perceive who the most affluent man is. The most affluent man is he that confronts all the shows he sees by equivalents out of the stronger wealth of himself. The American bard shall delineate no class of persons, nor one or two out of the strata of interests, nor love most nor truth most, nor the soul most, nor the body most—and not be for the Eastern states more than the Western, or the Northern states more than the Southern.

Exact science and its practical movements are no checks on the greatest poet, but always his encouragement and support. The outset and remembrance are there—there the arms that lifted him first, and braced him best—there he returns after all his goings and comings. The sailor and traveler—the anatomist, chemist, astronomer, geologist, phrenologist, spiritualist, mathematician, historian, and lexicographer, are not poets, but they are the lawgivers of poets, and their construction underlies the structure of every perfect poem. No matter what rises or is uttered, they sent the seed of the conception of it—of them and by them stand the visible proofs of souls. If there shall be love and content between the father and the son, and if the greatness of the son is the exuding of the greatness of the father, there shall be love between the poet and the man of demonstrable science. In the beauty of poems are henceforth the tuft and final applause of science.

Great is the faith of the flush of knowledge, and of the investigation of the depths of qualities and things. Cleaving and circling here swells the soul of the poet, yet is president of itself always. The depths are fathomless, and therefore calm. The innocence and nakedness are resumed—they are neither modest nor immodest. The whole theory of the supernatural, and all that was twined with it or euded out of it, departs as a dream. What has ever happened—what happens, and whatever may or shall happen, the vital laws inclose all. They are sufficient for any case and for all cases—none to be hurried or retarded—any special miracle of affairs or persons inadmissible in the vast clear scheme where every motion and every spear of grass, and the frames and spirits of men and women and all that concerns them, are unspeakably perfect miracles, all referring to all, and each distinct and in its place. It is also not consistent with the reality of the soul to admit that there is anything in the known universe more divine than men and women.

Men and women, and the earth and all upon it, are to be taken as they are, and the investigation of their past and present and future shall be unintermitted, and shall be done with perfect candor. Upon this basis philosophy speculates, ever looking

toward the poet, ever regarding the eternal tendencies of all toward happiness, never inconsistent with what is clear to the senses and to the soul. For the eternal tendencies of all toward happiness make the only point of sane philosophy. Whatever comprehends less than that—whatever is less than the laws of light and of astronomical motion—or less than the laws that follow the thief, the liar, the glutton and the drunkard, through this life and doubtless afterward—or less than vast stretches of time, or the slow formation of density, or the patient upheaving of strata—is of no account. Whatever would put God in a poem or system of philosophy as contending against some being or influence, is also of no account. Sanity and ensemble characterize the great master—spoilt in one principle, all is spoilt. The great master has nothing to do with miracles. He sees health for himself in being one of the mass—he sees the hiatus in singular eminence. To the perfect shape comes common ground. To be under the general law is great, for that is to correspond with it. The master knows that he is unspeakably great, and that all are unspeakably great—that nothing, for instance, is greater than to conceive children, and bring them up well—that to *be* is just as great as to perceive or tell.

In the make of the great masters the idea of political liberty is indispensable. Liberty takes the adherence of heroes wherever man and woman exist—but never takes any adherence or welcome from the rest more than from poets. They are the voice and exposition of liberty. They out of ages are worthy the grand idea—to them it is confided, and they must sustain it. Nothing has precedence of it, and nothing can warp or degrade it.

As the attributes of the poets of the kosmos concenter in the real body, and in the pleasure of things, they possess the superiority of genuineness over all fiction and romance. As they emit themselves, facts are showered over with light—the daylight is lit with more volatile light—the deep between the setting and rising sun goes deeper many fold. Each precise object or condition or combination or process exhibits a beauty—the multiplication table its—old age its—the carpenter's trade its—the

grand opera its—the huge-hulled clean-shaped New York clipper at sea under steam or full sail gleams with unmatched beauty—the American circles and large harmonies of government gleam with theirs—and the commonest definite intentions and actions with theirs. The poets of the kosmos advance through all interpositions and coverings and turmoils and stratagems to first principles. They are of use—they dissolve poverty from its need, and riches from its conceit. You large proprietor, they say, shall not realize or perceive more than any one else. The owner of the library is not he who holds a legal title to it, having bought and paid for it. Any one and every one is owner of the library (indeed he or she alone is owner), who can read the same through all the varieties of tongues and subjects and styles, and in whom they enter with ease, and make supple and powerful and rich and large.

These American States, strong and healthy and accomplished, shall receive no pleasure from violations of natural models, and must not permit them. In paintings or moldings or carvings in mineral or wood, or in the illustrations of books or newspapers, or in the patterns of woven stuffs, or anything to beautify rooms or furniture or costumes, or to put upon cornices or monuments, or on the prows or sterns of ships, or to put anywhere before the human eye indoors or out, that which distorts honest shapes, or which creates unearthly beings or places or contingencies, is a nuisance and revolt. Of the human form especially, it is so great it must never be made ridiculous. Of ornaments to a work nothing outre can be allowed—but those ornaments can be allowed that conform to the perfect facts of the open air, and that flow out of the nature of the work, and come irrepressibly from it, and are necessary to the completion of the work. Most works are most beautiful without ornament. Exaggerations will be revenged in human physiology. Clean and vigorous children are jetted and conceived only in those communities where the models of natural forms are public every day. Great genius and the people of these States must never be demeaned to romances. As soon as histories are properly told, no more need of romances,

The great poets are to be known by the absence in them of tricks, and by the justification of perfect personal candor. All faults may be forgiven of him who has perfect candor. Henceforth let no man of us lie, for we have seen that openness wins the inner and outer world, and that there is no single exception, and that never since our earth gathered itself in a mass have deceit or subterfuge or prevarication attracted its smallest particle or the faintest tinge of a shade—and that through the enveloping wealth and rank of a state, or the whole republic of states, a sneak or sly person shall be discovered and despised—and that the soul has never once been fooled and never can be fooled—and thrift without the loving nod of the soul is only a fetid puff—and there never grew up in any of the continents of the globe, nor upon any planet or satellite, nor in that condition which precedes the birth of babes, nor at any time during the changes of life, nor in any stretch of abeyance or action of vitality, nor in any process of formation or reformation anywhere, a being whose instinct hated the truth.

Extreme caution or prudence, the soundest organic health, large hope and comparison and fondness for women and children, large alimentiveness and destructiveness and causality, with a perfect sense of the oneness of nature, and the propriety of the same spirit applied to human affairs, are called up of the float of the brain of the world to be parts of the greatest poet from his birth out of his mother's womb, and from her birth out of her mother's. Caution seldom goes far enough. It has been thought that the prudent citizen was the citizen who applied himself to solid gains, and did well for himself and for his family, and completed a lawful life without debt or crime. The greatest poet sees and admits these economies as he sees the economies of food and sleep, but has higher notions of prudence than to think he gives much when he gives a few slight attentions at the latch of the gate. The premises of the prudence of life are not the hospitality of it, or the ripeness and harvest of it. Beyond the independence of a little sum laid aside for burial-money, and of a few clap-boards around and shingles overhead on a lot of

American soil owned, and the easy dollars that supply the year's plain clothing and meals, the melancholy prudence of the abandonment of such a great being as a man is, to the toss and pallor of years of money-making, with all their scorching days and icy nights, and all their stifling deceits and underhand dodgings, or infinitesimals of parlors, or shameless stuffing while others starve, and all the loss of the bloom and odor of the earth, and of the flowers and atmosphere, and of the sea, and of the true taste of the women and men you pass or have to do with in youth or middle age, and the issuing sickness and desperate revolt at the close of a life without elevation or naïveté (even if you have achieved a secure 10,000 a year, or election to Congress or the Governorship), and the ghastly chatter of a death without serenity or majesty, is the great fraud upon modern civilization and forethought, blotching the the surface and system which civilization undeniably drafts, and moistening with tears the immense features it spreads and spreads with such velocity before the reached kisses of the soul.

Ever the right explanation remains to be made about prudence. The prudence of the mere wealth and respectability of the most esteemed life appears too faint for the eye to observe at all, when little and large alike drop quietly aside at the thought of the prudence suitable for immortality. What is the wisdom that fills the thinness of a year, or seventy or eighty years—to the wisdom spaced out by ages, and coming back at a certain time with strong reinforcements and rich presents, and the clear faces of wedding-guests as far as you can look, in every direction, running gayly toward you? Only the soul is of itself—all else has reference to what ensues. All that a person does or thinks is of consequence. Nor can the push of charity or personal force ever be anything else than the profoundest reason, whether it brings argument to hand or no. No specification is necessary—to add or subtract or divide is in vain. Little or big, learned or unlearned, white or black, legal or illegal, sick or well, from the first inspiration down the windpipe to the last expiration out of it, all that a male or female does that is vigorous and benevo-

lent and clean is so much sure profit to him or her in the unshakable order of the universe, and through the whole scope of it forever. The prudence of the greatest poet answers at last the craving and glut of the soul, puts off nothing, permits no let-up for its own case or any case, has no particular sabbath or judgment day, divides not the living from the dead, or the righteous from the unrighteous, is satisfied with the present, matches every thought or act by its correlative, and knows no possible forgiveness or deputed atonement.

The direct trial of him who would be the greatest poet is to-day. If he does not flood himself with the immediate age as with vast oceanic tides—if he be not himself the age transfigured, and if to him is not opened the eternity which gives similitude to all periods and locations and processes, and animate and inanimate forms, and which is the bond of time, and rises up from its inconceivable vagueness and infiniteness in the swimming shapes of to-day, and is held by the ductile anchors of life, and makes the present spot the passage from what was to what shall be, and commits itself to the representation of this wave of an hour, and this one of the sixty beautiful children of the wave—let him merge in the general run, and wait his development.

Still the final test of poems, or any character or work, remains. The prescient poet projects himself centuries ahead, and judges performer or performance after the changes of time. Does it live through them? Does it still hold on untired? Will the same style, and the direction of genius to similar points, be satisfactory now? Have the marches of tens and hundreds and thousands of years made willing detours to the right hand and the left hand for his sake? Is he beloved long and long after he is buried? Does the young man think often of him? and the young woman think often of him? and do the middle-aged and the old think of him?

A great poem is for ages and ages in common, and for all degrees and complexions, and all departments and sects, and for a woman as much as a man, and a man as much as a woman. A great poem is no finish to a man or woman, but rather a beginning. Has any one fancied he could sit at last under some due authority, and rest satisfied with

explanations, and realize, and be content and full? To no such terminus does the greatest poet bring—he brings neither cessation nor sheltered fatness and ease. The touch of him, like Nature, tells in action. Whom he takes he takes with firm sure grasp into live regions previously unattained—thenceforward is no rest—they see the space and ineffable sheen that turn the old spots and lights into dead vacuums. Now there shall be a man cohered out of tumult and chaos—the elder encourages the younger and shows him how—they two shall launch off fearlessly together till the new world fits an orbit for itself, and looks unabashed on the lesser orbits of the stars, and sweeps through the ceaseless rings, and shall never be quiet again.

There will soon be no more priests. Their work is done. A new order shall arise, and they shall be the priests of man, and every man shall be his own priest. They shall find their inspiration in real objects to-day, symptoms of the past and future. They shall not deign to defend immortality or God, or the perfection of things, or liberty, or the exquisite beauty and reality of the soul. They shall arise in America, and be responded to from the remainder of the earth.

The English language befriends the grand American expression—it is brawny enough, and limber and full enough. On the tough stock of a race who through all change of circumstance was never without the idea of political liberty, which is the animus of all liberty, it has attracted the terms of daintier and gayer and subtler and more elegant tongues. It is the powerful language of resistance—it is the dialect of common sense. It is the speech of the proud and melancholy races, and of all who aspire. It is the chosen tongue to express growth, faith, self-esteem, freedom, justice, equality, friendliness, amplitude, prudence, decision, and courage. It is the medium that shall well-nigh express the inexpressible.

No great literature, nor any like style of behavior or oratory, or social intercourse or household arrangements, or public institutions, or the treatment by bosses of employed people, nor executive detail, or detail of the army and navy, nor spirit of legislation or courts, or police or tuition or architecture, or songs or amusements, can long elude the

jealous and passionate instinct of American standards. Whether or no the sign appears from the mouths of the people, it throbs a live interrogation in every freeman's and free-woman's heart, after that which passes by, or this built to remain. Is it uniform with my country? Are its disposals without ignominious distinctions? Is it for the ever-growing communes of brothers and lovers, large, well united, proud, beyond the old models, generous beyond all models? Is it something grown fresh out of the fields, or drawn from the sea for use to me to-day here? I know that what answers for me, an American, in Texas, Ohio, Canada, must answer for any individual or nation that serves for a part of my materials. Does this answer? Is it for the nursing of the young of the republic? Does it solve readily with the sweet milk of the nipples of the breasts of the Mother of Many Children?

America prepares with composure and good-will for the visitors that have sent word. It is not intellect that is to be their warrant and welcome. The talented, the artist, the ingenious, the editor, the statesman, the erudite, are not unappreciated—they fall in their place and do their work. The soul of the nation also does its work. It rejects none, it permits all. Only toward the like of itself will it advance half-way. An individual is as superb as a nation when he has the qualities which make a superb nation. The soul of the largest and wealthiest and proudest nation may well go half-way to meet that of its poets.

A BACKWARD GLANCE O'ER TRAVELED ROADS ¹

PERHAPS the best of songs heard, or of any and all true love, or life's fairest episodes, or sailors', soldiers' trying scenes on land or sea, is the *résumé* of them, or any of them, long afterwards, looking at the actualities away back past, with all their practical excitations gone. How the soul loves to float amid such reminiscences!

So here I sit gossiping in the early candle-light of old age—I and my book—casting backward glances over our traveled road. After completing, as it were, the journey—

¹ Preface to *November Boughs*, 1888.

(a varied jaunt of years, with many halts and gaps of intervals—or some lengthened ship-voyage, wherein more than once the last hour had apparently arrived, and we seemed certainly going down—yet reaching port in a sufficient way through all discomfitures at last)—After completing my poems, I am curious to review them in the light of their own (at the time unconscious, or mostly unconscious) intentions, with certain unfoldings of the thirty years they seek to embody. These lines, therefore, will probably blend the weft of first purposes and speculations, with the warp of that experience afterwards, always bringing strange developments.

Result of seven or eight stages and struggles extending through nearly thirty years (as I nigh my three-score-and-ten I live largely on memory), I look upon *Leaves of Grass*, now finished to the end of its opportunities and powers, as my definitive *carte visite* to the coming generations of the New World,¹ if I may assume to say so. That I have not gained the acceptance of my own time, but have fallen back on fond dreams of the future—anticipations—(“still lives the song, though Regnar dies”)—That from a worldly and business point of view *Leaves of Grass* has been worse than a failure—that public criticism on the book and myself as author of it yet shows marked anger and contempt more than anything else—(“I find a solid line of enemies to you everywhere,”—letter from W. S. K., Boston, May 28, 1884)—And that solely for publishing it I have been the object of two or three pretty serious special official buffetings—is all probably no more than I ought to have expected. I had my choice when I commenced. I bid neither for soft eulogies, big money returns, nor the approbation of existing schools and conventions. As fulfilled or partially fulfilled, the best comfort of the whole business (after a small band of the dearest friends and upholders ever vouchsafed to man or cause—doubtless all the more faithful and uncompromising—this little phalanx!—for being so few) is that, unstopped and unwarped by any influence outside the soul within me, I have had my say entirely my own way, and

put it unerringly on record—the value thereof to be decided by time.

In calculating that decision, William O'Connor and Dr. Bucke are far more peremptory than I am. Behind all else that can be said, I consider *Leaves of Grass* and its theory experimental—as, in the deepest sense, I consider our American republic itself to be, with its theory. (I think I have at least enough philosophy not to be too absolutely certain of anything, or any results.) In the second place, the volume is a *sortie*—whether to prove triumphant, and conquer its field of aim and escape and construction, nothing less than a hundred years from now can fully answer. I consider the point that I have positively gained a hearing, to far more than make up for any and all other lacks and withholdings. Essentially, *that* was from the first, and has remained throughout, the main object. Now it seems to be achieved, I am certainly contented to waive any otherwise momentous drawbacks, as of little account. Candidly and dispassionately reviewing all my intentions, I feel that they were creditable—and I accept the result, whatever it may be.

After continued personal ambition and effort, as a young fellow, to enter with the rest into competition for the usual rewards, business, political, literary, *etc.*—to take part in the great *mêlée*, both for victory's prize itself and to do some good—After years of those aims and pursuits, I found myself remaining possessed, at the age of thirty-one to thirty-three, with a special desire and conviction. Or rather, to be quite exact, a desire that had been flitting through my previous life, or hovering on the flanks, mostly indefinite hitherto, had steadily advanced to the front, defined itself, and finally dominated everything else. This was a feeling or ambition to articulate and faithfully express in literary or poetic form, and uncompromisingly, my own physical, emotional, moral, intellectual, and æsthetic Personality, in the midst of, and tallying, the momentous spirit and facts of its immediate days, and of current America—and to exploit that Personality, identified with place and date, in a far more candid and comprehensive sense than any hitherto poem or book.

Perhaps this is in brief, or suggests, all I have sought to do. Given the Nineteenth

¹ When Champollion, on his death-bed, handed to the printer the revised proof of his *Egyptian Grammar*, he said gayly, “Be careful of this—it is my *carte de visite* to posterity.” (Whitman's note.)

Century, with the United States, and what they furnish as area and points of view, *Leaves of Grass* is, or seeks to be, simply a faithful and doubtless self-willed record. In the midst of all, it gives one man's—the author's—identity, ardors, observations, faiths, and thoughts, colored hardly at all with any decided coloring from other faiths or other identities. Plenty of songs had been sung—beautiful, matchless songs—adjusted to other lands than these—another spirit and stage of evolution; but I would sing, and leave out or put in, quite solely with reference to America and to-day. Modern science and democracy seemed to be throwing out their challenge to poetry to put them in its statements in contradistinction to the songs and myths of the past. As I see it now (perhaps too late), I have unwittingly taken up that challenge and made an attempt at such statements—which I certainly would not assume to do now, knowing more clearly what it means.

For grounds for *Leaves of Grass*, as a poem, I abandoned the conventional themes, which do not appear in it: none of the stock ornamentation, or choice plots of love or war, or high, exceptional personages of Old-World song; nothing, as I may say, for beauty's sake—no legend, or myth, or romance, nor euphemism, nor rhyme. But the broadest average of humanity and its identities in the now ripening Nineteenth Century, and especially in each of their countless examples and practical occupations in the United States to-day.

One main contrast of the ideas behind every page of my verses, compared with established poems, is their different relative attitude towards God, towards the objective universe, and still more (by reflection, confession, assumption, *etc.*) the quite changed attitude of the ego, the one chanting or talking, towards himself and towards his fellow-humanity. It is certainly time for America, above all, to begin this readjustment in the scope and basic point of view of verse; for everything else has changed. As I write, I see in an article on Wordsworth, in one of the current English magazines, the lines, "A few weeks ago an eminent French critic said that, owing to the special tendency to science and to its all-devouring force, poetry would cease to be read in fifty years." But I anticipate

the very contrary. Only a firmer, vastly broader, new area begins to exist—nay, is already formed—to which the poetic genius must emigrate. Whatever may have been the case in years gone by, the true use for the imaginative faculty of modern times is to give ultimate vivification to facts, to science, and to common lives, endowing them with glows and glories and final illustriousness which belong to every real thing, and to real things only. Without that ultimate vivification—which the poet or other artist alone can give—reality would seem incomplete, and science, democracy, and life itself, finally in vain.

Few appreciate the moral revolutions, our age, which have been profounder far than the material or inventive or war-produced ones. The Nineteenth Century, now well towards its close (and ripening into fruit the seeds of the two preceding centuries¹)—the uprisings of national masses and shiftings of boundary-lines—the historical and other prominent facts of the United States—the war of attempted Secession—the stormy rush and haste of nebulous forces—never can future years witness more excitement and din of action—never completer change of army front along the whole line, the whole civilized world. For all these new and evolutionary facts, meanings, purposes, new poetic messages, new forms and expressions, are inevitable.

My Book and I—what a period we have presumed to span! those thirty years from 1850 to '80—and America in them! Proud, proud indeed may we be, if we have culled enough of that period in its own spirit to worthily waft a few live breaths of it to the future!

Let me not dare, here or anywhere, for my own purposes, or any purposes, to attempt the definition of Poetry, nor answer the question what it is. Like Religion, Love, Nature, while those terms are indispensable, and we all give a sufficiently accurate meaning to them, in my opinion no definition that has

¹ The ferment and germination even of the United States to-day, dating back to, and in my opinion mainly founded on, the Elizabethan age in English history, the age of Francis Bacon and Shakespeare. Indeed, when we pursue it, what growth or advent is there that does not date back, back, until lost—perhaps its most tantalizing clues lost—in the receded horizons of the past? (Whitman's note.)

ever been made sufficiently encloses the name Poetry; nor can any rule or convention ever so absolutely obtain but some great exception may arise and disregard and overturn it.

Also it must be carefully remembered that first-class literature does not shine by any luminosity of its own; nor do its poems. They grow of circumstances, and are evolutionary. The actual living light is always curiously from elsewhere — follows unaccountable sources, and is lunar and relative at the best. There are, I know, certain controlling themes that seem endlessly appropriated to the poets—as war, in the past—in the Bible, religious rapture and adoration—always love, beauty, some fine plot, or pensive or other emotion. But, strange as it may sound at first, I will say there is something striking far deeper and towering far higher than those themes for the best elements of modern song.

Just as all the old imaginative works rest, after their kind, on long trains of presuppositions, often entirely unmentioned by themselves, yet supplying the most important bases of them, and without which they could have had no reason for being, so *Leaves of Grass*, before a line was written, presupposed something different from any other, and, as it stands, is the result of such presupposition. I should say, indeed, it were useless to attempt reading the book without first carefully tallying that preparatory background and quality in the mind. Think of the United States to-day—the facts of these thirty-eight or forty empires soldered in one—sixty or seventy millions of equals, with their lives, their passions, their future—these incalculable, modern, American, seething multitudes around us, of which we are inseparable parts! Think, in comparison, of the petty environage and limited area of the poets of past or present Europe, no matter how great their genius. Think of the absence and ignorance in all cases hitherto, of the multitudinousness, vitality, and the unprecedented stimulants of to-day and here. It almost seems as if a poetry with cosmic and dynamic features of magnitude and limitlessness suitable to the human soul, were never possible before. It is certain that a poetry of absolute faith and equality for the use of the democratic masses never was.

In estimating first-class song, a sufficient Nationality, or, on the other hand, what may

be called the negative and lack of it (as in Goethe's case, it sometimes seems to me), is often, if not always, the first element. One needs only a little penetration to see, at more or less removes, the material facts of their country and radius, with the coloring of the moods of humanity at the time, and its gloomy or hopeful prospects, behind all poets and each poet, and forming their birthmarks. I know very well that my *Leaves* could not possibly have emerged or been fashioned or completed, from any other era than the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, nor any other land than democratic America, and from the absolute triumph of the National Union arms.

And whether my friends claim it for me or not, I know well enough, too, that in respect to pictorial talent, dramatic situations, and especially in verbal melody and all the conventional technique of poetry, not only the divine works that to-day stand ahead in the world's reading, but dozens more, transcend (some of them immeasurably transcend) all I have done, or could do. But it seemed to me, as the objects in Nature, the themes of æstheticism, and all special exploitations of the mind and soul, involve not only their own inherent quality, but the quality, just as inherent and important, of *their point of view*,¹ the time had come to reflect all themes and things, old and new, in the lights thrown on them by the advent of America and democracy—to chant those themes through the utterance of one, not only the grateful and reverent legatee of the past, but the born child of the New World—to illustrate all through the genesis and ensemble of to-day; and that such illustration and ensemble are the chief demands of America's prospective imaginative literature. Not to carry out, in approved style, some choice plot of fortune or misfortune, or fancy, or fine thoughts, or incidents, or courtesies—all of which has been done overwhelmingly and well, probably never to be excelled—but that while in such æsthetic presentation of objects, passions, plots, thoughts, *etc.*, our lands and days do not want, and probably will never have, anything better than they already possess from the bequests of the past, it still remains to be

¹ According to Immanuel Kant, the last essential reality, giving shape and significance to all the rest. (Whitman's note.)

said that there is even towards all those a subjective and contemporary point of view appropriate to ourselves alone, and to our new genius and environments, different from anything hitherto; and that such conception of current or gone-by life and art is for us the only means of their assimilation consistent with the Western world.

Indeed, and anyhow, to put it specifically, has not the time arrived when (if it must be plainly said, for democratic America's sake, if for no other) there must imperatively come a readjustment of the whole theory and nature of Poetry? The question is important, and I may turn the argument over and repeat it: Does not the best thought of our day and Republic conceive of a birth and spirit of song superior to anything past or present? To the effectual and moral consolidation of our lands (already, as materially established, the greatest factors in known history, and far, far greater through what they prelude and necessitate, and are to be in future)—to conform with and build on the concrete realities and theories of the universe furnished by science, and henceforth the only irrefragable basis for anything, verse included—to root both influences in the emotional and imaginative action of the modern time, and dominate all that precedes or opposes them—is not either a radical advance and step forward, or a new vertebra of the best song indispensable?

The New World receives with joy the poems of the antique, with European feudalism's rich fund of epics, plays, ballads—seeks not in the least to deaden or displace those voices from our ear and area—holds them indeed as indispensable studies, influences, records, comparisons. But though the dawn-dazzle of the sun of literature is in those poems for us of to-day—though perhaps the best parts of current character in nations, social groups, or any man's or woman's individuality, Old World or New, are from them—and though if I were asked to name the most precious bequest to current American civilization from all the hitherto ages, I am not sure but I would name those old and less old songs ferried hither from east and west—some serious words and debits remain; some acrid considerations demand a hearing. Of the great poems received from abroad and from the ages, and to-day enveloping and pene-

trating America, is there one that is consistent with these United States, or essentially applicable to them as they are and are to be? Is there one whose underlying basis is not a denial and insult to democracy? What a comment it forms, anyhow, on this era of literary fulfillment, with the splendid day-rise of science and resuscitation of history, that our chief religious and poetical works are not our own, nor adapted to our light, but have been furnished by far-back ages out of their arriere and darkness, or, at most, twilight dimness! What is there in those works that so imperiously and scornfully dominates all our advanced civilization, and culture?

Even Shakespeare, who so suffuses current letters and art (which indeed have in most degrees grown out of him), belongs essentially to the buried past. Only he holds the proud distinction for certain important phases of that past, of being the loftiest of the singers life has yet given voice to. All, however, relate to and rest upon conditions, standards, politics, sociologies, ranges of belief, that have been quite eliminated from the Eastern hemisphere, and never existed at all in the Western. As authoritative types of song they belong in America just about as much as the persons and institutes they depict. True, it may be said, the emotional, moral, and æsthetic natures of humanity have not radically changed—that in these the old poems apply to our times and all times, irrespective of date; and that they are of incalculable value as pictures of the past. I willingly make those admissions and to their fullest extent; then advance the points herewith as of serious, even paramount importance.

I have indeed put on record elsewhere my reverence and eulogy for those never-to-be-excelled poetic bequests, and their indescribable preciousness as heirlooms for America. Another and separate point must now be candidly stated. If I had not stood before those poems with uncovered head, fully aware of their colossal grandeur and beauty of form and spirit, I could not have written *Leaves of Grass*. My verdict and conclusions as illustrated in its pages are arrived at through the temper and inculcation of the old works as much as through anything else—perhaps more than through anything else. As

America fully and fairly construed is the legitimate result and evolutionary outcome of the past, so I would dare to claim for my verse. Without stopping to qualify the averment, the Old World has had the poems of myths, fictions, feudalism, conquest, caste, dynastic wars, and splendid exceptional characters and affairs, which have been great; but the New World needs the poems of realities and science and of the democratic average and basic equality, which shall be greater. In the center of all, and object of all, stands the Human Being, towards whose heroic and spiritual evolution poems and everything directly or indirectly tend, Old World or New.

Continuing the subject, my friends have more than once suggested—or may be the garrulity of advancing age is possessing me—some further embryonic facts of *Leaves of Grass*, and especially how I entered upon them. Dr. Bucke has, in his volume, already fully and fairly described the preparation of my poetic field, with the particular and general plowing, planting, seeding, and occupation of the ground, till everything was fertilized, rooted, and ready to start its own way for good or bad. Not till after this, did I attempt any serious acquaintance with poetic literature. Along in my sixteenth year I had become the possessor of a stout, well-crammed one thousand page octavo volume (I have it yet), containing Walter Scott's poetry entire—an inexhaustible mine and treasury of poetic forage (especially the endless forests and jungles of notes)—has been so to me for fifty years, and remains so to this day.¹

Later, at intervals, summers and falls, I used to go off, sometimes for a week at a stretch, down in the country, or to Long Island's seashores—there, in the presence of

outdoor influences, I went over thoroughly the Old and New Testaments, and absorbed (probably to better advantage for me than in any library or indoor room—it makes such difference *where* you read), Shakespeare, Ossian, the best translated versions I could get of Homer, Eschylus, Sophocles, the old German Nibelungen, the ancient Hindoo poems, and one or two other masterpieces, Dante's among them. As it happened, I read the latter mostly in an old wood. The *Iliad* (Buckley's prose version) I read first thoroughly on the peninsula of Orient, north-east end of Long Island, in a sheltered hollow of rocks and sand, with the sea on each side. (I have wondered since why I was not overwhelmed by those mighty masters. Likely because I read them, as described, in the full presence of Nature, under the sun, with the far-spreading landscape and vistas, or the sea rolling in.)

Towards the last I had among much else looked over Edgar Poe's poems—of which I was not an admirer, though I always saw that beyond their limited range of melody (like perpetual chimes of music bells, ringing from lower *b* flat up to *g*) they were melodious expressions, and perhaps never excelled ones, of certain pronounced phases of human morbidity. (The Poetic area is very spacious—has room for all—has so many mansions!) But I was repaid in Poe's prose by the idea that (at any rate for our occasions, our day) there can be no such thing as a long poem. The same thought had been haunting my mind before, but Poe's argument, though short, worked the sum and proved it to me.

Another point had an early settlement, clearing the ground greatly. I saw, from the time my enterprise and questionings positively shaped themselves (how best can I express my own distinctive era and surroundings, America, Democracy?) that the trunk and center whence the answer was to radiate, and to which all should return from straying however far a distance, must be an identical body and soul, a personality—which personality, after many considerations and ponderings I deliberately settled should be myself—indeed could not be any other. I also felt strongly (whether I have shown it or not) that to the true and full estimate of the Present both the Past and the Future are main considerations.

¹ Sir Walter Scott's *COMPLETE POEMS*; especially including *Border Minstrelsy*; then *Sir Tristrem*; *Lay of the Last Minstrel*; *Ballads from the German*; *Marmion*; *Lady of the Lake*; *Vision of Don Roderick*; *Lord of the Isles*; *Rokeby*; *Bridal of Triermain*; *Field of Waterloo*; *Harold the Dauntless*; all the *Dramas*; various *Introductions*, endless interesting *Notes*, and *Essays on Poetry, Romance, etc.*

Lockhart's 1833 (or '34) edition with Scott's latest and copious revisions and annotations. (All the poems were thoroughly read by me, but the ballads of the *Border Minstrelsy* over and over again.) (Whitman's note.)

These, however, and much more might have gone on and come to naught (almost positively would have come to naught), if a sudden, vast, terrible, direct and indirect stimulus for new and national declamatory expression had not been given to me. It is certain, I say, that, although I had made a start before, only from the occurrence of the Secession War, and what it showed me as by flashes of lightning, with the emotional depths it sounded and aroused (of course, I don't mean in my own heart only, I saw it just as plainly in others, in millions)—that only from the strong flare and provocation of that war's sights and scenes the final reasons-for-being of an autochthonic and passionate song definitely came forth.

I went down to the war fields in Virginia (end of 1862), lived thenceforward in camp—saw great battles and the days and nights afterward—partook of all the fluctuations, gloom, despair, hopes again aroused, courage evoked—death readily risked—the *cause*, too—along and filling those agonistic and lurid following years, 1863-'64-'65—the real parturition years (more than 1776-'83) of this henceforth homogeneous Union. Without those three or four years and the experiences they gave, *Leaves of Grass* would not now be existing.¹

But I set out with the intention also of indicating or hinting some point-characteristics which I since see (though I did not then, at least not definitely) were bases and object-urgings towards those *Leaves* from the first. The word I myself put primarily for the description of them as they stand at last, is the word Suggestiveness. I round and finish little, if anything; and could not, consistently with my scheme. The reader will always have his or her part to do, just as much as I have had mine. I seek less to state or display any theme or thought, and more to bring you, reader, into the atmosphere of the theme or thought—there to pursue your own flight. Another impetus-word is Comradeship as for all lands, and in a more commanding and acknowledged sense than

hitherto. Other word signs would be Good Cheer, Content, and Hope.

The chief trait of any given poet is always the spirit he brings to the observation of Humanity and Nature—the mood out of which he contemplates his subjects. What kind of temper and what amount of faith report these things? Up to how recent a date is the song carried? What the equipment, and special raciness of the singer—what his tinge of coloring? The last value of artistic expressers, past and present—Greek æsthetes, Shakespeare—or in our own day Tennyson, Victor Hugo, Carlyle, Emerson—is certainly involved in such questions. I say the profoundest service that poems or any other writings can do for their reader is not merely to satisfy the intellect, or supply something polished and interesting, nor even to depict great passions, or persons or events, but to fill him with vigorous and clean manliness, religiousness, and give him *good heart* as a radical possession and habit. The educated world seems to have been growing more and more ennuyed for ages, leaving to our time the inheritance of it all. Fortunately there is the original inexhaustible fund of buoyancy, normally resident in the race, forever eligible to be appealed to and relied on.

As for native American individuality, though certain to come, and on a large scale, the distinctive and ideal type of Western character (as consistent with the operative political and even money-making features of United States' humanity in the Nineteenth Century as chosen knights, gentlemen, and warriors were the ideals of the centuries of European feudalism) it has not yet appeared. I have allowed the stress of my poems from beginning to end to bear upon American individuality and assist it—not only because that is a great lesson in Nature, amid all her generalizing laws, but as counterpoise to the leveling tendencies of Democracy—and for other reasons. Defiant of ostensible literary and other conventions, I avowedly chant “the great pride of man in himself,” and permit it to be more or less a *motif* of nearly all my verse. I think this pride indispensable to an American. I think it not inconsistent with obedience, humility, deference, and self-questioning.

Democracy has been so retarded and jeopardized by powerful personalities, that

¹ It would appear that Whitman, in writing this and an earlier passage of *A Backward Glance*, lost sight of how much he had really done by 1860. But, of course, he was thinking in terms of his comprehensive scheme for the volume, and he is guilty of exaggeration rather than, as some have thought, of misstatement.

its first instincts are fain to clip, conform, bring in stragglers, and reduce everything to a dead level. While the ambitious thought of my song is to help the forming of a great aggregate Nation, it is, perhaps, altogether through the forming of myriads of fully developed and enclosing individuals. Welcome as are equality's and fraternity's doctrines and popular education, a certain liability accompanies them all, as we see. That primal and interior something in man, in his soul's abysms, coloring all, and, by exceptional fruitions, giving the last majesty to him—something continually touched upon and attained by the old poems and ballads of feudalism, and often the principal foundation of them—modern science and democracy appear to be endangering, perhaps eliminating. But that forms an appearance only; the reality is quite different. The new influences, upon the whole, are surely preparing the way for grander individualities than ever. To-day and here personal force is behind everything, just the same. The times and depictions from the *Iliad* to Shakespeare inclusive can happily never again be realized—but the elements of courageous and lofty manhood are unchanged.

Without yielding an inch the working-man and working-woman were to be in my pages from first to last. The ranges of heroism and loftiness with which Greek and feudal poets endowed their god-like or lordly born characters—indeed prouder and better based and with fuller ranges than those—I was to endow the democratic averages of America. I was to show that we, here and to-day, are eligible to the grandest and the best—more eligible now than any times of old were. I will also want my utterances (I said to myself before beginning) to be in spirit the poems of the morning. (They have been founded and mainly written in the sunny forenoon and early midday of my life.) I will want them to be the poems of women entirely as much as men. I have wished to put the complete Union of the States in my songs without any preference or partiality whatever. Henceforth, if they live and are read, it must be just as much South as North—just as much along the Pacific as Atlantic—in the valley of the Mississippi, in Canada, up in Maine, down in Texas, and on the shores of Puget Sound.

From another point of view *Leaves of Grass* is avowedly the song of Sex and Amativeness, and even Animality—though meanings that do not usually go along with those words are behind all, and will duly emerge; and all are sought to be lifted into a different light and atmosphere. Of this feature, intentionally palpable in a few lines, I shall only say the espousing principle of those lines so gives breath of life to my whole scheme that the bulk of the pieces might as well have been left unwritten were those lines omitted. Difficult as it will be, it has become, in my opinion, imperative to achieve a shifted attitude from superior men and women towards the thought and fact of sexuality, as an element in character, personality, the emotions, and a theme in literature. I am not going to argue the question by itself; it does not stand by itself. The vitality of it is altogether in its relations, bearings, significance—like the clef of a symphony. At last analogy the lines I allude to, and the spirit in which they are spoken, permeate all *Leaves of Grass*, and the work must stand or fall with them, as the human body and soul must remain as an entirety.

Universal as are certain facts and symptoms of communities or individuals all times, there is nothing so rare in modern conventions and poetry as their normal recognizance. Literature is always calling in the doctor for consultation and confession, and always giving evasions and swathing suppressions in place of that "heroic nudity"¹ on which only a genuine diagnosis of serious cases can be built. And in respect to editions of *Leaves of Grass* in time to come (if there should be such) I take occasion now to confirm those lines with the settled convictions and deliberate renewals of thirty years, and to hereby prohibit, as far as word of mine can do so, any elision of them.

Then still a purpose enclosing all, and over and beneath all. Ever since what might be called thought, or the budding of thought, fairly began in my youthful mind, I had had a desire to attempt some worthy record of that entire faith and acceptance ("to justify the ways of God to man" is Milton's well-known and ambitious phrase) which is the foundation of moral America. I felt it all as positively then in my young days as I do now in my old ones; to formulate a poem

¹ *Nineteenth Century*, July, 1883. (Whitman's note.)

whose every thought or fact should directly or indirectly be or connive at an implicit belief in the wisdom, health, mystery, beauty of every process, every concrete object, every human or other existence, not only considered from the point of view of all, but of each.

While I cannot understand it or argue it out, I fully believe in a clue and purpose in Nature, entire and several; and that invisible spiritual results, just as real and definite as the visible, eventuate all concrete life and all materialism, through Time. My book ought to emanate buoyancy and gladness legitimately enough, for it was grown out of those elements, and has been the comfort of my life since it was originally commenced.

One main genesis-motive of the *Leaves* was my conviction (just as strong to-day as ever) that the crowning growth of the United States is to be spiritual and heroic. To help start and favor that growth—or even to call attention to it, or the need of it—is the beginning, middle and final purpose of the poems. (In fact, when really ciphered out and summed to the last, plowing up in earnest the interminable average fallows of humanity—not “good government” merely, in the common sense—is the justification and main purpose of these United States.)

Isolated advantages in any rank or grace or fortune—the direct or indirect threads of all the poetry of the past—are in my opinion distasteful to the republican genius, and offer no foundation for its fitting verse. Established poems, I know, have the very great advantage of chanting the already performed, so full of glories, reminiscences dear to the minds of men. But my volume is a candidate for the future. “All original art,” says Taine, anyhow, “is self-regulated, and no original art can be regulated from without; it carries its own counterpoise, and does not receive it from elsewhere—lives on its own blood”—a solace to my frequent bruises and sulky vanity.

As the present is perhaps mainly an attempt at personal statement or illustration, I will allow myself as further help to extract the following anecdote from a book, *Annals of Old Painters*, conned by me in youth. Rubens, the Flemish painter, in one of his wanderings through the galleries of old convents, came across a singular work. After looking at it thoughtfully for a good

while, and listening to the criticisms of his suite of students, he said to the latter, in answer to their questions (as to what school the work implied or belonged), “I do not believe the artist, unknown and perhaps no longer living, who has given the world this legacy, ever belonged to any school, or ever painted anything but this one picture, which is a personal affair—a piece out of a man’s life.”

Leaves of Grass indeed (I cannot too often reiterate) has mainly been the outcropping of my own emotional and other personal nature—an attempt, from first to last, to put a *Person*, a human being (myself, in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, in America), freely, fully and truly on record. I could not find any similar personal record in current literature that satisfied me. But it is not on *Leaves of Grass* distinctively as *literature*, or a specimen thereof, that I feel to dwell, or advance claims. No one will get at my verses who insists upon viewing them as a literary performance, or attempt at such performance, or as aiming mainly towards art or æstheticism.

I say no land or people or circumstances ever existed so needing a race of singers and poems differing from all others, and rigidly their own, as the land and people and circumstances of our United States need such singers and poems to-day, and for the future. Still further, as long as the States continue to absorb and be dominated by the poetry of the Old World, and remain unsupplied with autochthonous song, to express, vitalize and give color to and define their material and political success, and minister to them distinctively, so long will they stop short of first-class Nationality and remain defective.

In the free evening of my day I give to you, reader, the foregoing garrulous talk, thoughts, reminiscences,

As idly drifting down the ebb, [shore.
Such ripples, half-caught voices, echo from the

Concluding with two items for the imaginative genius of the West, when it worthily rises—First, what Herder taught to the young Goethe, that really great poetry is always (like the Homeric or Biblical canticles) the result of a national spirit, and not the privilege of a polished and select few; Second, that the strongest and sweetest songs yet remain to be sung.

FRANCIS PARKMAN (1823-1893)

Parkman was born in Boston on 16 September, 1823. As a child he was "sensitive and restless, rarely ill, but never robust." When he was eight years old he was sent to Medford, to live on a farm with his mother's father, and there he stayed four years, attending a school not far distant. He entered Harvard in 1840. Already he had literary ambitions but, at the same time, disliked the sedentary life of a literary man, so that he attempted to combine hard and continuous physical exercise with close attention to books—a dual aim doubtless good in itself, and, too, partly responsible for the character of his later work, but one which put too great a burden upon his delicate constitution, with disastrous results from which he suffered grievously throughout his mature life. Concerning his literary projects at this time he later wrote: "My favorite backwoods were always in my thoughts. At first I tried to persuade myself that I could woo this new mistress in verse; then I came down to fiction, and at last reached the sage though not flattering conclusion that if I wanted to build in her honor any monument that would stand, I must found on solid fact. Before the end of the sophomore year my various schemes had crystallized into a plan of writing the story of what was then known as the 'Old French War'; that is, the war that ended in the conquest of Canada; for here, as it seemed to me, the forest drama was more stirring and the forest stage more thronged with appropriate actors than in any other passage of our history. It was not till some years later that I enlarged the plan to include the whole course of the American conflict between France and England; or, in other words, the history of the American forest; for this was the light in which I regarded it. My theme fascinated me, and I was haunted with wilderness images day and night."

Nevertheless, Parkman kept his aims a secret, partly because of his habitual reserve and partly because his father was anxious for him to enter a regular profession and had small sympathy with his real interests. During his college vacations he traveled, visiting many scenes about which he was later to write. At the beginning of his senior year his health was too poor to permit continuance of study, and he spent the greater part of the winter and spring in Europe, returning only in time to graduate with his class. He then, in obedience to his father's wish, spent two years in ostensible study of the law, though during this time he was chiefly occupied with an attempt to perfect his manner of writing and with study of the Indians, which involved further traveling. In 1846 he spent five months in the West, living among the Dakotas and other tribes. He thus gained invaluable knowledge at first-hand, but the hardships of the expedition left him gravely weakened and brought on trouble with his eyes which almost deprived him of sight. From this time until the end of his life he was practically an invalid, often wholly incapacitated for long periods and often suffering great pain, and he never regained the full use of his eyes, but, like Prescott, had to do the greater part of his work with the eyes of others. Despite all obstacles, however, he did not lose hope, but continued always to do all that his wretched body would permit. In his youth he had concluded that "not happiness, but achievement," was the true end of life, and he lived completely in the spirit of that conclusion.

He now, being able to do nothing else, dictated a volume based on his experiences in the West, *The California and Oregon Trail*, which was published serially in *The Knickerbocker Magazine* in 1847, and as a book in 1849. From this he turned to work on *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, which he had resolved to write "in the way of preparation and preliminary to his principal undertaking." The book was very slowly completed, and was published at Parkman's own expense in 1851. It met with a favorable, though not enthusiastic, reception. As a modern critic says: "It was a good book from a young author; but it lacked conciseness and was overdrawn." (J. S. Bassett, *Camb. Hist. Am. Lit.*, III.) For ten years or more after this Parkman was unable to make any real progress with his great design, owing to the state of his health. In 1850 he had married Catherine Bigelow who, however, lived only until 1858. He wrote a novel, *Vassall Morton* (1856), which was on the whole not a success. He turned also to horticulture, and became remarkably expert in growing flowers and producing new varieties, and *The Book of Roses* (1866) was a result of this activity. After a partial improvement in his health, however, he was able to return to history, and he now planned a series of works under the comprehensive title, *France and England in North America*. The remainder of his life was devoted to its completion, with only such journeys to Europe or Canada as the work made necessary. The parts and their dates of publication are: I. *The Pioneers of France in the New World*

(1865); II. *The Jesuits in North America* (1867); III. *The Discovery of the Great West* (1869; in 1879 the title was altered to *La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West*); IV. *The Old Régime in Canada* (1874); V. *Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV* (1877); VI. *A Half-Century of Conflict* (2 vols., 1892); and VII. *Montcalm and Wolfe* (2 vols., 1884). Parkman died in Boston on 8 November, 1893.

"His avowed method of writing was 'while scrupulously and rigorously adhering to the truth of facts, to animate them with the life of the past, and, so far as might be, clothe the skeleton with flesh. Faithfulness to the truth of history involves far more than research, however patient and scrupulous, into special facts. The narrator must seek to imbue himself with the life and spirit of the time.' Few writers have achieved their ideal of expression as well as he. What Cooper did in the realm of fiction Parkman did with even better fidelity to nature in the realm of history. He never studied in the seminar school, but he understood its lessons instinctively and made them his own without loss of the best things in the old school—vigor, harmony, and color." (J. S. Bassett, as above.)

THE JESUITS IN NORTH AMERICA IN THE SEVEN- TEENTH CENTURY¹

CHAPTER XVI

1641-1644

ISAAC JOGUES

THE IROQUOIS WAR.—JOGUES: HIS CAPTURE;
HIS JOURNEY TO THE MOHAWKS.—LAKE
GEORGE.—THE MOHAWK TOWNS.—THE
MISSIONARY TORTURED.—DEATH OF GOU-
PIL.—MISERY OF JOGUES.—THE MOHAWK
"BABYLON."—FORT ORANGE.—ESCAPE OF
JOGUES.—MANHATTAN.—THE VOYAGE TO
FRANCE.—JOGUES AMONG HIS BRETHREN;
HE RETURNS TO CANADA.

THE waters of the St. Lawrence rolled through a virgin wilderness, where, in the vastness of the lonely woodlands, civilized man found a precarious harborage at three points only,—at Quebec, at Montreal, and at Three Rivers. Here and in the scattered missions was the whole of New France,—a population of some three hundred souls in all. And now, over these miserable settlements, rose a war-cloud of frightful portent.

It was thirty-two years since Champlain had first attacked the Iroquois. They had nursed their wrath for more than a generation, and at length their hour was come. The Dutch traders at Fort Orange, now Albany, had supplied them with firearms. The Mohawks, the most easterly of the Iroquois nations, had, among their seven or

eight hundred warriors, no less than three hundred armed with the arquebuse, a weapon somewhat like the modern carbine. They were masters of the thunderbolts which, in the hands of Champlain, had struck terror into their hearts.

We have surveyed in the introductory chapter the character and organization of this ferocious people,²—their confederacy of five nations, bound together by a peculiar tie of clanship; their chiefs, half hereditary, half elective; their government, an oligarchy in form and a democracy in spirit; their minds, thoroughly savage, yet marked here and there with traits of a vigorous development. The war which they had long waged with the Hurons was carried on by the Senecas and the other Western nations of their league; while the conduct of hostilities against the French and their Indian allies in Lower Canada was left to the Mohawks. In parties of from ten to a hundred or more, they would leave their towns on the river Mohawk, descend Lake Champlain and the river Richelieu, lie in ambush on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and attack the passing boats or canoes. Sometimes they hovered about the fortifications of Quebec and Three Rivers, killing stragglers, or luring armed parties into ambushades. They followed like hounds on the trail of travelers and hunters; broke in upon unguarded camps at midnight; and lay in wait, for days and weeks, to intercept the Huron traders on their yearly descent to Quebec. Had they joined to their ferocious courage the discipline and the military knowledge that belong

¹ The chapters from this volume here reprinted are used with the permission of Messrs. Little, Brown, and Company, the authorized publishers of Parkman's writings.

² The volume is introduced by a long and absorbingly interesting essay upon the American Indians, their tribal divisions, institutions, habits, arts, character, and beliefs.

to civilization, they could easily have blotted out New France from the map, and made the banks of the St. Lawrence once more a solitude; but though the most formidable of savages, they were savages only.

In the early morning of the second of August, 1642, twelve Huron canoes were moving slowly along the northern shore of the expansion of the St. Lawrence known as the Lake of St. Peter. There were on board about forty persons, including four Frenchmen, one of them being the Jesuit, Isaac Jogues, whom we have already followed on his missionary journey to the towns of the Tobacco Nation.¹ In the interval he had not been idle. During the last autumn (1641) he, with Father Charles Raymbault, had passed along the shore of Lake Huron northward, entered the strait through which Lake Superior discharges itself, pushed on as far as the Sault Sainte Marie, and preached the Faith to two thousand Ojibwas and other Algonquins there assembled. He was now on his return from a far more perilous errand. The Huron mission was in a state of destitution. There was need of clothing for the priests, of vessels for the altars, of bread and wine for the eucharist, of writing materials,—in short, of everything; and early in the summer of the present year Jogues had descended to Three Rivers and Quebec, with the Huron traders, to procure the necessary supplies. He had accomplished his task, and was on his way back to the mission. With him were a few Huron converts, and among them a noted Christian chief, Eustache Ahatsistari. Others of the party were in course of instruction for baptism; but the greater part were heathen, whose canoes were deeply laden with the proceeds of their bargains with the French fur-traders.

Jogues sat in one of the leading canoes. He was born at Orleans in 1607, and was thirty-five years of age. His oval face and the delicate mold of his features indicated a modest, thoughtful, and refined nature. He was constitutionally timid, with a sensitive conscience and great religious susceptibilities. He was a finished scholar, and might have gained a literary reputation; but he had chosen another career, and one for which he

seemed but ill fitted. Physically, however, he was well matched with his work; for, though his frame was slight, he was so active that none of the Indians could surpass him in running.

With him were two young men, René Goupil and Guillaume Couture, *donnés* of the mission,—that is to say, laymen who, from a religious motive and without pay, had attached themselves to the service of the Jesuits. Goupil had formerly entered upon the Jesuit novitiate at Paris, but failing health had obliged him to leave it. As soon as he was able, he came to Canada, offered his services to the Superior of the mission, was employed for a time in the humblest offices, and afterwards became an attendant at the hospital. At length, to his delight, he received permission to go up to the Hurons, where the surgical skill which he had acquired was greatly needed; and he was now on his way thither. His companion, Couture, was a man of intelligence and vigor, and of a character equally disinterested. Both were, like Jogues, in the foremost canoes; while the fourth Frenchman was with the unconverted Hurons, in the rear.

The twelve canoes had reached the western end of the Lake of St. Peter, where it is filled with innumerable islands. The forest was close on their right; they kept near the shore to avoid the current, and the shallow water before them was covered with a dense growth of tall bulrushes. Suddenly the silence was frightfully broken. The war-whoop rose from among the rushes, mingled with the reports of guns and the whistling of bullets; and several Iroquois canoes, filled with warriors, pushed out from their concealment, and bore down upon Jogues and his companions. The Hurons in the rear were seized with a shameful panic. They leaped ashore; left canoes, baggage, and weapons, and fled into the woods. The French and the Christian Hurons made fight for a time; but when they saw another fleet of canoes approaching from the opposite shores or islands, they lost heart, and those escaped who could. Goupil was seized amid triumphant yells, as were also several of the Huron converts. Jogues sprang into the bulrushes, and might have escaped; but when he saw Goupil and the neophytes in the

¹ In Chap. XII.

clutches of the Iroquois, he had no heart to abandon them, but came out from his hiding-place, and gave himself up to the astonished victors. A few of them had remained to guard the prisoners; the rest were chasing the fugitives. Jogues mastered his agony, and began to baptize those of the captive converts who needed baptism.

Couture had eluded pursuit; but when he thought of Jogues and of what perhaps awaited him, he resolved to share his fate, and, turning, retraced his steps. As he approached, five Iroquois ran forward to meet him; and one of them snapped his gun at his breast, but it missed fire. In his confusion and excitement, Couture fired his own piece, and laid the savage dead. The remaining four sprang upon him, stripped off all his clothing, tore away his finger-nails with their teeth, gnawed his fingers with the fury of famished dogs, and thrust a sword through one of his hands. Jogues broke from his guards, and, rushing to his friend, threw his arms about his neck. The Iroquois dragged him away, beat him with their fists and war-clubs till he was senseless, and, when he revived, lacerated his fingers with their teeth, as they had done those of Couture. Then they turned upon Goupil, and treated him with the same ferocity. The Huron prisoners were left for the present unharmed. More of them were brought in every moment, till at length the number of captives amounted in all to twenty-two, while three Hurons had been killed in the fight and pursuit. The Iroquois, about seventy in number, now embarked with their prey; but not until they had knocked on the head an old Huron, whom Jogues, with his mangled hands, had just baptized, and who refused to leave the place. Then, under a burning sun, they crossed to the spot on which the town of Sorel now stands, at the mouth of the river Richelieu, where they encamped.

Their course was southward, up the river Richelieu and Lake Champlain; thence, by way of Lake George, to the Mohawk towns. The pain and fever of their wounds, and the clouds of mosquitoes, which they could not drive off, left the prisoners no peace by day nor sleep by night. On the eighth day, they learned that a large Iroquois war-party, on their way to Canada, were near at hand;

and they soon approached their camp, on a small island near the southern end of Lake Champlain. The warriors, two hundred in number, saluted their victorious countrymen with volleys from their guns; then, armed with clubs and thorny sticks, ranged themselves in two lines, between which the captives were compelled to pass up the side of a rocky hill. On the way, they were beaten with such fury that Jogues, who was last in the line, fell powerless, drenched in blood and half dead. As the chief man among the French captives, he fared the worst. His hands were again mangled, and fire applied to his body; while the Huron chief, Eustache, was subjected to tortures even more atrocious. When, at night, the exhausted sufferers tried to rest, the young warriors came to lacerate their wounds and pull out their hair and beards.

In the morning they resumed their journey. And now the lake narrowed to the semblance of a tranquil river. Before them was a woody mountain, close on their right a rocky promontory, and between these flowed a stream, the outlet of Lake George. On those rocks, more than a hundred years after, rose the ramparts of Ticonderoga. They landed, shouldered their canoes and baggage, took their way through the woods, passed the spot where the fierce Highlanders and the dauntless regiments of England breasted in vain the storm of lead and fire, and soon reached the shore where Abercrombie landed and Lord Howe fell. First of white men, Jogues and his companions gazed on the romantic lake that bears the name, not of its gentle discoverer, but of the dull Hanoverian king. Like a fair Naiad of the wilderness, it slumbered between the guardian mountains that breathe from crag and forest the stern poetry of war. But all then was solitude; and the clang of trumpets, the roar of cannon, and the deadly crack of the rifle had never as yet awakened their angry echoes.

Again the canoes were launched, and the wild flotilla glided on its way,—now in the shadow of the heights, now on the broad expanse, now among the devious channels of the narrows, beset with woody islets, where the hot air was redolent of the pine, the spruce, and the cedar,—till they neared that tragic shore, where, in the following

century, New England rustics baffled the soldiers of Dieskau, where Montcalm planted his batteries, where the red cross waved so long amid the smoke, and where at length the summer night was hideous with carnage, and an honored name was stained with a memory of blood.¹

The Iroquois landed at or near the future site of Fort William Henry, left their canoes, and, with their prisoners, began their march for the nearest Mohawk town. Each bore his share of the plunder. Even Jogues, though his lacerated hands were in a frightful condition and his body covered with bruises, was forced to stagger on with the rest under a heavy load. He with his fellow-prisoners, and indeed the whole party, were half starved, subsisting chiefly on wild berries. They crossed the upper Hudson, and in thirteen days after leaving the St. Lawrence neared the wretched goal of their pilgrimage,—a palisaded town, standing on a hill by the banks of the river Mohawk.

The whoops of the victors announced their approach, and the savage hive sent forth its swarms. They thronged the side of the hill, the old and the young, each with a stick, or a slender iron rod, bought from the Dutchmen on the Hudson. They ranged themselves in a double line, reaching upward to the entrance of the town; and through this "narrow road of Paradise," as Jogues calls it, the captives were led in single file,—Couture in front, after him a half-score of Hurons, then Goupil, then the remaining Hurons, and at last Jogues. As they passed, they were saluted with yells, screeches, and a tempest of blows. One, heavier than the others, knocked Jogues's breath from his body, and stretched him on the ground; but it was death to lie there, and, regaining his feet, he staggered on with the rest.² When they reached the town, the blows ceased,

and they were all placed on a scaffold, or high platform, in the middle of the place. The three Frenchmen had fared the worst, and were frightfully disfigured. Goupil, especially, was streaming with blood, and livid with bruises from head to foot.

They were allowed a few minutes to recover their breath, undisturbed, except by the hootings and gibes of the mob below. Then a chief called out, "Come, let us caress these Frenchmen!"—and the crowd, knife in hand, began to mount the scaffold. They ordered a Christian Algonquin woman, a prisoner among them, to cut off Jogues's left thumb, which she did; and a thumb of Goupil was also severed, a clam-shell being used as the instrument, in order to increase the pain. It is needless to specify further the tortures to which they were subjected, all designed to cause the greatest possible suffering without endangering life. At night, they were removed from the scaffold and placed in one of the houses, each stretched on his back, with his limbs extended, and his ankles and wrists bound fast to stakes driven into the earthen floor. The children now profited by the examples of their parents, and amused themselves by placing live coals and red-hot ashes on the naked bodies of the prisoners, who, bound fast, and covered with wounds and bruises which made every movement a torture, were sometimes unable to shake them off.

In the morning, they were again placed on the scaffold, where, during this and the two following days, they remained exposed to the taunts of the crowd. Then they were led in triumph to the second Mohawk town, and afterwards to the third,³ suffering at each a repetition of cruelties, the detail of which would be as monotonous as revolting.

In a house in the town of Teonontogen, Jogues was hung by the wrists between two

¹ The allusion is, of course, to the siege of Fort William Henry in 1757, and the ensuing massacre by Montcalm's Indians. Charlevoix, with his usual carelessness, says that Jogues's captors took a circuitous route to avoid enemies. In truth, however, they were not in the slightest danger of meeting any; and they followed the route which before the present century was the great highway between Canada and New Holland, or New York. (Parkman's note.)

² This practice of forcing prisoners to "run the gantlet" was by no means peculiar to the Iroquois, but was common to many tribes. (Parkman's note.)

³ The Mohawks had but three towns. The first, and the lowest on the river, was Osseruenon; the second, two miles above, was Andagaron; and the third, Teonontogen: or, as Megapolensis, in his *Sketch of the Mohawks*, writes the names, Asseruë, Banagiroy, and Thenondiogo. They all seem to have been fortified in the Iroquois manner, and their united population was thirty-five hundred, or somewhat more. At a later period, 1720, there were still three towns, named respectively Teahontaioaga, Ganowauga, and Ganeganaga. See the map in Morgan, *League of the Iroquois*. (Parkman's note.)

of the upright poles which supported the structure, in such a manner that his feet could not touch the ground; and thus he remained for some fifteen minutes, in extreme torture, until, as he was on the point of swooning, an Indian, with an impulse of pity, cut the cords and released him. While they were in this town, four fresh Huron prisoners, just taken, were brought in, and placed on the scaffold with the rest. Jogues, in the midst of his pain and exhaustion, took the opportunity to convert them. An ear of green corn was thrown to him for food, and he discovered a few raindrops clinging to the husks. With these he baptized two of the Hurons. The remaining two received baptism soon after from a brook which the prisoners crossed on the way to another town.

Couture, though he had incensed the Indians by killing one of their warriors, had gained their admiration by his bravery; and, after torturing him most savagely, they adopted him into one of their families, in place of a dead relative. Thenceforth he was comparatively safe. Jogues and Goupil were less fortunate. Three of the Hurons had been burned to death, and they expected to share their fate. A council was held to pronounce their doom; but dissensions arose, and no result was reached. They were led back to the first village, where they remained, racked with suspense and half dead with exhaustion. Jogues, however, lost no opportunity to baptize dying infants, while Goupil taught children to make the sign of the cross. On one occasion, he made the sign on the forehead of a child, grandson of an Indian in whose lodge they lived. The superstition of the old savage was aroused. Some Dutchmen had told him that the sign of the cross came from the Devil, and would cause mischief. He thought that Goupil was bewitching the child; and, resolving to rid himself of so dangerous a guest, applied for aid to two young braves. Jogues and Goupil, clad in their squalid garb of tattered skins, were soon after walking together in the forest that adjoined the town, consoling themselves with prayer, and mutually exhorting each other to suffer patiently for the sake of Christ and the Virgin, when, as they were returning, reciting their rosaries, they met the two young Indians, and read

in their sullen visages an augury of ill. The Indians joined them, and accompanied them to the entrance of the town, where one of the two, suddenly drawing a hatchet from beneath his blanket, struck it into the head of Goupil, who fell, murmuring the name of Christ. Jogues dropped on his knees, and, bowing his head in prayer, awaited the blow, when the murderer ordered him to get up and go home. He obeyed, but not until he had given absolution to his still breathing friend, and presently saw the lifeless body dragged through the town amid hootings and rejoicings.

Jogues passed a night of anguish and desolation, and in the morning, reckless of life, set forth in search of Goupil's remains. "Where are you going so fast?" demanded the old Indian, his master. "Do you not see those fierce young braves, who are watching to kill you?" Jogues persisted, and the old man asked another Indian to go with him as a protector. The corpse had been flung into a neighboring ravine, at the bottom of which ran a torrent; and here, with the Indian's help, Jogues found it, stripped naked, and gnawed by dogs. He dragged it into the water, and covered it with stones to save it from further mutilation, resolving to return alone on the following day and secretly bury it. But with the night there came a storm; and when, in the gray of the morning, Jogues descended to the brink of the stream, he found it a rolling, turbid flood, and the body was nowhere to be seen. Had the Indians or the torrent borne it away? Jogues waded into the cold current: it was the first of October; he sounded it with his feet and with his stick; he searched the rocks, the thicket, the forest; but all in vain. Then, crouched by the pitiless stream, he mingled his tears with its waters, and, in a voice broken with groans, chanted the service of the dead.

The Indians, it proved, and not the flood, had robbed him of the remains of his friend. Early in the spring, when the snows were melting in the woods, he was told by Mohawk children that the body was lying, where it had been flung, in a lonely spot lower down the stream. He went to seek it; found the scattered bones, stripped by the foxes and the birds; and, tenderly gathering

them up, hid them in a hollow tree, hoping that a day might come when he could give them a Christian burial in consecrated ground.

After the murder of Goupil, Jogues's life hung by a hair. He lived in hourly expectation of the tomahawk, and would have welcomed it as a boon. By signs and words, he was warned that his hour was near; but, as he never shunned his fate, it fled from him, and each day, with renewed astonishment, he found himself still among the living.

Late in the autumn, a party of the Indians set forth on their yearly deer-hunt, and Jogues was ordered to go with them. Shivering and half-famished, he followed them through the chill November forest, and shared their wild bivouac in the depths of the wintry desolation. The game they took was devoted to Areskoui, their god, and eaten in his honor. Jogues would not taste the meat offered to a demon; and thus he starved in the midst of plenty. At night, when the kettle was slung, and the savage crew made merry around their fire, he crouched in a corner of the hut, gnawed by hunger, and pierced to the bone with cold. They thought his presence unpropitious to their hunting, and the women especially hated him. His demeanor at once astonished and incensed his masters. He brought them firewood, like a squaw; he did their bidding without a murmur, and patiently bore their abuse; but when they mocked at his God, and laughed at his devotions, their slave assumed an air and tone of authority, and sternly rebuked them.

He would sometimes escape from "this Babylon," as he calls the hut, and wander in the forest, telling his beads and repeating passages of Scripture. In a remote and lonely spot, he cut the bark in the form of a cross from the trunk of a great tree; and here he made his prayers. This living martyr, half clad in shaggy furs, kneeling on the snow among the iced rocks and beneath the gloomy pines, bowing in adoration before the emblem of the faith in which was his only consolation and his only hope, is alike a theme for the pen and a subject for the pencil.

The Indians at last grew tired of him, and sent him back to the village. Here he re-

mained till the middle of March, baptizing infants and trying to convert adults. He told them of the sun, moon, planets, and stars. They listened with interest; but when from astronomy he passed to theology, he spent his breath in vain. In March, the old man with whom he lived set forth for his spring fishing, taking with him his squaw and several children. Jogues also was of the party. They repaired to a lake, perhaps Lake Saratoga, four days distant. Here they subsisted for some time on frogs, the entrails of fish, and other garbage. Jogues passed his days in the forest, repeating his prayers, and carving the name of Jesus on trees, as a terror to the demons of the wilderness. A messenger at length arrived from the town; and on the following day, under the pretense that signs of an enemy had been seen, the party broke up their camp, and returned home in hot haste. The messenger had brought tidings that a war-party, which had gone out against the French, had been defeated and destroyed, and that the whole population were clamoring to appease their grief by torturing Jogues to death. This was the true cause of the sudden and mysterious return; but when they reached the town, other tidings had arrived. The missing warriors were safe, and on their way home in triumph with a large number of prisoners. Again Jogues's life was spared; but he was forced to witness the torture and butchery of the converts and allies of the French. Existence became unendurable to him, and he longed to die. War-parties were continually going out. Should they be defeated and cut off, he would pay the forfeit at the stake; and if they came back, as they usually did, with booty and prisoners, he was doomed to see his countrymen and their Indian friends mangled, burned, and devoured.

Jogues had shown no disposition to escape, and great liberty was therefore allowed him. He went from town to town, giving absolution to the Christian captives, and converting and baptizing the heathen. On one occasion, he baptized a woman in the midst of the fire, under pretense of lifting a cup of water to her parched lips. There was no lack of objects for his zeal. A single war-party returned from the Huron country with nearly a hundred prisoners, who were dis-

tributed among the Iroquois towns, and the greater part burned.¹ Of the children of the Mohawks and their neighbors, he had baptized, before August, about seventy; inasmuch that he began to regard his captivity as a Providential interposition for the saving of souls.

At the end of July, he went with a party of Indians to a fishing-place on the Hudson, about twenty miles below Fort Orange. While here, he learned that another war-party had lately returned with prisoners, two of whom had been burned to death at Osseruenon. On this, his conscience smote him that he had not remained in the town to give the sufferers absolution or baptism; and he begged leave of the old woman who had him in charge to return at the first opportunity. A canoe soon after went up the river with some of the Iroquois, and he was allowed to go in it. When they reached Rensselaerswyck, the Indians landed to trade with the Dutch, and took Jogues with them.

The center of this rude little settlement was Fort Orange, a miserable structure of logs, standing on a spot now within the limits of the city of Albany. It contained several houses and other buildings; and behind it was a small church, recently erected, and serving as the abode of the pastor, Dominie Megapolensis, known in our day as the writer of an interesting though short account of the Mohawks. Some twenty-five or thirty houses, roughly built of boards and roofed with thatch, were scattered at intervals on or near the borders of the Hudson, above and below the fort. Their inhabitants, about a hundred in number, were for the most part rude Dutch farmers, tenants of Van Rensselaer, the patroon, or lord of the manor. They raised wheat, of which they made beer, and oats, with which they fed their numerous horses. They traded, too, with the Indians, who profited greatly by the competition among

them, receiving guns, knives, axes, kettles, cloth, and beads, at moderate rates, in exchange for their furs. The Dutch were on excellent terms with their red neighbors, met them in the forest without the least fear, and sometimes intermarried with them. They had known of Jogues's captivity, and, to their great honor, had made efforts for his release, offering for that purpose goods to a considerable value, but without effect.²

At Fort Orange, Jogues heard startling news. The Indians of the village where he lived were, he was told, enraged against him, and determined to burn him. About the first of July, a war-party had set out for Canada, and one of the warriors had offered to Jogues to be the bearer of a letter from him to the French commander at Three Rivers, thinking probably to gain some advantage under cover of a parley. Jogues knew that the French would be on their guard; and he felt it his duty to lose no opportunity of informing them as to the state of affairs among the Iroquois. A Dutchman gave him a piece of paper; and he wrote a letter, in a jargon of Latin, French, and Huron, warning his countrymen to be on their guard, as war-parties were constantly going out, and they could hope for no respite from attack until late in the autumn. When the Iroquois reached the mouth of the river Richelieu, where a small fort had been built by the French the preceding summer, the messenger asked for a parley, and gave Jogues's letter to the commander of the post, who, after reading it, turned his cannon on the savages. They fled in dismay, leaving behind them their baggage and some of their guns; and returning home in a fury, charged Jogues with having caused their discomfiture. Jogues had expected this result, and was prepared to meet it; but several of the principal Dutch settlers, and among them Van Curler, who had made the previous attempt to rescue him, urged that his death was certain if he returned to the Indian town, and ad-

¹ The Dutch clergyman, Megapolensis, at this time living at Fort Orange, bears the strongest testimony to the ferocity with which his friends, the Mohawks, treated their prisoners. He mentions the same modes of torture which Jogues describes, and is very explicit as to cannibalism. "The common people," he says, "eat the arms, buttocks, and trunk; but the chiefs eat the head and the heart." (*Short Sketch of the Mohawk Indians.*) This feast was of a religious character. (Parkman's note.)

² See a long letter of Arendt Van Curler (Corlaer) to Van Rensselaer, June 16, 1643, in O'Callaghan's *New Netherland*, Appendix L. "We persuaded them so far," writes Van Curler, "that they promised not to kill them. . . . The French captives ran screaming after us, and besought us to do all in our power to release them out of the hands of the barbarians." (Parkman's note.)

vised him to make his escape. In the Hudson, opposite the settlement, lay a small Dutch vessel nearly ready to sail. Van Curler offered him a passage in her to Bordeaux or Rochelle,—representing that the opportunity was too good to be lost, and making light of the prisoner's objection that a connivance in his escape on the part of the Dutch would excite the resentment of the Indians against them. Jogues thanked him warmly; but, to his amazement, asked for a night to consider the matter, and take counsel of God in prayer.

He spent the night in great agitation, tossed by doubt, and full of anxiety lest his self-love should beguile him from his duty. Was it not possible that the Indians might spare his life, and that, by a timely drop of water, he might still rescue souls from torturing devils and eternal fires of perdition? On the other hand, would he not, by remaining to meet a fate almost inevitable, incur the guilt of suicide? And even should he escape torture and death, could he hope that the Indians would again permit him to instruct and baptize their prisoners? Of his French companions, one, Goupil, was dead; while Couture had urged Jogues to flight, saying that he would then follow his example, but that, so long as the Father remained a prisoner, he, Couture, would share his fate. Before morning, Jogues had made his decision. God, he thought, would be better pleased should he embrace the opportunity given him. He went to find his Dutch friends, and, with a profusion of thanks, accepted their offer. They told him that a boat should be left for him on the shore, and that he must watch his time, and escape in it to the vessel, where he would be safe.

He and his Indian masters were lodged together in a large building, like a barn, belonging to a Dutch farmer. It was a hundred feet long, and had no partition of any kind. At one end the farmer kept his cattle; at the other he slept with his wife, a Mohawk squaw, and his children, while his Indian guests lay on the floor in the middle. As he is described as one of the principal persons of the colony, it is clear that the civilization of Rensselaerswyck was not high.

In the evening, Jogues, in such a manner as not to excite the suspicion of the Indians, went out to reconnoiter. There was a fence

around the house, and, as he was passing it, a large dog belonging to the farmer flew at him, and bit him very severely in the leg. The Dutchman, hearing the noise, came out with a light, led Jogues back into the building, and bandaged his wound. He seemed to have some suspicion of the prisoner's design; for, fearful perhaps that his escape might exasperate the Indians, he made fast the door in such a manner that it could not readily be opened. Jogues now lay down among the Indians, who, rolled in their blankets, were stretched around him. He was fevered with excitement; and the agitation of his mind, joined to the pain of his wound, kept him awake all night. About dawn, while the Indians were still asleep, a laborer in the employ of the farmer came in with a lantern, and Jogues, who spoke no Dutch, gave him to understand by signs that he needed his help and guidance. The man was disposed to aid him, silently led the way out, quieted the dogs, and showed him the path to the river. It was more than half a mile distant, and the way was rough and broken. Jogues was greatly exhausted, and his wounded limb gave him such pain that he walked with the utmost difficulty. When he reached the shore, the day was breaking, and he found, to his dismay, that the ebb of the tide had left the boat high and dry. He shouted to the vessel, but no one heard him. His desperation gave him strength; and, by working the boat to and fro, he pushed it at length, little by little, into the water, entered it, and rowed to the vessel. The Dutch sailors received him kindly, and hid him in the bottom of the hold, placing a large box over the hatchway.

He remained two days, half stifled, in this foul lurking-place, while the Indians, furious at his escape, ransacked the settlement in vain to find him. They came off to the vessel, and so terrified the officers that Jogues was sent on shore at night, and led to the fort. Here he was hidden in the garret of a house occupied by a miserly old man, to whose charge he was consigned. Food was sent to him; but, as his host appropriated the larger part to himself, Jogues was nearly starved. There was a compartment of his garret, separated from the rest by a partition of boards. Here the old Dutchman, who, like many others of the settlers, carried on a trade with the

Mohawks, kept a quantity of goods for that purpose; and hither he often brought his customers. The boards of the partition had shrunk, leaving wide crevices; and Jogues could plainly see the Indians, as they passed between him and the light. They, on their part, might as easily have seen him, if he had not, when he heard them entering the house, hidden himself behind some barrels in the corner; where he would sometimes remain crouched for hours, in a constrained and painful posture, half suffocated with heat, and afraid to move a limb. His wounded leg began to show dangerous symptoms; but he was relieved by the care of a Dutch surgeon of the fort. The minister, Megapolensis, also visited him, and did all in his power for the comfort of his Catholic brother, with whom he seems to have been well pleased, and whom he calls "a very learned scholar."

When Jogues had remained for six weeks in this hiding-place, his Dutch friends succeeded in satisfying his Indian masters by the payment of a large ransom. A vessel from Manhattan, now New York, soon after brought up an order from the Director-General, Kieft, that he should be sent to him. Accordingly he was placed in a small vessel, which carried him down the Hudson. The Dutch on board treated him with great kindness; and, to do him honor, they named after him one of the islands in the river. At Manhattan he found a dilapidated fort, garrisoned by sixty soldiers, and containing a stone church and the Director-General's house, together with storehouses and barracks. Near it were ranges of small houses, occupied chiefly by mechanics and laborers; while the dwellings of the remaining colonists, numbering in all four or five hundred, were scattered here and there on the island and the neighboring shores. The settlers were of different sects and nations, but chiefly Dutch Calvinists. Kieft told his guest that eighteen different languages were spoken at Manhattan. The colonists were in the midst of a bloody Indian war, brought on by their own besotted cruelty; and while Jogues was at the fort, some forty of the Dutchmen were killed on the neighboring farms, and many barns and houses burned.¹

¹ This war was with Algonquin tribes of the neighborhood. (Parkman's note.)

The Director-General, with a humanity that was far from usual with him, exchanged Jogues's squalid and savage dress for a suit of Dutch cloth, and gave him passage in a small vessel which was then about to sail. The voyage was rough and tedious; and the passenger slept on deck or on a coil of ropes, suffering greatly from cold, and often drenched by the waves that broke over the vessel's side. At length she reached Falmouth, on the southern coast of England, when all the crew went ashore for a carouse, leaving Jogues alone on board. A boat presently came alongside with a gang of desperadoes, who boarded her, and rifled her of everything valuable, threatened Jogues with a pistol, and robbed him of his hat and coat. He obtained some assistance from the crew of a French ship in the harbor, and, on the day before Christmas, took passage in a small coal vessel for the neighboring coast of Brittany. In the following afternoon he was set on shore a little to the north of Brest, and, seeing a peasant's cottage not far off, he approached it, and asked the way to the nearest church. The peasant and his wife, as the narrative gravely tells us, mistook him, by reason of his modest deportment, for some poor but pious Irishman, and asked him to share their supper, after finishing his devotions,—an invitation which Jogues, half famished as he was, gladly accepted. He reached the church in time for the early mass, and with an unutterable joy knelt before the altar, and renewed the communion of which he had been deprived so long. When he returned to the cottage, the attention of his hosts was at once attracted to his mutilated and distorted hands. They asked with amazement how he could have received such injuries; and when they heard the story of his tortures, their surprise and veneration knew no bounds. Two young girls, their daughters, begged him to accept all they had to give,—a handful of sous; while the peasant made known the character of his new guest to his neighbors. A trader from Rennes brought a horse to the door, and offered the use of it to Jogues, to carry him to the Jesuit college in that town. He gratefully accepted it; and, on the morning of the fifth of January, 1644, reached his destination.

He dismounted, and knocked at the door

of the college. The porter opened it, and saw a man wearing on his head an old woolen nightcap, and in an attire little better than that of a beggar. Jogues asked to see the Rector; but the porter answered, coldly, that the Rector was busied in the Sacristy. Jogues begged him to say that a man was at the door with news from Canada. The missions of Canada were at this time an object of primal interest to the Jesuits, and above all to the Jesuits of France. A letter from Jogues, written during his captivity, had already reached France, as had also the Jesuit *Relation* of 1643, which contained a long account of his capture; and he had no doubt been an engrossing theme of conversation in every house of the French Jesuits. The Father Rector was putting on his vestments to say mass; but when he heard that a poor man from Canada had asked for him at the door, he postponed the service, and went to meet him. Jogues, without discovering himself, gave him a letter from the Dutch Director-General attesting his character. The Rector, without reading it, began to question him as to the affairs of Canada, and at length asked him if he knew Father Jogues.

"I knew him very well," was the reply.

"The Iroquois have taken him," pursued the Rector. "Is he dead? Have they murdered him?"

"No," answered Jogues; "he is alive and at liberty, and I am he." And he fell on his knees to ask his Superior's blessing.

That night was a night of jubilation and thanksgiving in the college of Rennes.

Jogues became a center of curiosity and reverence. He was summoned to Paris. The Queen, Anne of Austria, wished to see him; and when the persecuted slave of the Mohawks was conducted into her presence, she kissed his mutilated hands, while the ladies of the Court thronged around to do him homage. We are told, and no doubt with truth, that these honors were unwelcome to the modest and single-hearted missionary, who thought only of returning to his work of converting the Indians. A priest with any deformity of body is debarred from saying mass. The teeth and knives of the Iroquois had inflicted an injury worse than the torturers imagined, for they had robbed Jogues of the privilege

which was the chief consolation of his life; but the Pope, by a special dispensation, restored it to him, and with the opening spring he sailed again for Canada.

CHAPTER XVII

1641-1646

THE IROQUOIS

WAR.—DISTRESS AND TERROR.—RICHELIEU.—BATTLE.—RUIN OF INDIAN TRIBES.—MUTUAL DESTRUCTION.—IROQUOIS AND ALGONQUIN.—ATROCITIES.—FRIGHTFUL POSITION OF THE FRENCH.

Two forces were battling for the mastery of Canada: on the one side, Christ, the Virgin, and the Angels, with their agents the priests; on the other, the Devil, and his tools the Iroquois. Such at least was the view of the case held in full faith, not by the Jesuit Fathers alone, but by most of the colonists. Never before had the fiend put forth such rage; and in the Iroquois he found instruments of a nature not uncongenial with his own.

At Quebec, Three Rivers, Montreal, and the little fort of Richelieu,—that is to say, in all Canada,—no man could hunt, fish, till the fields, or cut a tree in the forest, without peril to his scalp. The Iroquois were everywhere, and nowhere. A yell, a volley of bullets, a rush of screeching savages, and all was over. The soldiers hastened to the spot to find silence, solitude, and a mangled corpse.

"I had as lief," writes Father Vimont, "be beset by goblins as by the Iroquois. The one are about as invisible as the other. Our people on the Richelieu and at Montreal are kept in a closer confinement than ever were monks or nuns in our smallest convents in France."

The Confederates at this time were in a flush of unparalleled audacity. They despised white men as base poltroons, and esteemed themselves warriors and heroes, destined to conquer all mankind. The firearms with which the Dutch had rashly supplied them, joined to their united councils, their courage, and ferocity, gave them an advantage over the surrounding tribes which they fully understood. Their pas-

sions rose with their sense of power. They boasted that they would wipe the Hurons, the Algonquins, and the French from the face of the earth, and carry the "white girls," meaning the nuns, to their villages. This last event, indeed, seemed more than probable; and the Hospital nuns left their exposed station at Sillery, and withdrew to the ramparts and palisades of Quebec. The St. Lawrence and the Ottawa were so infested that communication with the Huron country was cut off; and three times the annual packet of letters sent thither to the missionaries fell into the hands of the Iroquois.

It was towards the close of the year 1640 that the scourge of Iroquois war had begun to fall heavily on the French. At that time, a party of their warriors waylaid and captured Thomas Godefroy and François Marguerie,—the latter a young man of great energy and daring, familiar with the woods, a master of the Algonquin language, and a scholar of no mean acquirements.¹ To the great joy of the colonists, he and his companion were brought back to Three Rivers by their captors, and given up, in the vain hope that the French would respond with a gift of firearms. Their demand for them being declined, they broke off the parley in a rage, fortified themselves, fired on the French, and withdrew under cover of night.

Open war now ensued, and for a time all was bewilderment and terror. How to check the inroads of an enemy so stealthy and so keen for blood was the problem that taxed the brain of Montmagny, the Governor. He thought he had found a solution, when he conceived the plan of building a fort at the mouth of the river Richelieu, by which the Iroquois always made their descents to the St. Lawrence. Happily for the perishing colony, the Cardinal de Richelieu, in 1642, sent out thirty or forty soldiers for its defense. Ten times the number would have been scarcely sufficient; but even this slight succor was hailed with delight, and Montmagny was enabled to carry into effect his plan of the fort, for which hitherto he had had neither builders nor garrison. He took with him, besides the new-comers, a body of soldiers and armed laborers from Quebec,

and, with a force of about a hundred men in all, sailed for the Richelieu, in a brigantine and two or three open boats.

On the thirteenth of August he reached his destination, and landed where the town of Sorel now stands. It was but eleven days before that Jogues and his companions had been captured, and Montmagny's followers found ghastly tokens of the disaster. The heads of the slain were stuck on poles by the side of the river; and several trees, from which portions of the bark had been peeled, were daubed with the rude picture-writing in which the victors recorded their exploit.² Among the rest, a representation of Jogues himself was clearly distinguishable. The heads were removed, the trees cut down, and a large cross planted on the spot. An altar was raised, and all heard mass; then a volley of musketry was fired; and then they fell to their work. They hewed an opening into the forest, dug up the roots, cleared the ground, and cut, shaped, and planted palisades. Thus a week passed, and their defenses were nearly completed, when suddenly the war-whoop rang in their ears, and two hundred Iroquois rushed upon them from the borders of the clearing.

It was the party of warriors that Jogues had met on an island in Lake Champlain. But for the courage of Du Rocher, a corporal, who was on guard, they would have carried all before them. They were rushing through an opening in the palisade, when he, with a few soldiers, met them with such vigor and resolution that they were held in check long enough for the rest to snatch their arms. Montmagny, who was on the river in his brigantine, hastened on shore; and the soldiers, encouraged by his arrival, fought with great determination.

The Iroquois, on their part, swarmed up to the palisade, thrust their guns through the loop-holes, and fired on those within; nor was it till several of them had been killed and others wounded that they learned to keep a more prudent distance. A tall

¹ During his captivity, he wrote, on a beaver-skin, a letter to the Dutch in French, Latin, and English. (Parkman's note.)

² This practice was common to many tribes, and is not yet extinct. The writer has seen similar records, made by recent war-parties of Crows or Blackfeet, in the remote West. In this case, the bark was removed from the trunks of large cotton-wood trees, and the pictures traced with charcoal and vermilion. There were marks for scalps, for prisoners, and for the conquerors themselves. (Parkman's note.)

savage, wearing a crest of the hair of some animal dyed scarlet and bound with a fillet of wampum, leaped forward to the attack, and was shot dead. Another shared his fate, with seven buck-shot in his shield and as many in his body. The French, with shouts, redoubled their fire, and the Indians at length lost heart and fell back. The wounded dropped guns, shields, and war-clubs, and the whole band withdrew to the shelter of a fort which they had built in the forest, three miles above. On the part of the French, one man was killed and four wounded. They had narrowly escaped a disaster which might have proved the ruin of the colony; and they now gained time so far to strengthen their defenses as to make them reasonably secure against any attack of savages.¹ The new fort, however, did not effectually answer its purpose of stopping the inroads of the Iroquois. They would land a mile or more above it, carry their canoes through the forest across an intervening tongue of land, and then launch them in the St. Lawrence, while the garrison remained in total ignorance of their movements.

While the French were thus beset, their Indian allies fared still worse. The effect of Iroquois hostilities on all the Algonquin tribes of Canada, from the Saguenay to the Lake of the Nipissings, had become frightfully apparent. Famine and pestilence had aided the ravages of war, till these wretched bands seemed in the course of rapid extermination. Their spirit was broken. They became humble and docile in the hands of the missionaries, ceased their railings against the new doctrine, and leaned on the French as their only hope in this extremity of woe. Sometimes they would appear in troops at Sillery or Three Rivers, scared out of their forests by the sight of an Iroquois footprint; then some new terror would seize them, and drive them back to seek a hiding-place in the deepest thickets of the wilderness. Their best hunting-grounds were beset by the enemy. They starved for weeks together,

subsisting on the bark of trees or the thongs of raw hide which formed the network of their snow-shoes. The mortality among them was prodigious. "Where, eight years ago," writes Father Vimont, "one would see a hundred wigwams, one now sees scarcely five or six. A chief who once had eight hundred warriors has now but thirty or forty; and in place of fleets of three or four hundred canoes, we see less than a tenth of that number."

These Canadian tribes were undergoing that process of extermination, absorption, or expatriation which, as there is reason to believe, had for many generations formed the gloomy and meaningless history of the greater part of this continent. Three or four hundred Dutch guns, in the hands of the conquerors, gave an unwonted quickness and decision to the work, but in no way changed its essential character. The horrible nature of this warfare can be known only through examples; and of these one or two will suffice.

A band of Algonquins, late in the autumn of 1641, set forth from Three Rivers on their winter hunt, and, fearful of the Iroquois, made their way far northward, into the depths of the forests that border the Ottawa. Here they thought themselves safe, built their lodges, and began to hunt the moose and beaver. But a large party of their enemies, with a persistent ferocity that is truly astonishing, had penetrated even here, found the traces of the snow-shoes, followed up their human prey, and hid at nightfall among the rocks and thickets around the encampment. At midnight, their yells and the blows of their war-clubs awakened their sleeping victims. In a few minutes all were in their power. They bound the prisoners hand and foot, rekindled the fire, slung the kettles, cut the bodies of the slain to pieces, and boiled and devoured them before the eyes of the wretched survivors. "In a word," says the narrator, "they ate men with as much appetite and more pleasure than hunters eat a boar or a stag."

Meanwhile they amused themselves with bantering their prisoners. "Uncle," said one of them to an old Algonquin, "you are a dead man. You are going to the land of souls. Tell them to take heart: they will have good company soon, for we are going to

¹ Assaults by Indians on fortified places are rare. The Iroquois are known, however, to have made them with success in several cases. * * * The courage of Indians is uncertain and spasmodic. They are capable, at times, of a furious temerity, approaching desperation; but this is liable to sudden and extreme reaction. Their courage, too, is much oftener displayed in covert than in open attacks. (Parkman's note.)

send all the rest of your nation to join them. This will be good news for them."

This old man, who is described as no less malicious than his captors, and even more crafty, soon after escaped, and brought tidings of the disaster to the French. In the following spring, two women of the party also escaped; and, after suffering almost incredible hardships, reached Three Rivers, torn with briars, nearly naked, and in a deplorable state of bodily and mental exhaustion. One of them told her story to Father Buteux, who translated it into French, and gave it to Vimont to be printed in the *Relation* of 1642. Revolting as it is, it is necessary to recount it. Suffice it to say, that it is sustained by the whole body of contemporary evidence in regard to the practices of the Iroquois and some of the neighboring tribes.

The conquerors feasted in the lodge till nearly daybreak, and then, after a short rest, began their march homeward with their prisoners. Among these were three women, of whom the narrator was one, who had each a child of a few weeks or months old. At the first halt, their captors took the infants from them, tied them to wooden spits, placed them to die slowly before a fire, and feasted on them before the eyes of the agonized mothers, whose shrieks, supplications, and frantic efforts to break the cords that bound them were met with mockery and laughter. "They are not men, they are wolves!" sobbed the wretched woman, as she told what had befallen her to the pitying Jesuit. At the Fall of the Chaudière, another of the women ended her woes by leaping into the cataract. When they approached the first Iroquois town, they were met, at the distance of several leagues, by a crowd of the inhabitants, and among them a troop of women, bringing food to regale the triumphant warriors. Here they halted, and passed the night in songs of victory, mingled with the dismal chant of the prisoners, who were forced to dance for their entertainment.

On the morrow they entered the town, leading the captive Algonquins, fast bound, and surrounded by a crowd of men, women, and children, all singing at the top of their throats. The largest lodge was ready to receive them; and as they entered, the victims read their doom in the fires that

blazed on the earthen floor, and in the aspect of the attendant savages, whom the Jesuit Father calls attendant demons, that waited their coming. The torture which ensued was but preliminary, designed to cause all possible suffering without touching life. It consisted in blows with sticks and cudgels, gashing their limbs with knives, cutting off their fingers with clam-shells, scorching them with firebrands, and other indescribable torments. The women were stripped naked, and forced to dance to the singing of the male prisoners, amid the applause and laughter of the crowd. They then gave them food, to strengthen them for further suffering.

On the following morning, they were placed on a large scaffold, in sight of the whole population. It was a gala-day. Young and old were gathered from far and near. Some mounted the scaffold, and scorched them with torches and firebrands; while the children, standing beneath the bark platform, applied fire to the feet of the prisoners between the crevices. The Algonquin women were told to burn their husbands and companions; and one of them obeyed, vainly thinking to appease her tormentors. The stoicism of one of the warriors enraged his captors beyond measure. "Scream! why don't you scream?" they cried, thrusting their burning brands at his naked body. "Look at me," he answered; "you cannot make me wince. If you were in my place, you would screech like babies." At this they fell upon him with redoubled fury, till their knives and firebrands left in him no semblance of humanity. He was defiant to the last, and when death came to his relief, they tore out his heart and devoured it; then hacked him in pieces, and made their feast of triumph on his mangled limbs.¹

All the men and all the old women of the party were put to death in a similar manner, though but few displayed the same amazing

¹ The diabolical practices described above were not peculiar to the Iroquois. The Neutrals and other kindred tribes were no whit less cruel. It is a remark of Mr. Gallatin, and I think a just one, that the Indians west of the Mississippi are less ferocious than those east of it. The burning of prisoners is rare among the prairie tribes, but is not unknown. An Ogillallah chief, in whose lodge I lived for several weeks in 1846, described to me, with most expressive pantomime, how he had captured and burned a warrior of the Snake Tribe, in a valley of the Medicine Bow Mountains, near which we were then encamped. (Parkman's note.)

fortitude. The younger women, of whom there were about thirty, after passing their ordeal of torture, were permitted to live; and, disfigured as they were, were distributed among the several villages, as concubines or slaves to the Iroquois warriors. Of this number were the narrator and her companion, who, being ordered to accompany a war-party and carry their provisions, escaped at night into the forest, and reached Three Rivers, as we have seen.

While the Indian allies of the French were wasting away beneath this atrocious warfare, the French themselves, and especially the traveling Jesuits, had their full share of the infliction. In truth, the puny and sickly colony seemed in the gasps of dissolution. The beginning of spring, particularly, was a season of terror and suspense; for with the breaking up of the ice, sure as a destiny, came the Iroquois. As soon as a canoe could float, they were on the war-path; and with the cry of the returning wild-fowl mingled the yell of these human tigers. They did not always wait for the breaking ice, but set forth on foot, and when they came to open water, made canoes and embarked.

Well might Father Vimont call the Iroquois "the scourge of this infant church." They burned, hacked, and devoured the neophytes; exterminated whole villages at once; destroyed the nations whom the Fathers hoped to convert; and ruined that sure ally of the missions, the fur-trade. Not the most hideous nightmare of a fevered brain could transcend in horror the real and waking perils with which they beset the path of these intrepid priests.

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CHAPTER XXII

1645-1651

PRIEST AND PURITAN

MISCOU.—TADOUSSAC.—JOURNEYS OF DE QUEN.—DRUILLETES: HIS WINTER WITH THE MONTAGNAIS.—INFLUENCE OF THE MISSIONS.—THE ABENAKIS.—DRUILLETES ON THE KENNEBEC: HIS EMBASSY TO BOSTON.—GIBBONS.—DUDLEY.—BRADFORD.—

ELIOT.—ENDICOTT.—FRENCH AND PURITAN COLONIZATION.—FAILURE OF DRUILLETES'S EMBASSY.

BEFORE passing to the closing scenes of this wilderness drama, we will touch briefly on a few points aside from its main action, yet essential to an understanding of the scope of the mission. Besides their establishments at Quebec, Sillery, Three Rivers, and the neighborhood of Lake Huron, the Jesuits had an outlying post at the island of Miscou on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, near the entrance of the Bay of Chaleurs, where they instructed the wandering savages of those shores, and confessed the French fishermen. The island was unhealthy in the extreme. Several of the priests sickened and died; and scarcely one convert repaid their toils. There was a more successful mission at Tadoussac, or Sadilege, as the neighboring Indians called it. In winter, this place was a solitude; but in summer, when the Montagnais gathered from their hunting-grounds to meet the French traders, Jesuits came yearly from Quebec to instruct them in the Faith. Sometimes they followed them northward, into wilds where at this day a white man rarely penetrates. Thus, in 1646, De Quen ascended the Saguenay, and, by a series of rivers, torrents, lakes, and rapids, reached a Montagnais horde called the "Nation of the Porcupine," where he found that the teachings at Tadoussac had borne fruit, and that the converts had planted a cross on the borders of the savage lake where they dwelt. There was a kindred band, the Nation of the White Fish, among the rocks and forests north of Three Rivers. They proved tractable beyond all others, threw away their "medicines," or fetiches, burned their magic drums, renounced their medicine-songs, and accepted instead rosaries, crucifixes, and versions of Catholic hymns.

In a former chapter, we followed Father Paul Le Jeune on his winter roamings, with a band of Montagnais, among the forests on the northern boundary of Maine. Now Father Gabriel Druilletes sets forth on a similar excursion, but with one essential difference. Le Jeune's companions were heathen, who persecuted him day and night with their gibes and sarcasms. Those of

Druilletes were all converts, who looked on him as a friend and a father. There were prayers, confessions, masses, and invocations of St. Joseph. They built their bark chapel at every camp, and no festival of the Church passed unobserved. On Good Friday they laid their best robe of beaver-skin on the snow, placed on it a crucifix, and knelt around it in prayer. What was their prayer? It was a petition for the forgiveness and the conversion of their enemies, the Iroquois. Those who know the intensity and tenacity of an Indian's hatred will see in this something more than a change from one superstition to another. An idea had been presented to the mind of the savage to which he had previously been an utter stranger. This is the most remarkable record of success in the whole body of the Jesuit *Relations*; but it is very far from being the only evidence, that, in teaching the dogmas and observances of the Roman Church, the missionaries taught also the morals of Christianity. When we look for the results of these missions, we soon become aware that the influence of the French and the Jesuits extended far beyond the circle of converts. It eventually modified and softened the manners of many unconverted tribes. In the wars of the next century we do not often find those examples of diabolic atrocity with which the earlier annals are crowded. The savage burned his enemies alive, it is true, but he rarely ate them; neither did he torment them with the same deliberation and persistency. He was a savage still, but not so often a devil. The improvement was not great, but it was distinct; and it seems to have taken place wherever Indian tribes were in close relations with any respectable community of white men. Thus Philip's war in New England, cruel as it was, was less ferocious, judging from Canadian experience, than it would have been if a generation of civilized intercourse had not worn down the sharpest asperities of barbarism. Yet it was to French priests and colonists, mingled as they were soon to be among the tribes of the vast interior, that the change is chiefly to be ascribed. In this softening of manners, such as it was, and in the obedient Catholicity of a few hundred tamed savages gathered at stationary missions in various

parts of Canada, we find, after a century had elapsed, all the results of the heroic toil of the Jesuits. The missions had failed, because the Indians had ceased to exist. Of the great tribes on whom rested the hopes of the early Canadian Fathers, nearly all were virtually extinct. The missionaries built laboriously and well, but they were doomed to build on a failing foundation. The Indians melted away, not because civilization destroyed them, but because their own ferocity and intractable indolence made it impossible that they should exist in its presence. Either the plastic energies of a higher race or the servile pliancy of a lower one would, each in its way, have preserved them: as it was, their extinction was a foregone conclusion. As for the religion which the Jesuits taught them, however Protestants may carp at it, it was the only form of Christianity likely to take root in their crude and barbarous nature.

To return to Druilletes. The smoke of the wigwam blinded him; and it is no matter of surprise to hear that he was cured by a miracle. He returned from his winter roving to Quebec in high health, and soon set forth on a new mission. On the river Kennebec, in the present State of Maine, dwelt the Abenakis, an Algonquin people, destined hereafter to become a thorn in the sides of the New England colonists. Some of them had visited their friends, the Christian Indians of Sillery. Here they became converted, went home, and preached the Faith to their countrymen,—and this to such purpose that the Abenakis sent to Quebec to ask for a missionary. Apart from the saving of souls, there were solid reasons for acceding to their request. The Abenakis were near the colonies of New England,—indeed, the Plymouth colony, under its charter, claimed jurisdiction over them; and in case of rupture they would prove serviceable friends or dangerous enemies to New France. Their messengers were favorably received; and Druilletes was ordered to proceed upon the new mission.

He left Sillery, with a party of Indians, on the twenty-ninth of August, 1646, and following, as it seems, the route by which, a hundred and twenty-nine years later, the soldiers of Arnold made their way to Quebec, he reached the waters of the Kennebec

and descended to the Abenaki villages. Here he nursed the sick, baptized the dying, and gave such instruction as, in his ignorance of the language, he was able. Apparently he had been ordered to reconnoiter; for he presently descended the river from Norridgewock to the first English trading-post, where Augusta now stands. Thence he continued his journey to the sea, and followed the coast in a canoe to the Penobscot, visiting seven or eight English posts on the way, where, to his surprise, he was very well received. At the Penobscot he found several Capuchin friars, under their Superior, Father Ignace, who welcomed him with the utmost cordiality. Returning, he again ascended the Kennebec to the English post at Augusta. At a spot three miles above, the Indians had gathered in considerable numbers; and here they built him a chapel after their fashion. He remained till midwinter, catechizing and baptizing, and waging war so successfully against the Indian sorcerers that medicine-bags were thrown away, and charms and incantations were supplanted by prayers. In January the whole troop set off on their grand hunt, Druilletes following them,—“with toil,” says the chronicler, “too great to buy the kingdoms of this world, but very small as a price for the Kingdom of Heaven.” They encamped on Moosehead Lake, where new disputes with the “medicine-men” ensued, and the Father again remained master of the field. When, after a prosperous hunt, the party returned to the English trading-house, John Winslow, the agent in charge, again received the missionary with a kindness which showed no trace of jealousy or religious prejudice.¹

Early in the summer Druilletes went to Quebec; and during the two following years, the Abenakis, for reasons which are not clear, were left without a missionary. He spent another winter of extreme hardship with the Algonquins on their winter roving, and during the summer instructed the wandering savages of Tadoussac. It was not until the autumn of 1650 that he again descended the Kennebec. This time he went as an envoy charged with the negotia-

tion of a treaty. His journey is worthy of notice, since, with the unimportant exception of Jogues's embassy to the Mohawks, it is the first occasion on which the Canadian Jesuits appear in a character distinctly political. Afterwards, when the fervor and freshness of the missions had passed away, they frequently did the work of political agents among the Indians; but the Jesuit of the earlier period was, with rare exceptions, a missionary only; and though he was expected to exert a powerful influence in gaining subjects and allies for France, he was to do so by gathering them under the wings of the Church.

The Colony of Massachusetts had applied to the French officials at Quebec, with a view to a reciprocity of trade. The Iroquois had brought Canada to extremity, and the French Governor conceived the hope of gaining the powerful support of New England by granting the desired privileges on condition of military aid. But as the Puritans would scarcely see it for their interest to provoke a dangerous enemy, who had thus far never molested them, it was resolved to urge the proposed alliance as a point of duty. The Abenakis had suffered from Mohawk inroads; and the French, assuming for the occasion that they were under the jurisdiction of the English colonies, argued that they were bound to protect them. Druilletes went in a double character,—as an envoy of the government at Quebec, and as an agent of his Abenaki flock, who had been advised to petition for English assistance. The time seemed inauspicious for a Jesuit visit to Boston; for not only had it been announced as foremost among the objects in colonizing New England “to raise a bulwark against the kingdom of Antichrist, which the Jesuits labor to rear up in all places of the world,” but, three years before, the Legislature of Massachusetts had enacted that Jesuits entering the colony should be expelled, and if they returned, hanged.

Nevertheless, on the first of September, Druilletes set forth from Quebec with a Christian chief of Sillery, crossed forests, mountains, and torrents, and reached Norridgewock, the highest Abenaki settlement on the Kennebec. Thence he descended to the English trading-house at Augusta,

¹ Winslow would scarcely have recognized his own name in the Jesuit spelling,—“*Le Sieur de Houinslaud*.” In his journal of 1650 Druilletes is more successful in his orthography, and spells it *Winslau*. (Parkman's note.)

where his fast friend, the Puritan Winslow, gave him a warm welcome, entertained him hospitably, and promised to forward the object of his mission. He went with him, at great personal inconvenience, to Merry-meeting Bay, where Druilletes embarked in an English vessel for Boston. The passage was stormy, and the wind ahead. He was forced to land at Cape Ann, or, as he calls it, *Kepane*, whence, partly on foot, partly in boats along the shore, he made his way to Boston. The three-hilled city of the Puritans lay chill and dreary under a December sky, as the priest crossed in a boat from the neighboring peninsula of Charlestown.

Winslow was agent for the merchant Edward Gibbons, a personage of note, whose life presents curious phases,—a reveler of Merry Mount, a bold sailor, a member of the church, an adventurous trader, an associate of buccaneers, a magistrate of the commonwealth, and a major-general. The Jesuit, with credentials from the Governor of Canada and letters from Winslow, met a reception widely different from that which the law enjoined against persons of his profession.¹ Gibbons welcomed him heartily, prayed him to accept no other lodging than his house while he remained in Boston, and gave him the key of a chamber, in order that he might pray after his own fashion, without fear of disturbance. An accurate Catholic writer thinks it likely that he brought with him the means of celebrating the mass. If so, the house of the Puritan was, no doubt, desecrated by that Popish abomination; but be this as it may, Massachusetts, in the person of her magistrate, became the gracious host of one of those whom, next to the Devil and an Anglican bishop, she most abhorred.

On the next day, Gibbons took his guest to Roxbury,—called *Rogsbray* by Druilletes,—to see the Governor, the harsh and narrow Dudley, grown gray in repellent virtue and grim honesty. Some half a century before, he had served in France, under Henry the Fourth; but he had forgotten his French, and called for an interpreter to explain the visitor's credentials. He

received Druilletes with courtesy, and promised to call the magistrates together on the following Tuesday to hear his proposals. They met accordingly, and Druilletes was asked to dine with them. The old Governor sat at the head of the table, and after dinner invited the guest to open the business of his embassy. They listened to him, desired him to withdraw, and, after consulting among themselves, sent for him to join them again at supper, when they made him an answer, of which the record is lost, but which evidently was not definitive.

As the Abenaki Indians were within the jurisdiction of Plymouth, Druilletes proceeded thither in his character of their agent. Here, again, he was received with courtesy and kindness. Governor Bradford invited him to dine, and, as it was Friday, considerably gave him a dinner of fish. Druilletes conceived great hope that the colony could be wrought upon to give the desired assistance; for some of the chief inhabitants had an interest in the trade with the Abenakis. He came back by land to Boston, stopping again at Roxbury on the way. It was night when he arrived; and, after the usual custom, he took lodging with the minister. Here were several young Indians, pupils of his host: for he was no other than the celebrated Eliot, who during the past summer had established his mission at Natick, and was now laboring, in the fullness of his zeal, in the work of civilization and conversion. There was great sympathy between the two missionaries; and Eliot prayed his guest to spend the winter with him.

At Salem, which Druilletes also visited, in company with the minister of Marblehead, he had an interview with the stern, but manly Endicott, who, he says, spoke French, and expressed both interest and good-will towards the objects of the expedition. As the envoy had no money left, Endicott paid his charges, and asked him to dine with the magistrates.

Druilletes was evidently struck with the thrift and vigor of these sturdy young colonies, and the strength of their population. He says that Boston, meaning Massachusetts, could alone furnish four thousand fighting men, and that the four united colonies could count forty thousand souls.

¹ In the Act, an exception, however, was made in favor of Jesuits coming as ambassadors or envoys from their government, who were declared not liable to the penalty of hanging. (Parkman's note.)

These numbers may be challenged; but, at all events, the contrast was striking with the attenuated and suffering bands of priests, nuns, and fur-traders on the St. Lawrence. About twenty-one thousand persons had come from Old to New England, with the resolve of making it their home; and though this immigration had virtually ceased, the natural increase had been great. The necessity, or the strong desire, of escaping from persecution had given the impulse to Puritan colonization; while, on the other hand, none but good Catholics, the favored class of France, were tolerated in Canada. These had no motive for exchanging the comforts of home and the smiles of Fortune for a starving wilderness and the scalping-knives of the Iroquois. The Huguenots would have emigrated in swarms; but they were rigidly forbidden. The zeal of propagandism and the fur-trade were, as we have seen, the vital forces of New France. Of her feeble population, the best part was bound to perpetual chastity; while the fur-traders and those in their service rarely brought their wives to the wilderness. The fur-trader, moreover, is always the worst of colonists; since the increase of population, by diminishing the numbers of the fur-bearing animals, is adverse to his interest. But behind all this there was in the religious ideal of the rival colonies an influence which alone would have gone far to produce the contrast in material growth.

To the mind of the Puritan, heaven was God's throne; but no less was the earth His footstool: and each in its degree and its kind had its demands on man. He held it a duty to labor and to multiply; and, building on the Old Testament quite as much as on the New, thought that a reward on earth as well as in heaven awaited those who were faithful to the law. Doubtless, such a belief is widely open to abuse, and it would be folly to pretend that it escaped abuse in New England; but there was in it an element manly, healthful, and invigorating. On the other hand, those who shaped the character and in great measure the destiny of New France had always on their lips the nothingness and the vanity of life. For them, time was nothing but a preparation for eternity, and the highest virtue consisted in a renunciation of all the cares, toils,

and interests of earth. That such a doctrine has often been joined to an intense worldliness, all history proclaims; but with this we have at present nothing to do. If all mankind acted on it in good faith, the world would sink into decrepitude. It is the monastic idea carried into the wide field of active life, and is like the error of those who, in their zeal to cultivate their higher nature, suffer the neglected body to dwindle and pine, till body and mind alike lapse into feebleness and disease.

Druilletes returned to the Abenakis, and thence to Quebec, full of hope that the object of his mission was in a fair way of accomplishment. The Governor, D'Ailleboust, who had succeeded Montmagny, called his council; and Druilletes was again dispatched to New England, together with one of the principal inhabitants of Quebec, Jean Paul Godefroy. They repaired to New Haven, and appeared before the Commissioners of the Four Colonies, then in session there; but their errand proved bootless. The Commissioners refused either to declare war or to permit volunteers to be raised in New England against the Iroquois. The Puritan, like his descendant, would not fight without a reason. The bait of free-trade with Canada failed to tempt him; and the envoys retraced their steps, with a flat, though courteous refusal.

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CHAPTER XXIV

1645-1648

THE HURON CHURCH

HOPES OF THE MISSION.—CHRISTIAN AND HEATHEN.—BODY AND SOUL.—POSITION OF PROSELYTES.—THE HURON GIRL'S VISIT TO HEAVEN.—A CRISIS.—HURON JUSTICE.—MURDER AND ATONEMENT.—HOPES AND FEARS.

How did it fare with the missions in these days of woe and terror? They had thriven beyond hope. The Hurons, in their time of trouble, had become tractable. They humbled themselves, and, in their desolation and despair, came for succor to the priests. There was a harvest of converts, not only exceeding in numbers that of all former

years, but giving in many cases undeniable proofs of sincerity and fervor. In some towns the Christians outnumbered the heathen, and in nearly all they formed a strong party. The mission of La Conception, or Ossossané, was the most successful. Here there were now a church and one or more resident Jesuits,—as also at St. Joseph, St. Ignace, St. Michel, and St. Jean Baptiste: for we have seen that the Huron towns were christened with names of saints. Each church had its bell, which was sometimes hung in a neighboring tree.¹ Every morning it rang its summons to mass; and, issuing from their dwellings of bark, the converts gathered within the sacred precinct, where the bare rude walls, fresh from the ax and saw, contrasted with the sheen of tinsel and gilding, and the hues of gay draperies and gaudy pictures. At evening they met again at prayers; and on Sunday, masses, confession, catechism, sermons, and repeating the rosary consumed the whole day.

These converts rarely took part in the burning of prisoners. On the contrary, they sometimes set their faces against the practice; and on one occasion a certain Étienne Totiri, while his heathen countrymen were tormenting a captive Iroquois at St. Ignace, boldly denounced them, and promised them an eternity of flames and demons unless they desisted. Not content with this, he addressed an exhortation to the sufferer in one of the intervals of his torture. The dying wretch demanded baptism, which Étienne took it upon himself to administer, amid the hootings of the crowd, who, as he ran with a cup of water from a neighboring house, pushed him to and fro to make him spill it, crying out, "Let him alone! Let the devils burn him after we have done!"²

In regard to these atrocious scenes, which formed the favorite Huron recreation of a summer night, the Jesuits, it must be con-

fessed, did not quite come up to the requirements of modern sensibility. They were offended at them, it is true, and prevented them when they could; but they were wholly given to the saving of souls, and held the body in scorn, as the vile source of incalculable mischief, worthy the worst inflictions that could be put upon it. What were a few hours of suffering to an eternity of bliss or woe? If the victim were heathen, these brief pangs were but the faint prelude of an undying flame; and if a Christian, they were the fiery portal of Heaven. They might, indeed, be a blessing; since, accepted in atonement for sin, they would shorten the torments of Purgatory. Yet, while schooling themselves to despise the body, and all the pain or pleasure that pertained to it, the Fathers were emphatic on one point,—it must not be eaten. In the matter of cannibalism, they were loud and vehement in invective.³

Undeniably, the Faith was making progress: yet it is not to be supposed that its path was a smooth one. The old opposition and the old calumnies were still alive and active. "It is *la prière* that kills us. Your books and your strings of beads have bewitched the country. Before you came, we were happy and prosperous. You are magicians. Your charms kill our corn, and bring sickness and the Iroquois. Echon [Brébeuf] is a traitor among us, in league with our enemies." Such discourse was still rife, openly and secretly.

³ The following curious case of conversion at the stake, gravely related by Lalemant, is worth preserving:

"An Iroquois was to be burned at a town some way off. What consolation to set forth, in the hottest summer weather, to deliver this poor victim from the hell prepared for him! The Father approaches him, and instructs him even in the midst of his torments. Forthwith the Faith finds a place in his heart. He recognizes and adores, as the author of his life, Him whose name he had never heard till the hour of his death. He receives the grace of baptism, and breathes nothing but heaven. . . . This newly made, but generous Christian, mounted on the scaffold which is the place of his torture, in the sight of a thousand spectators, who are at once his enemies, his judges, and his executioners, raises his eyes and his voice heavenward, and cries aloud, 'Sun, who art witness of my torments, hear my words! I am about to die; but after my death I shall go to dwell in heaven.'"—*Relation des Hurons*, 1641, 67.

The Sun, it will be remembered, was the god of the heathen Iroquois. The convert appealed to his old deity to rejoice with him in his happy future. (Parkman's note.)

¹ A fragment of one of these bells, found on the site of a Huron town, is preserved in the museum of Huron relics at the Laval University, Quebec. The bell was not large, but was of very elaborate workmanship. Before 1644 the Jesuits had used old copper kettles as a substitute. (Parkman's note.)

² The Hurons often resisted the baptism of their prisoners, on the ground that hell, and not heaven, was the place to which they would have them go. (Parkman's note.)

The Huron who embraced the Faith renounced thenceforth, as we have seen, the feasts, dances, and games in which was his delight, since all these savored of diabolism. And if, being in health, he could not enjoy himself, so also, being sick, he could not be cured; for his physician was a sorcerer, whose medicines were charms and incantations. If the convert was a chief, his case was far worse; since, writes Father Lalemant, "to be a chief and a Christian is to combine water and fire; for the business of the chiefs is mainly to do the Devil's bidding, preside over ceremonies of hell, and excite the young Indians to dances, feasts, and shameless indecencies."¹

It is not surprising, then, that proselytes were difficult to make, or that, being made, they often relapsed. The Jesuits complain that they had no means of controlling their converts, and coercing backsliders to stand fast; and they add, that the Iroquois, by destroying the fur-trade, had broken the principal bond between the Hurons and the French, and greatly weakened the influence of the mission.

Among the slanders devised by the heathen party against the teachers of the obnoxious doctrine was one which found wide credence, even among the converts, and produced a great effect. They gave out that a baptized Huron girl, who had lately died, and was buried in the cemetery at Sainte Marie, had returned to life, and given a deplorable account of the heaven of the French. No sooner had she entered,—such was the story,—than they seized her, chained her to a stake, and tormented her all day with inconceivable cruelty. They did the same to all the other converted Hurons; for this was the recreation of the French, and especially of the Jesuits, in their celestial abode. They baptized Indians with no other object than that they might have them to torment in heaven; to which end they were willing to meet hardships and dangers in this life, just as a war-party invades the enemy's country at great risk that it may bring home prisoners to burn. After her painful experience, an unknown

friend secretly showed the girl a path down to the earth; and she hastened thither to warn her countrymen against the wiles of the missionaries.

In the spring of 1648 the excitement of the heathen party reached a crisis. A young Frenchman, named Jacques Douart, in the service of the mission, going out at evening a short distance from the Jesuit house of Sainte Marie, was tomahawked by unknown Indians, who proved to be two brothers, instigated by the heathen chiefs. A great commotion followed, and for a few days it seemed that the adverse parties would fall to blows, at a time when the common enemy threatened to destroy them both. But sager counsels prevailed. In view of the manifest strength of the Christians, the pagans lowered their tone; and it soon became apparent that it was the part of the Jesuits to insist boldly on satisfaction for the outrage. They made no demand that the murderers should be punished or surrendered, but, with their usual good sense in such matters, conformed to Indian usage, and required that the nation at large should make atonement for the crime by presents. The number of these, their value, and the mode of delivering them were all fixed by ancient custom; and some of the converts, acting as counsel, advised the Fathers of every step it behooved them to take in a case of such importance. As this is the best illustration of Huron justice on record, it may be well to observe the method of procedure,—recollecting that the public, and not the criminal, was to pay the forfeit of the crime.

First of all, the Huron chiefs summoned the Jesuits to meet them at a grand council of the nation, when an old orator, chosen by the rest, rose and addressed Ragueneau, as chief of the French, in the following harangue. Ragueneau, who reports it, declares that he has added nothing to it, and the translation is as literal as possible.

"My Brother," began the speaker, "behold all the tribes of our league assembled!"—and he named them one by one. "We are but a handful; you are the prop and stay of this nation. A thunderbolt has fallen from the sky, and rent a chasm in the earth. We shall fall into it, if you do not support us. Take pity on us. We are here, not so much

¹ *Relation des Hurons*, 1642, 89. The indecencies alluded to were chiefly naked dances, of a superstitious character, and the mystical cure called *Andacwandet*. (Parkman's note.)

to speak as to weep over our loss and yours. Our country is but a skeleton, without flesh, veins, sinews, or arteries; and its bones hang together by a thread. This thread is broken by the blow that has fallen on the head of your nephew,¹ for whom we weep. It was a demon of hell who placed the hatchet in the murderer's hand. Was it you, Sun, whose beams shine on us, who led him to do this deed? Why did you not darken your light, that he might be stricken with horror at his crime? Were you his accomplice? No; for he walked in darkness, and did not see where he struck. He thought, this wretched murderer, that he aimed at the head of a young Frenchman; but the blow fell upon his country, and gave it a death-wound. The earth opens to receive the blood of the innocent victim, and we shall be swallowed up in the chasm; for we are all guilty. The Iroquois rejoice at his death, and celebrate it as a triumph; for they see that our weapons are turned against each other, and know well that our nation is near its end.

"Brother, take pity on this nation. You alone can restore it to life. It is for you to gather up all these scattered bones, and close this chasm that opens to engulf us. Take pity on your country. I call it yours, for you are the master of it; and we came here like criminals to receive your sentence, if you will not show us mercy. Pity those who condemn themselves and come to ask forgiveness. It is you who have given strength to the nation by dwelling with it; and if you leave us, we shall be like a wisp of straw torn from the ground to be the sport of the wind. This country is an island drifting on the waves, for the first storm to overwhelm and sink. Make it fast again to its foundation, and posterity will never forget to praise you. When we first heard of this murder, we could do nothing but weep; and we are ready to receive your orders and comply with your demands. Speak, then, and ask what satisfaction you will, for our lives and our possessions are yours; and even if we rob our children to satisfy you, we will tell them that it is not of you that they have to complain, but of him whose crime

has made us all guilty. Our anger is against him; but for you we feel nothing but love. He destroyed our lives; and you will restore them, if you will but speak and tell us what you will have us do."

Ragueneau, who remarks that this harangue is a proof that eloquence is the gift of Nature rather than of Art, made a reply, which he has not recorded, and then gave the speaker a bundle of small sticks, indicating the number of presents which he required in satisfaction for the murder. These sticks were distributed among the various tribes in the council, in order that each might contribute its share towards the indemnity. The council dissolved, and the chiefs went home, each with his allotment of sticks, to collect in his village a corresponding number of presents. There was no constraint; those gave who chose to do so; but, as all were ambitious to show their public spirit, the contributions were ample. No one thought of molesting the murderers. Their punishment was their shame at the sacrifices which the public were making in their behalf.

The presents being ready, a day was set for the ceremony of their delivery; and crowds gathered from all parts to witness it. The assembly was convened in the open air, in a field beside the mission-house of Sainte Marie; and, in the midst, the chiefs held solemn council. Towards evening, they deputed four of their number, two Christians and two heathen, to carry their address to the Father Superior. They came, loaded with presents; but these were merely preliminary. One was to open the door, another for leave to enter; and as Sainte Marie was a large house, with several interior doors, at each one of which it behooved them to repeat this formality, their stock of gifts became seriously reduced before they reached the room where Father Ragueneau awaited them. On arriving, they made him a speech, every clause of which was confirmed by a present. The first was to wipe away his tears; the second, to restore his voice, which his grief was supposed to have impaired; the third, to calm the agitation of his mind; and the fourth, to allay the just anger of his heart. These gifts consisted of wampum and the large shells of which it was made, together with other articles, worthless in any eyes but those of

¹ The usual Indian figure in such cases, and not meant to express an actual relationship,—“Uncle” for a superior, “Brother” for an equal, “Nephew” for an inferior. (Parkman’s note.)

an Indian. Nine additional presents followed: four for the four posts of the sepulcher or scaffold of the murdered man; four for the cross-pieces which connected the posts; and one for a pillow to support his head. Then came eight more, corresponding to the eight largest bones of the victim's body, and also to the eight clans of the Hurons. Ragueneau, as required by established custom, now made them a present in his turn. It consisted of three thousand beads of wampum, and was designed to soften the earth, in order that they might not be hurt when falling upon it, overpowered by his reproaches for the enormity of their crime. This closed the interview, and the deputation withdrew.

The grand ceremony took place on the next day. A kind of arena had been prepared, and here were hung the fifty presents in which the atonement essentially consisted,—the rest, amounting to as many more, being only accessory. The Jesuits had the right of examining them all, rejecting any that did not satisfy them, and demanding others in place of them. The naked crowd sat silent and attentive, while the orator in the midst delivered the fifty presents in a series of harangues, which the tired listener has not thought it necessary to preserve. Then came the minor gifts, each with its signification explained in turn by the speaker. First, as a sepulcher had been provided the day before for the dead man, it was now necessary to clothe and equip him for his journey to the next world; and to this end three presents were made. They represented a hat, a coat, a shirt, breeches,

stockings, shoes, a gun, powder, and bullets; but they were in fact something quite different, as wampum, beaver-skins, and the like. Next came several gifts to close up the wounds of the slain. Then followed three more. The first closed the chasm in the earth, which had burst through horror of the crime. The next trod the ground firm, that it might not open again; and here the whole assembly rose and danced, as custom required. The last placed a large stone over the closed gulf, to make it doubly secure.

Now came another series of presents, seven in number,—to restore the voices of all the missionaries; to invite the men in their service to forget the murder; to appease the Governor when he should hear of it; to light the fire at Sainte Marie; to open the gate; to launch the ferry-boat in which the Huron visitors crossed the river; and to give back the paddle to the boy who had charge of the boat. The Fathers, it seems, had the right of exacting two more presents, to rebuild their house and church,—supposed to have been shaken to the earth by the late calamity; but they forbore to urge the claim. Last of all were three gifts to confirm all the rest, and to entreat the Jesuits to cherish an undying love for the Hurons.

The priests on their part gave presents, as tokens of good-will; and with that the assembly dispersed. The mission had gained a triumph, and its influence was greatly strengthened. The future would have been full of hope but for the portentous cloud of war that rose, black and wrathful, from where lay the dens of the Iroquois.

EMILY DICKINSON (1830-1886)

Emily Dickinson came of a family settled in New England for some nine generations, and one of her ancestors was among the founders of the town, and the church, of Amherst, Massachusetts. There she was born, on 11 December, 1830, in the house in which she was to live, and die. She was precocious from childhood, though her marked individuality apparently asserted itself only in rather inconspicuous and minor ways until she was well advanced in life. Her education was obtained in the schools of Amherst, save that for one year (1847-1848) she attended the South Hadley Female Seminary, which, as her biographer (Martha Dickinson Bianchi, her niece) says, "was at that time a unique establishment of learning, one of whose avowed objects was to provide mates for the missionaries sent out to the foreign field." Christmas was observed as a fast-day, the girls keeping to their rooms for meditation—all, that is, save Emily in the year 1847, who was "so lost to a sense of the meaning of the day" that she rebelled and boldly went home. From the summer of 1848 she remained at home. In a few notes written in years immediately following we begin, if faintly, to see the woman who was to become a poet. "We cleaned house—Mother and Vinnie [a sister] did—and I scolded because they moved my things. I can't find much I used to wear. You will conceive I am surrounded by trial." Her shyness seems to have come with self-consciousness and to have grown progressively with her realization of differences between herself and her family and acquaintance. When she met an inexplicable situation or a person not to be reasoned with, she simply folded herself up and disappeared. She did not sacrifice herself or make terms with the world, but preserved her independence without overt conflict by retreating to an inner citadel which was her very own. And she had vitality sufficient not only to keep her freedom, but—though alone and nourished only by her reading and a few seemingly tenuous friendships—to use it, ranging through the "fine and private" world of the mind and the spirit with ecstasy and audacity. A friend said: "Physically timid at the least approach to a crisis in the day's event, her mind dared earth and heaven."

Eager for a full experience even while she instinctively feared the world and doubted of its solidier enchantments, she wanted love. In the winter of 1853-1854 she was in Washington with her father, then a member of the national Congress, and she surprised his friends by her wit and by her insight. Even while she entered into the life of the place, however, she registered a judgment against worldliness. At a dinner, when the burning plum pudding was brought in, she asked a Justice of the Supreme Court: "O Sir, may one eat of hell fire with impunity here?" From Washington she went for a visit to Philadelphia, and there she met one whom instantly she knew to be hers. At sight, apparently, both were overwhelmingly in love—but the man was married and a father—and Emily's course was inevitable for her. She fled to her own home. The man followed her, but did not win the answer she could not give. His life broken, he presently exiled himself in the farthest West, and died prematurely, still bound by his impossible love. The experience was crucial for Emily, and confirmed her in her retreat from the outer world. Henceforth she lived more and more secluded, and after her father's death in 1874 she never even left the house save, in the evenings, to water her plants, set just outside the porch in summer. Her biographer properly insists that this withdrawal had in it nothing of the mere love of singularity and was not caused simply by fruitless yearning after an impossible romance. Nevertheless, it is not surprising that Emily Dickinson became almost a legendary figure even to the inhabitants of Amherst, and that queer stories went abroad.

It was not until the winter of 1861-1862 that she wrote many poems. Then, she said, "I had a terror since September, I could tell to none; and so I sing, as the boy does of the burying ground, because I am afraid." Attracted by an article of his, she wrote to T. W. Higginson to ask if her verses were alive, and he became her master and friend through the remainder of her days, constantly aiding her by his sympathy, understanding, and encouragement, even though he never succeeded in making her change anything she wrote. Once, when he complained of chaotic expression, she replied: "I had no monarch in my life, and cannot rule myself; and when I try to organize, my little force explodes and leaves me bare and charred." In answer to his inquiry she said that she read Keats and the Brownings, Ruskin, Sir Thomas Browne, and the Book of Revelation. She read, too, Shakespeare, the Brontës, George Eliot, Emerson, and others. But the secret of her poetry lies not in her reading. However that may have helped to open her eyes, her poetry sprang from her quick and direct

perceptions and her unscared, deep-delving thought and her precious faculty of compressed utterance. It has faults which any one may see, but excellencies which few achieve, and, though its place in American literature may be small, it has exercised a remarkable influence upon some very recent writers.

Emily Dickinson died on 16 May, 1886. Apparently only one of her poems was published during her life-time, and that one anonymously and against her wish, by a well-meaning friend who did not understand her aversion from publicity. In 1890 appeared a volume entitled *Poems*, which was followed in 1892 and 1896 by a second and a third series of selections from her verse left in manuscript at her death. In 1914 was published a fourth volume, entitled *The Single Hound*, and finally in 1924 her *Complete Poems*.

THIS IS MY LETTER ¹

THIS is my letter to the world,
That never wrote to me,—
The simple news that Nature told,
With tender majesty.

Her message is committed
To hands I cannot see;
For love of her, sweet countrymen,
Judge tenderly of me!

I'M NOBODY

I'm nobody! Who are you?
Are you nobody, too?
Then there's a pair of us—don't tell!
They'd banish us, you know.

How dreary to be somebody!
How public, like a frog
To tell your name the livelong day
To an admiring bog!

I MEANT TO HAVE BUT
MODEST NEEDS

I MEANT to have but modest needs,
Such as content, and heaven;
Within my income these could lie,
And life and I keep even.

But since the last included both,
It would suffice my prayer
But just for one to stipulate,
And grace would grant the pair.

And so, upon this wise I prayed,—
Great Spirit, give to me
A heaven not so large as yours,
But large enough for me.

10

¹ This and the following poems by Emily Dickinson (reprinted from her *Complete Poems*, 1924) are copyrighted by, and are used with the permission of, Messrs. Little, Brown, and Company.

A smile suffused Jehovah's face;
The cherubim withdrew;
Grave saints stole out to look at me,
And showed their dimples, too.

I left the place with all my might,—
My prayer away I threw;
The quiet ages picked it up,
And Judgment twinkled, too,

20

That one so honest be extant
As take the tale for true
That "Whatsoever you shall ask,
Itself be given you."

But I, grown shrewder, scan the skies
With a suspicious air,—
As children, swindled for the first,
All swindlers be, infer.

I LIKE TO SEE IT LAP THE
MILES

I LIKE to see it lap the miles,
And lick the valleys up,
And stop to feed itself at tanks;
And then, prodigious, step

Around a pile of mountains,
And, supercilious, peer
In shanties by the sides of roads;
And then a quarry pare

To fit its sides, and crawl between,
Complaining all the while
In horrid, hooting stanza;
Then chase itself down hill

10

And neigh like Boanerges;
Then, punctual as a star,
Stop—docile and omnipotent—
At its own stable door.

HE PREACHED

HE preached upon "breadth" till it argued
him narrow,—

The broad are too broad to define;
And of "truth" until it proclaimed him a
liar,—

The truth never flaunted a sign.

Simplicity fled from his counterfeit presence
As gold the pyrites would shun.

What confusion would cover the innocent
Jesus

To meet so enabled a man!

THERE IS NO FRIGATE LIKE
A BOOK

THERE is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away,
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing poetry.

This traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of toll;
How frugal is the chariot
That bears a human soul!

IT DROPPED SO LOW IN MY
REGARD

IT dropped so low in my regard
I heard it hit the ground,
And go to pieces on the stones
At bottom of my mind;

Yet blamed the fate that fractured, less
Than I reviled myself
For entertaining plated wares
Upon my silver shelf.

THE BONE THAT HAS NO
MARROW

THE bone that has no marrow;
What ultimate for that?
It is not fit for table,
For beggar, or for cat.

A bone has obligations,
A being has the same;
A marrowless assembly
Is culpabler than shame.

But how shall finished creatures
A function fresh obtain?—
Old Nicodemus' phantom
Confronting us again!

10

DOUBT ME, MY DIM
COMPANION

DOUBT me, my dim companion!
Why, God would be content
With but a fraction of the love
Poured thee without a stint.
The whole of me, forever,
What more the woman can,—
Say quick, that I may dower thee
With last delight I own!

It cannot be my spirit,
For that was thine before;
I ceded all of dust I knew,—
What opulence the more
Had I, a humble maiden,
Whose farthest of degree
Was that she might
Some distant heaven,
Dwell timidly with thee!

10

IF YOU WERE COMING IN
THE FALL

IF you were coming in the fall,
I'd brush the summer by
With half a smile and half a spurn,
As housewives do a fly.

If I could see you in a year,
I'd wind the months in balls,
And put them each in separate drawers,
Until their time befalls.

If only centuries delayed,
I'd count them on my hand,
Subtracting till my fingers dropped
Into Van Diemen's land.

10

If certain, when this life was out,
That yours and mine should be,
I'd toss it yonder like a rind,
And taste eternity.

But now, all ignorant of the length
Of time's uncertain wing,
It goads me, like the goblin bee,
That will not state its sting.

20

SHE ROSE TO HIS
REQUIREMENT

SHE rose to his requirement, dropped
The playthings of her life
To take the honorable work
Of woman and of wife.

If aught she missed in her new day
Of amplitude, or awe,
Or first prospective, or the gold
In using wore away,

It lay unmentioned, as the sea
Develops pearl and weed,
But only to himself is known
The fathoms they abide.

10

OF ALL THE SOULS THAT
STAND CREATE

Of all the souls that stand create
I have elected one.
When sense from spirit files away,
And subterfuge is done;

When that which is and that which was
Apart, intrinsic, stand,
And this brief tragedy of flesh
Is shifted like a sand;

When figures show their royal front
And mists are carved away,—
Behold the atom I preferred
To all the lists of clay!

10

I LIKE A LOOK OF AGONY

I LIKE a look of agony,
Because I know it's true;
Men do not sham convulsion,
Nor simulate a throe.

The eyes glaze once, and that is death.
Impossible to feign
The beads upon the forehead
By homely anguish strung.

I'VE SEEN A DYING EYE

I'VE seen a dying eye
Run round and round a room
In search of something, as it seemed,
Then cloudier become;
And then, obscure with fog,
And then be soldered down,
Without disclosing what it be,
'T were blessed to have seen.

THE BUSTLE IN A HOUSE

THE bustle in a house
The morning after death
Is solemnest of industries
Enacted upon earth,—

The sweeping up the heart,
And putting love away
We shall not want to use again
Until eternity.

BRET HARTE (1836-1902)

Francis Brett Hart (to give him his name in its earliest form) was born at Albany, New York, on 25 August, 1836. His father was an accomplished scholar, but he never was materially successful in life, and he died in 1845. Harte's boyhood and youth were passed in a number of Eastern cities, chiefly Brooklyn and New York. He was precocious, quiet, studious, sensitive, and delicate in health. He was reading Froissart and Shakespeare at the age of six, and Dickens's *Dombey and Son* a year later, and shortly afterwards such writers as Cervantes, Fielding, and Washington Irving. He astonished his mother, a competent judge, by the ease with which he learned to read Greek. He left school when thirteen to enter a lawyer's office, was later employed by a merchant, and was self-supporting before he was sixteen. In 1854 he and his sister Margaret journeyed to California, following their mother, who had preceded them by several months and had married a Colonel Andrew Williams, with whom she was living in Oakland. The story of Harte's life in California is not fully known and, where facts are established, there still remain unanswered questions concerning his feelings and inner development. It seems probable, however, that he did not take kindly to his new surroundings. He had literary ambitions but was apparently further from any opportunity or hope of gratifying them than when he had been in the East. For several years he drifted from one employment to another; he was a tutor, a school-teacher, a drug-clerk, an express messenger, a typesetter, and possibly a miner. But in 1857 his sister obtained for him a position as typesetter for the *Golden Era* of San Francisco, and he soon became a contributor to this periodical and was promoted to its editorial room. In 1862 he married Anna Griswold, of New York. In 1864 he was made Secretary of the California Mint, an office which was almost a sinecure and which scarcely interfered with either his editorial or his creative work. He is said to have lived during these years a quiet and studious life, and certainly it was one which was very productive. In 1868, when the *Overland Monthly* was established, with the hope that it would become the *Atlantic Monthly* of the West, Harte was chosen its editor. In its second number he published *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, in 1869 *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, and in 1870 *Plain Language from Truthful James, or the Heathen Chinnee*, and these three pieces suddenly made him extraordinarily famous from one end of the United States to the other. He had begun his literary work as a follower of Irving, and had seen in the Spanish civilization of California an opportunity to do for that region what Irving had done for New York and its vicinity. But now the great vogue of Dickens in America apparently suggested to him the trick of combining California "local color" with caricature and paradox, and thus it was his happy fortune to create a new kind of American literature for which the whole country seemed to be waiting. He was the creator of the modern American short-story. To signalize his sudden eminence he was made Professor of recent literature in the University of California and, far more important, he was offered \$10,000 to write exclusively during the coming year for the *Atlantic Monthly*. At once, in 1871, he made a triumphal progress to the East, joyfully leaving California for ever. He had, perhaps, never been happy there, but latterly his unhappiness had been augmented by resentment against Californians who, he thought, had done all in their power to hinder his success and to belittle his achievements. He felt that now he was going where he was properly appreciated. The feeling probably was short-lived, but he was not, at any rate, tempted to return to the West. Somehow during his first year in the East he accumulated many debts, and at its close was hard pressed for funds. Then began a struggle for money which apparently lasted without intermission until his death. For several years he made not very successful attempts to add to his income by lecturing. Finally in 1878 he managed by his own efforts to secure an appointment as Consul to Crefeld, in Germany. He went abroad without his family, and never returned to America, nor did he ever again live with his wife or children. A few years before his death his wife came to England, but there was no change in the nature of their relations with each other, as far as is known. The reason for their separation has never been divulged, and it would appear from Harte's recently published *Letters* that it was curiously never recognized as an actual separation by either of them. They kept up a correspondence until Harte's death, in which there was frequent discussion of visits, which was, however, in the end, if not at first, a palpable pretense; though Harte continued to support her and their children, generally sending her \$3,000 the year. In 1880 he was transferred to the consulate at Glasgow, Scotland, and he held this post until 1885, when he was removed, probably for

political reasons, though he was charged with neglect of duty. He felt by now something of the resentment against all America which he had formerly felt against California. In addition, he had made friends in England, and he also felt that he could make a better income from literary work by remaining there than he could if he returned to the United States. Accordingly he remained abroad, living chiefly in London until his death on 5 May, 1902.

"Harte was a conscious artist, a workman who had served a careful apprenticeship. His stories are models of condensation, his characters are as distinct and as striking as are those of Dickens, his climaxes are dramatic, and his closing effect is always impressively theatric. Sentiment he used with a free hand, but he kept it more within control than did the creator of *Little Nell*. Fiction with him, as with Poe, was a deliberate thing, to be written with the reader always in mind. His unit necessarily was short. He had no power to trace the growth of a soul or to record the steps of an evolution." (F. L. Pattee, *Camb. Hist. Am. Lit.*, II.) Harte's biographer (H. C. Merwin) has said: "There was a want of background, both intellectual and moral, in his nature. He was an observer, not a thinker, and his genius was shown only as he lived in the life of others. Even his poetry is dramatic, not lyric. It was very seldom that Bret Harte, in his tales or elsewhere, advanced any abstract sentiment or idea; he was concerned wholly with the concrete; and it is noticeable that when he does venture to lay down a general principle, it fails to bear the impress of real conviction. The note of sincerity is wanting."

MLISS¹

CHAPTER I

JUST where the Sierra Nevada begins to subside in gentler undulations, and the rivers grow less rapid and yellow, on the side of a great red mountain, stands "Smith's Pocket." Seen from the red road at sunset, in the red light and the red dust, its white houses look like the outcroppings of quartz on the mountain-side. The red stage topped with red-shirted passengers is lost to view half a dozen times in the tortuous descent, turning up unexpectedly in out-of-the-way places, and vanishing altogether within a hundred yards of the town. It is probably owing to this sudden twist in the road that the advent of a stranger at Smith's Pocket is usually attended with a peculiar circum-

stance. Dismounting from the vehicle at the stage-office, the too confident traveler is apt to walk straight out of town under the impression that it lies in quite another direction. It is related that one of the tunnel-men, two miles from town, met one of these self-reliant passengers with a carpet-bag, umbrella, *Harper's Magazine*, and other evidences of "civilization and refinement," plodding along over the road he had just ridden, vainly endeavoring to find the settlement of Smith's Pocket.

An observant traveler might have found some compensation for his disappointment in the weird aspect of that vicinity. There were huge fissures on the hillside, and displacements of the red soil, resembling more the chaos of some primary elemental upheaval than the work of man; while, halfway down, a long flume straddled its narrow body and disproportionate legs over the chasm, like an enormous fossil of some forgotten antediluvian. At every step smaller ditches crossed the road, hiding in their sallow depths unlovely streams that crept away to a clandestine union with the great yellow torrent below, and here and there were the ruins of some cabin, with the chimney alone left intact and the hearthstone open to the skies.

The settlement of Smith's Pocket owed its origin to the finding of a "pocket" on its site by a veritable Smith. Five thousand dollars were taken out of it in one half-hour by Smith. Three thousand dollars were expended by Smith and others in erecting a flume and in tunneling. And then Smith's

¹ Written, according to Harte's own statement (*Letters*, p. 23) in 1860 for the *San Francisco Golden Era*. It was published in *The Luck of Roaring Camp and Other Sketches* in 1870, and separately in 1873. "Harte's first story with other than a legendary theme was *Mliss*. . . . For the student of his literary art it is the most important of all his writings, especially important because of the revision which he made of it later after he had evolved his final manner. It is transition work. The backgrounds are traced in with Irving-like care; the character of the schoolmaster is done with artistic restraint and certainty of touch. *Mliss* is exquisitely handled. There is nothing better in all his work. . . . But even in the earlier version of the story there are false notes. . . . The author is thinking of the effect he hopes to produce. He must fill his reader with wonder." (F. L. Pattee, *History of American Literature since 1870*.)

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Pocket was found to be only a pocket, and subject, like other pockets, to depletion. Although Smith pierced the bowels of the great red mountain, that five thousand dollars was the first and last return of his labor. The mountain grew reticent of its golden secrets, and the flume steadily ebbbed away the remainder of Smith's fortune. Then Smith went into quartz-mining; then into quartz-milling; then into hydraulics and ditching, and then by easy degrees into saloon-keeping. Presently it was whispered that Smith was drinking a great deal; then it was known that Smith was a habitual drunkard; and then people began to think, as they are apt to, that he had never been anything else. But the settlement of Smith's Pocket, like that of most discoveries, was happily not dependent on the fortune of its pioneer, and other parties projected tunnels and found pockets. So Smith's Pocket became a settlement, with its two fancy stores, its two hotels, its one express-office, and its two first families. Occasionally its one long straggling street was overawed by the assumption of the latest San Francisco fashions, imported per express, exclusively to the first families; making outraged Nature, in the ragged outline of her furrowed surface, look still more homely, and putting personal insult on that greater portion of the population to whom the Sabbath, with a change of linen, brought merely the necessity of cleanliness, without the luxury of adornment. Then there was a Methodist Church, and hard by a Monte Bank, and a little beyond, on the mountain-side, a graveyard, and then a little schoolhouse.

"The Master," as he was known to his little flock, sat alone one night in the schoolhouse, with some open copy-books before him, carefully making those bold and full characters which are supposed to combine the extremes of chirographical and moral excellence, and had got as far as "Riches are deceitful," and was elaborating the noun with an insincerity of flourish that was quite in the spirit of his text, when he heard a gentle tapping. The woodpeckers had been busy about the roof during the day, and the noise did not disturb his work. But the opening of the door, and the tapping continuing from the inside, caused him to look up. He was slightly startled by the figure

of a young girl, dirty and shabbily clad. Still, her great black eyes, her coarse, uncombed, lusterless black hair falling over her sunburned face, her red arms and feet streaked with the red soil, were all familiar to him. It was Melissa Smith,—Smith's motherless child.

"What can she want here?" thought the master. Everybody knew "Mliss," as she was called, throughout the length and height of Red Mountain. Everybody knew her as an incorrigible girl. Her fierce, ungovernable disposition, her mad freaks and lawless character, were in their way as proverbial as the story of her father's weaknesses, and as philosophically accepted by the townsfolk. She wrangled with and fought the schoolboys with keener invective and quite as powerful arm. She followed the trails with a woodman's craft, and the master had met her before, miles away, shoeless, stockingless, and bareheaded on the mountain road. The miners' camps along the stream supplied her with subsistence, during these voluntary pilgrimages, in freely offered alms. Not but that a larger protection had been previously extended to Mliss. The Rev. Joshua McSnagley, "stated" preacher, had placed her in the hotel as servant, by way of preliminary refinement, and had introduced her to his scholars at Sunday-school. But she threw plates occasionally at the landlord, and quickly retorted to the cheap witticisms of the guests, and created in the Sabbath-school a sensation that was so inimical to the orthodox dullness and placidity of that institution that, with a decent regard for the starched frocks and unblemished morals of the two pink-and-white-faced children of the first families, the reverend gentleman had her ignominiously expelled. Such were the antecedents and such the character of Mliss as she stood before the master. It was shown in the ragged dress, the unkempt hair, and bleeding feet, and asked his pity. It flashed from her black, fearless eyes, and commanded his respect.

"I come here to-night," she said rapidly and boldly, keeping her hard glance on his, "because I knew you was alone. I wouldn't come here when them gals was here. I hate 'em, and they hates me. That's why. You keep school, don't you? I want to be teached!"

If to the shabbiness of her apparel and uncomeliness of her tangled hair and dirty face she had added the humility of tears the master would have extended to her the usual moiety of pity, and nothing more. But with the natural, though illogical, instincts of his species, her boldness awakened in him something of that respect which all original natures pay unconsciously to one another in any grade. And he gazed at her the more fixedly as she went on, still rapidly, her hand on that door-latch and her eyes on his:—

“My name’s Mliss,—Mliss Smith! You can bet your life on that. My father’s Old Smith,—Old Bummer Smith,—that’s what’s the matter with him. Mliss Smith,—and I’m coming to school!”

“Well?” said the master.

Accustomed to be thwarted and opposed, often wantonly and cruelly, for no other purpose than to excite the violent impulses of her nature, the master’s phlegm evidently took her by surprise. She stopped; she began to twist a lock of her hair between her fingers; and the rigid line of upper lip, drawn over the wicked little teeth, relaxed and quivered slightly. Then her eyes dropped, and something like a blush struggled up to her cheek, and tried to assert itself through the splashes of redder soil and the sunburn of years. Suddenly she threw herself forward, calling on God to strike her dead, and fell quite weak and helpless, with her face on the master’s desk, crying and sobbing as if her heart would break.

The master lifted her gently, and waited for the paroxysm to pass. When, with face still averted, she was repeating between her sobs the *mea culpa* of childish penitence,—that “she’d be good, she didn’t mean to,” *etc.*,—it came to him to ask her why she had left Sabbath-school.

Why had she left the Sabbath-school?—why? Oh, yes! What did he (McSnagley) want to tell her she was wicked for? What did he tell her that God hated her for? If God hated her, what did she want to go to Sabbath-school for? *She* didn’t want to be “beholden” to anybody who hated her.

Had she told McSnagley this?

Yes, she had.

The master laughed. It was a hearty laugh, and echoed so oddly in the little

schoolhouse, and seemed so inconsistent and discordant with the sighing of the pines without, that he shortly corrected himself with a sigh. The sigh was quite as sincere in its way, however, and after a moment of serious silence he asked about her father.

Her father? What father? Whose father? What had he ever done for her? Why did the girls hate her? Come now! what made the folks say “Old Bummer Smith’s Mliss!” when she passed? Yes; oh, yes! She wished he was dead,—she was dead,—everybody was dead; and her sobs broke forth anew.

The master then, leaning over her, told her as well as he could what you or I might have said after hearing such unnatural theories from childish lips; only bearing in mind perhaps better than you or I the unnatural facts of her ragged dress, her bleeding feet, and the omnipresent shadow of her drunken father. Then raising her to her feet, he wrapped his shawl around her, and, bidding her come early in the morning, he walked with her down the road. There he bade her “good-night.” The moon shone brightly on the narrow path before them. He stood and watched the bent little figure as it staggered down the road, and waited until it had passed the little graveyard and reached the curve of the hill, where it turned and stood for a moment, a mere atom of suffering, outlined against the far-off patient stars. Then he went back to his work. But the lines of the copy-book thereafter faded into long parallels of never-ending road, over which childish figures seemed to pass sobbing and crying into the night. Then, the little schoolhouse seeming lonelier than before, he shut the door and went home.

The next morning Mliss came to school. Her face had been washed, and her coarse black hair bore evidence of recent struggles with the comb, in which both had evidently suffered. The old defiant look shone occasionally in her eyes, but her manner was tamer and more subdued. Then began a series of little trials and self-sacrifices, in which master and pupil bore an equal part, and which increased the confidence and sympathy between them. Although obedient under the master’s eye, at times during recess, if thwarted or stung by a fancied slight, Mliss would rage in ungovernable fury; and many a palpitating young savage, finding

himself matched with his own weapons of torment, would seek the master with torn jacket and scratched face, and complaints of the dreadful Mliss. There was a serious division among the townspeople on the subject: some threatening to withdraw their children from such evil companionship, and others as warmly upholding the course of the master in his work of reclamation. Meanwhile, with a steady persistence that seemed quite astonishing to him on looking back afterward, the master drew Mliss gradually out of the shadow of her past life, as though it were but her natural progress down the narrow path on which he had set her feet the moonlit night of their first meeting. Remembering the experience of the evangelical McSnagley, he carefully avoided that Rock of Ages on which that unskillful pilot had shipwrecked her young faith. But if, in the course of her reading, she chanced to stumble upon those few words which have lifted such as she above the level of the older, the wiser, and the more prudent,—if she learned something of a faith that is symbolized by suffering, and the old light softened in her eyes,—it did not take the shape of a lesson. A few of the plainer people had made up a little sum by which the ragged Mliss was enabled to assume the garments of respect and civilization; and often a rough shake of the hand and words of homely commendation from a red-shirted and burly figure sent a glow to the cheek of the young master, and set him to thinking if it was altogether deserved.

Three months had passed from the time of their first meeting, and the master was sitting late one evening over the moral and sententious copies, when there came a tap at the door, and again Mliss stood before him. She was neatly clad and clean-faced, and there was nothing, perhaps, but the long black hair and bright black eyes to remind him of his former apparition. "Are you busy?" she asked. "Can you come with me?"—and on his signifying his readiness, in her old willful way she said, "Come, then, quick!"

They passed out of the door together and into the dark road. As they entered the town the master asked her whither she was going. She replied, "To see my father."

It was the first time he had heard her call

him by that filial title, or indeed anything more than "Old Smith" or the "Old man." It was the first time in three months that she had spoken of him at all, and the master knew she had kept resolutely aloof from him since her great change. Satisfied from her manner that it was fruitless to question her purpose, he passively followed. In out-of-the-way places, low grogeries, restaurants, and saloons; in gambling-hells and dance-houses, the master, preceded by Mliss, came and went. In the reeking smoke and blasphemous outcries of low dens, the child, holding the master's hand, stood and anxiously gazed, seemingly unconscious of all in the one absorbing nature of her pursuit. Some of the revelers, recognizing Mliss, called to the child to sing and dance for them, and would have forced liquor upon her but for the interference of the master. Others, recognizing him, mutely made way for them to pass. So an hour slipped by. Then the child whispered in his ear that there was a cabin on the other side of the creek crossed by the long flume, where she thought he still might be. Thither they crossed,—a toilsome half-hour's walk,—but in vain. They were returning by the ditch at the abutment of the flume, gazing at the lights of the town on the opposite bank, when suddenly, sharply, a quick report rang out on the clear night air. The echoes caught it, and carried it round and round Red Mountain, and set the dogs to barking all along the streams. Lights seemed to dance and move quickly on the outskirts of the town for a few moments, the stream rippled quite audibly beside them, a few stones loosened themselves from the hillside and splashed into the stream, a heavy wind seemed to surge the branches of the funereal pines, and then the silence seemed to fall thicker, heavier, and deadlier. The master turned towards Mliss with an unconscious gesture of protection, but the child had gone. Oppressed by a strange fear, he ran quickly down the trail to the river's bed, and, jumping from boulder to boulder, reached the base of Red Mountain and the outskirts of the village. Midway of the crossing he looked up and held his breath in awe. For high above him on the narrow flume he saw the fluttering little figure of his late companion crossing swiftly in the darkness.

He climbed the bank, and, guided by a few lights moving about a central point on the mountain, soon found himself breathless among a crowd of awe-stricken and sorrowful men.

Out from among them the child appeared, and, taking the master's hand, led him silently before what seemed a ragged hole in the mountain. Her face was quite white, but her excited manner gone, and her look that of one to whom some long-expected event had at last happened,—an expression that to the master in his bewilderment seemed almost like relief. The walls of the cavern were partly propped by decaying timbers. The child pointed to what appeared to be some ragged, cast-off clothes left in the hole by the late occupant. The master approached nearer with his flaming dip, and bent over them. It was Smith, already cold, with a pistol in his hand and a bullet in his heart, lying beside his empty pocket.

CHAPTER II

THE opinion which McSnagley expressed in reference to a "change of heart" supposed to be experienced by Mliss was more forcibly described in the gulches and tunnels. It was thought there that Mliss had "struck a good lead." So when there was a new grave added to the little enclosure, and at the expense of the master a little board and inscription put above it, the *Red Mountain Banner* came out quite handsomely, and did the fair thing to the memory of one of "our oldest pioneers," alluding gracefully to that "bane of noble intellects," and otherwise genteelly shelving our dear brother with the past. "He leaves an only child to mourn his loss," says the *Banner*, "who is now an exemplary scholar, thanks to the efforts of the Rev. Mr. McSnagley." The Rev. McSnagley, in fact, made a strong point of Mliss's conversion, and, indirectly attributing to the unfortunate child the suicide of her father, made affecting allusions in Sunday-school to the beneficial effects of the "silent tomb," and in this cheerful contemplation drove most of the children into speechless horror, and caused the pink-and-white scions of the first families to howl dismally and refuse to be comforted.

The long dry summer came. As each

fierce day burned itself out in little whiffs of pearl-gray smoke on the mountain summits, and the upspringing breeze scattered its red embers over the landscape, the green wave which in early spring upheaved above Smith's grave grew sere and dry and hard. In those days the master, strolling in the little churchyard of a Sabbath afternoon, was sometimes surprised to find a few wild-flowers plucked from the damp pine-forests scattered there, and oftener rude wreaths hung upon the little pine cross. Most of these wreaths were formed of a sweet-scented grass, which the children loved to keep in their desks, intertwined with the plumes of the buckeye, the syringa, and the wood-anemone; and here and there the master noticed the dark blue cowl of the monk's-hood, or deadly aconite. There was something in the odd association of this noxious plant with these memorials which occasioned a painful sensation to the master deeper than his æsthetic sense. One day, during a long walk, in crossing a wooded ridge he came upon Mliss in the heart of the forest, perched upon a prostrate pine, on a fantastic throne formed by the hanging plumes of lifeless branches, her lap full of grasses and pine-burs, and crooning to herself one of the negro melodies of her younger life. Recognizing him at a distance, she made room for him on her elevated throne, and, with a grave assumption of hospitality and patronage that would have been ridiculous had it not been so terribly earnest, she fed him with pine-nuts and crab-apples. The master took that opportunity to point out to her the noxious and deadly qualities of the monk's-hood, whose dark blossoms he saw in her lap, and extorted from her a promise not to meddle with it as long as she remained his pupil. This done,—as the master had tested her integrity before,—he rested satisfied, and the strange feeling which had overcome him on seeing them died away.

Of the homes that were offered Mliss when her conversion became known, the master preferred that of Mrs. Morpher, a womanly and kind-hearted specimen of Southwestern efflorescence, known in her maidenhood as the "Per-rairie Rose." Being one of those who contend resolutely against their own natures, Mrs. Morpher, by a long series of self-sacrifices and struggles, had at last subjugated her naturally careless disposition

to principles of "order," which she considered, in common with Mr. Pope, as "Heaven's first law." But she could not entirely govern the orbits of her satellites, however regular her own movements, and even her own "Jeemes" sometimes collided with her. Again her old nature asserted itself in her children. Lycurgus dipped into the cupboard "between meals," and Aristides came home from school without shoes, leaving those important articles on the threshold, for the delight of a barefooted walk down the ditches. Octavia and Cassandra were "keerless" of their clothes. So with but one exception, however much the "Prairie Rose" might have trimmed and pruned and trained her own matured luxuriance, the little shoots came up defiantly wild and straggling. That one exception was Clytemnestra Morpher, aged fifteen. She was the realization of her mother's immaculate conception,—neat, orderly, and dull.

It was an amiable weakness of Mrs. Morpher to imagine that "Clytie" was a consolation and model for Mliss. Following this fallacy, Mrs. Morpher threw Clytie at the head of Mliss when she was "bad," and set her up before the child for adoration in her penitential moments. It was not, therefore, surprising to the master to hear that Clytie was coming to school, obviously as a favor to the master and as an example for Mliss and others. For "Clytie" was quite a young lady. Inheriting her mother's physical peculiarities, and in obedience to the climatic laws of the Red Mountain region, she was an early bloomer. The youth of Smith's Pocket, to whom this kind of flower was rare, sighed for her in April and languished in May. Enamored swains haunted the schoolhouse at the hour of dismissal. A few were jealous of the master.

Perhaps it was this latter circumstance that opened the master's eyes to another. He could not help noticing that Clytie was romantic; that in school she required a great deal of attention; that her pens were uniformly bad and wanted fixing; that she usually accompanied the request with a certain expectation in her eye that was somewhat disproportionate to the quality of service she verbally required; that she sometimes allowed the curves of a round, plump white

arm to rest on his when he was writing her copies; that she always blushed and flung back her blonde curls when she did so. I don't remember whether I have stated that the master was a young man,—it's of little consequence, however; he had been severely educated in the school in which Clytie was taking her first lesson, and, on the whole, withstood the flexible curves and factitious glance like the fine young Spartan that he was. Perhaps an insufficient quality of food may have tended to this asceticism. He generally avoided Clytie; but one evening, when she returned to the schoolhouse after something she had forgotten, and did not find it until the master walked home with her, I hear that he endeavored to make himself particularly agreeable,—partly from the fact, I imagine, that his conduct was adding gall and bitterness to the already overcharged hearts of Clytemnestra's admirers.

The morning after this affecting episode Mliss did not come to school. Noon came, but not Mliss. Questioning Clytie on the subject, it appeared that they had left the school together, but the willful Mliss had taken another road. The afternoon brought her not. In the evening he called on Mrs. Morpher, whose motherly heart was really alarmed. Mr. Morpher had spent all day in search of her, without discovering a trace that might lead to her discovery. Aristides was summoned as a probable accomplice, but that equitable infant succeeded in impressing the household with his innocence. Mrs. Morpher entertained a vivid impression that the child would yet be found drowned in a ditch, or, what was almost as terrible, mud-died and soiled beyond the redemption of soap and water. Sick at heart, the master returned to the schoolhouse. As he lit his lamp and seated himself at his desk, he found a note lying before him addressed to himself, in Mliss's handwriting. It seemed to be written on a leaf torn from some old memorandum-book, and, to prevent sacrilegious trifling, had been sealed with six broken wafers. Opening it almost tenderly, the master read as follows:—

RESPECTED SIR,—When you read this, I am run away. Never to come back. *Never*, NEVER, NEVER. You can give my beads to Mary Jennings, and my Amerika's Pride [a highly colored

lithograph from a tobacco-box] to Sally Flanders. But don't you give anything to Clytie Morpher. Don't you dare to. Do you know what my opinion is of her: it is this, she is perfectly disgustin'. That is all and no more at present from

Yours respectfully,

MELISSA SMITH.

The master sat pondering on this strange epistle till the moon lifted its bright face above the distant hills, and illuminated the trail that led to the schoolhouse, beaten quite hard with the coming and going of little feet. Then, more satisfied in mind, he tore the missive into fragments and scattered them along the road.

At sunrise the next morning he was picking his way through the palm-like fern and thick underbrush of the pine forest, starting the hare from its form, and awakening a querulous protest from a few dissipated crows, who had evidently been making a night of it, and so came to the wooded ridge where he had once found Mliss. There he found the prostrate pine and tasseled branches, but the throne was vacant. As he drew nearer, what might have been some frightened animal started through the crackling limbs. It ran up the tossed arms of the fallen monarch, and sheltered itself in some friendly foliage. The master, reaching the old seat, found the nest still warm; looking up in the intertwining branches, he met the black eyes of the errant Mliss. They gazed at each other without speaking. She was first to break the silence.

"What do you want?" she asked curtly.

The master had decided on a course of action. "I want some crab-apples," he said humbly.

"Sha'n't have 'em! go away. Why don't you get 'em of Clytemnerestera?" (It seemed to be a relief to Mliss to express her contempt in additional syllables to that classical young woman's already long-drawn title.) "Oh, you wicked thing!"

"I am hungry, Lissy. I have eaten nothing since dinner yesterday. I am famished!" and the young man in a state of remarkable exhaustion leaned against the tree.

Melissa's heart was touched. In the bitter days of her gypsy life she had known the sensation he so artfully simulated. Overcome by his heart-broken tone, but not entirely divested of suspicion, she said,—

"Dig under the tree near the roots, and you'll find lots; but mind you don't tell!" (for Mliss had *her* hoards as well as the rats and squirrels.)

But the master, of course, was unable to find them; the effects of hunger probably blinding his senses. Mliss grew uneasy. At length she peered at him through the leaves in an elfish way, and questioned,—

"If I come down and give you some, you'll promise you won't touch me?"

The master promised.

"Hope you'll die if you do?"

The master accepted instant dissolution as a forfeit. Mliss slid down the tree. For a few moments nothing transpired but the munching of the pine-nuts. "Do you feel better?" she asked, with some solicitude. The master confessed to a recuperated feeling, and then gravely thanking her proceeded to retrace his steps. As he expected, he had not gone far before she called him. He turned. She was standing there quite white, with tears in her widely opened orbs. The master felt that the right moment had come. Going up to her, he took both her hands, and, looking in her tearful eyes, said gravely, "Lissy, do you remember the first evening you came to see me?"

Lissy remembered.

"You asked me if you might come to school, for you wanted to learn something and be better, and I said"—

"Come," responded the child, promptly.

"What would *you* say if the master now came to you and said that he was lonely without his little scholar, and that he wanted her to come and teach him to be better?"

The child hung her head for a few moments in silence. The master waited patiently. Tempted by the quiet, a hare ran close to the couple, and, raising her bright eyes and velvet forepaws, sat and gazed at them. A squirrel ran half-way down the furrowed bark of the fallen tree, and there stopped.

"We are waiting, Lissy," said the master, in a whisper, and the child smiled. Stirred by a passing breeze, the tree-tops rocked, and a long pencil of light stole through their interlaced boughs full on the doubting face and irresolute little figure. Suddenly she took the master's hand in her quick way. What she said was scarcely audible, but the

master, putting the black hair back from her forehead, kissed her; and so, hand in hand, they passed out of the damp aisles and forest odors into the open sunlit road.

CHAPTER III

SOMEWHAT less spiteful in her intercourse with other scholars, Mliss still retained an offensive attitude in regard to Clytemnestra. Perhaps the jealous element was not entirely lulled in her passionate little breast. Perhaps it was only that the round curves and plump outline offered more extended pinching surface. But while such ebullitions were under the master's control, her enmity occasionally took a new and irrepressible form.

The master, in his first estimate of the child's character, could not conceive that she had ever possessed a doll. But the master, like many other professed readers of character, was safer in *à posteriori* than *à priori* reasoning. Mliss had a doll, but then it was emphatically Mliss's doll,—a smaller copy of herself. Its unhappy existence had been a secret discovered accidentally by Mrs. Morpher. It had been the old-time companion of Mliss's wanderings, and bore evident marks of suffering. Its original complexion was long since washed away by the weather and anointed by the slime of ditches. It looked very much as Mliss had in days past. Its one gown of faded stuff was dirty and ragged as hers had been. Mliss had never been known to apply to it any childish term of endearment. She never exhibited it in the presence of other children. It was put severely to bed in a hollow tree near the schoolhouse, and only allowed exercise during Mliss's rambles. Fulfilling a stern duty to her doll, as she would to herself, it knew no luxuries.

Now Mrs. Morpher, obeying a commendable impulse, bought another doll and gave it to Mliss. The child received it gravely and curiously. The master, on looking at it one day, fancied he saw a slight resemblance in its round red cheeks and mild blue eyes to Clytemnestra. It became evident before long that Mliss had also noticed the same resemblance. Accordingly she hammered its waxen head on the rocks when she was alone, and sometimes dragged it with a string round its neck to and from school. At other

times, setting it up on her desk, she made a pin-cushion of its patient and inoffensive body. Whether this was done in revenge of what she considered a second figurative obstruction of Clytie's excellences upon her, or whether she had an intuitive appreciation of the rites of certain other heathens, and, indulging in that "fetish" ceremony, imagined that the original of her wax model would pine away and finally die, is a metaphysical question I shall not now consider.

In spite of these moral vagaries, the master could not help noticing in her different tasks the working of a quick, restless, and vigorous perception. She knew neither the hesitancy nor the doubts of childhood. Her answers in class were always slightly dashed with audacity. Of course she was not infallible. But her courage and daring in passing beyond her own depth and that of the floundering little swimmers around her, in their minds outweighed all errors of judgment. Children are not better than grown people in this respect, I fancy; and whenever the little red hand flashed above her desk, there was a wondering silence, and even the master was sometimes oppressed with a doubt of his own experience and judgment.

Nevertheless, certain attributes which at first amused and entertained his fancy began to afflict him with grave doubts. He could not but see that Mliss was revengeful, irreverent, and willful. That there was but one better quality which pertained to her semi-savage disposition,—the faculty of physical fortitude and self-sacrifice; and another, though not always an attribute of the noble savage,—truth. Mliss was both fearless and sincere; perhaps in such a character the adjectives were synonymous.

The master had been doing some hard thinking on this subject, and had arrived at that conclusion quite common to all who think sincerely, that he was generally the slave of his own prejudices, when he determined to call on the Rev. McSnagley for advice. This decision was somewhat humiliating to his pride, as he and McSnagley were not friends. But he thought of Mliss, and the evening of their first meeting; and perhaps with a pardonable superstition that it was not chance alone that had guided her willful feet to the schoolhouse, and perhaps with a complacent consciousness of the rare

magnanimity of the act, he choked back his dislike and went to McSnagley.

The reverend gentleman was glad to see him. Moreover, he observed that the master was looking "peartish," and hoped he had got over the "neuralgy" and "rheumatiz." He himself had been troubled with a dumb "ager" since last Conference. But he had learned to "rastle and pray."

Pausing a moment to enable the master to write his certain method of curing the dumb "ager" upon the book and volume of his brain, Mr. McSnagley proceeded to inquire after Sister Morpher. "She is an adornment to Christewanity, and has a likely growin' young family," added Mr. McSnagley; "and there's that mannerly young gal,—so well behaved,—Miss Clytie." In fact, Clytie's perfections seemed to affect him to such an extent that he dwelt for several minutes upon them. The master was doubly embarrassed. In the first place, there was an enforced contrast with poor Mliss in all this praise of Clytie. Secondly, there was something unpleasantly confidential in his tone of speaking of Mrs. Morpher's earliest born. So that the master, after a few futile efforts to say something natural, found it convenient to recall another engagement, and left without asking the information required, but in his after reflections somewhat unjustly giving the Rev. Mr. McSnagley the full benefit of having refused it.

Perhaps this rebuff placed the master and pupil once more in the close communion of old. The child seemed to notice the change in the master's manner, which had of late been constrained, and in one of their long post-prandial walks she stopped suddenly, and, mounting a stump, looked full in his face with big, searching eyes. "You ain't mad?" said she, with an interrogative shake of the black braids. "No." "Nor bothered?" "No." "Nor hungry?" (Hunger was to Mliss a sickness that might attack a person at any moment.) "No." "Nor thinking of her?" "Of whom, Lissy?" "That white girl." (This was the latest epithet invented by Mliss, who was a very dark brunette, to express Clytemnestra.) "No." "Upon your word?" (A substitute for "Hope you'll die?" proposed by the master.) "Yes." "And sacred honor?" "Yes." Then Mliss gave him a fierce little

kiss, and, hopping down, fluttered off. For two or three days after that she condescended to appear more like other children, and be, as she expressed it, "good."

Two years had passed since the master's advent at Smith's Pocket, and as his salary was not large, and the prospects of Smith's Pocket eventually becoming the capital of the State not entirely definite, he contemplated a change. He had informed the school trustees privately of his intentions, but, educated young men of unblemished moral character being scarce at that time, he consented to continue his school term through the winter to early spring. None else knew of his intention except his one friend, a Dr. Duchesne, a young Creole physician, known to the people of Wingdam as "Duchesny." He never mentioned it to Mrs. Morpher, Clytie, or any of his scholars. His reticence was partly the result of a constitutional indisposition to fuss, partly a desire to be spared the questions and surmises of vulgar curiosity, and partly that he never really believed he was going to do anything before it was done.

He did not like to think of Mliss. It was a selfish instinct, perhaps, which made him try to fancy his feeling for the child was foolish, romantic, and unpractical. He even tried to imagine that she would do better under the control of an older and sterner teacher. Then she was nearly eleven, and in a few years, by the rules of Red Mountain, would be a woman. He had done his duty. After Smith's death he addressed letters to Smith's relatives, and received one answer from a sister of Melissa's mother. Thanking the master, she stated her intention of leaving the Atlantic States for California with her husband in a few months. This was a slight superstructure for the airy castle which the master pictured for Mliss's home, but it was easy to fancy that some loving, sympathetic woman, with the claims of kindred, might better guide her wayward nature. Yet, when the master had read the letter, Mliss listened to it carelessly, received it submissively, and afterwards cut figures out of it with her scissors, supposed to represent Clytemnestra, labeled "the white girl," to prevent mistakes, and impaled them upon the outer walls of the schoolhouse.

When the summer was about spent, and

the last harvest had been gathered in the valleys, the master bethought him of gathering in a few ripened shoots of the young idea, and of having his harvest-home, or examination. So the savans and professionals of Smith's Pocket were gathered to witness that time-honored custom of placing timid children in a constrained position, and bullying them as in a witness-box. As usual in such cases, the most audacious and self-possessed were the lucky recipients of the honors. The reader will imagine that in the present instance Mliss and Clytie were pre-eminent, and divided public attention: Mliss with her clearness of material perception and self-reliance, Clytie with her placid self-esteem and saint-like correctness of deportment. The other little ones were timid and blundering. Mliss's readiness and brilliancy, of course, captivated the greatest number and provoked the greatest applause. Mliss's antecedents had unconsciously awakened the strongest sympathies of a class whose athletic forms were ranged against the walls, or whose handsome bearded faces looked in at the windows. But Mliss's popularity was overthrown by an unexpected circumstance.

McSnagley had invited himself, and had been going through the pleasing entertainment of frightening the more timid pupils by the vaguest and most ambiguous questions delivered in an impressive funereal tone; and Mliss had soared into astronomy, and was tracking the course of our spotted ball through space, and keeping time with the music of the spheres, and defining the tethered orbits of the planets, when McSnagley impressively arose. "Melissy! ye were speaking of the revolutions of this yere yearth and the move-ments of the sun, and I think ye said it had been a doing of it since the creashun, eh?" Mliss nodded a scornful affirmative. "Well, war that the truth?" said McSnagley, folding his arms. "Yes," said Mliss, shutting up her little red lips tightly. The handsome outlines at the windows peered further in the schoolroom, and a saintly Raphael face, with blonde beard and soft blue eyes, belonging to the biggest scamp in the diggings, turned towards the child and whispered, "Stick to it, Mliss!" The reverend gentleman heaved a deep sigh, and cast a compassionate glance at the master, then at the children, and then rested his look

on Clytie. That young woman softly elevated her round, white arm. Its seductive curves were enhanced by a gorgeous and massive specimen bracelet, the gift of one of her humblest worshipers, worn in honor of the occasion. There was a momentary silence. Clytie's round cheeks were very pink and soft. Clytie's big eyes were very bright and blue. Clytie's low-necked white book-muslin rested softly on Clytie's white plump shoulders. Clytie looked at the master, and the master nodded. Then Clytie spoke softly:—

"Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and it obeyed him!" There was a low hum of applause in the schoolroom, a triumphant expression on McSnagley's face, a grave shadow on the master's, and a comical look of disappointment reflected from the windows. Mliss skimmed rapidly over her Astronomy, and then shut the book with a loud snap. A groan burst from McSnagley, an expression of astonishment from the schoolroom, a yell from the windows, as Mliss brought her red fist down on the desk, with the emphatic declaration,—

"It's a damn lie. I don't believe it!"

CHAPTER IV

THE long wet season had drawn near its close. Signs of spring were visible in the swelling buds and rushing torrents. The pine forests exhaled the fresher spicery. The azaleas were already budding, the ceanothus getting ready its lilac livery for spring. On the green upland which climbed Red Mountain at its southern aspect the long spike of the monk's-hood shot up from its broad-leaved stool, and once more shook its dark-blue bells. Again the billow above Smith's grave was soft and green, its crest just tossed with the foam of daisies and buttercups. The little graveyard had gathered a few new dwellers in the past year, and the mounds were placed two by two by the little paling until they reached Smith's grave, and there there was but one. General superstition had shunned it, and the plot beside Smith was vacant.

There had been several placards posted about the town, intimating that, at a certain period, a celebrated dramatic company would perform, for a few days, a series of

"side-splitting" and "screaming" farces; that, alternating pleasantly with this, there would be some melodrama and a grand divertissement, which would include singing, dancing, *etc.* These announcements occasioned a great fluttering among the little folk, and were the theme of much excitement and great speculation among the master's scholars. The master had promised Mliss, to whom this sort of thing was sacred and rare, that she should go, and on that momentous evening the master and Mliss "assisted."

The performance was the prevalent style of heavy mediocrity; the melodrama was not bad enough to laugh at nor good enough to excite. But the master, turning wearily to the child, was astonished, and felt something like self-accusation, in noticing the peculiar effect upon her excitable nature. The red blood flushed in her cheeks at each stroke of her panting little heart. Her small passionate lips were slightly parted to give vent to her hurried breath. Her widely opened lids threw up and arched her black eyebrows. She did not laugh at the dismal comicalities of the funny man, for Mliss seldom laughed. Nor was she discreetly affected to the delicate extremes of the corner of a white handkerchief, as was the tender-hearted "Clytie," who was talking with her "feller" and ogling the master at the same moment. But when the performance was over, and the green curtain fell on the little stage, Mliss drew a long, deep breath, and turned to the master's grave face with a half-apologetic smile and wearied gesture. Then she said, "Now take me home!" and dropped the lids of her black eyes, as if to dwell once more in fancy on the mimic stage.

On their way to Mrs. Morpher's the master thought proper to ridicule the whole performance. Now he shouldn't wonder if Mliss thought that the young lady who acted so beautifully was really in earnest, and in love with the gentleman who wore such fine clothes. Well, if she were in love with him it was a very unfortunate thing! "Why?" said Mliss, with an upward sweep of the drooping lid. "Oh! well, he couldn't support his wife at his present salary, and pay so much a week for his fine clothes, and then they wouldn't receive as much wages if they

were married as if they were merely lovers,—that is," added the master, "if they are not already married to somebody else; but I think the husband of the pretty young countess takes the tickets at the door, or pulls up the curtain, or snuffs the candles, or does something equally refined and elegant. As to the young man with nice clothes, which are really nice now, and must cost at least two and a half or three dollars, not to speak of that mantle of red drugget, which I happen to know the price of, for I bought some of it for my room once,—as to this young man, Lissy, he is a pretty good fellow, and if he does drink occasionally, I don't think people ought to take advantage of it, and give him black eyes and throw him in the mud. Do you? I am sure he might owe me two dollars and a half a long time before I would throw it up in his face, as the fellow did the other night at Wingdam."

Mliss had taken his hand in both of hers and was trying to look in his eyes, which the young man kept as resolutely averted. Mliss had a faint idea of irony, indulging herself sometimes in a species of sardonic humor, which was equally visible in her actions and speech. But the young man continued in this strain until they had reached Mrs. Morpher's, and he had deposited Mliss in her maternal charge. Waiving the invitation of Mrs. Morpher to refreshment and rest, and shading his eyes with his hand to keep out the blue-eyed Clytemnestra's siren glances, he excused himself, and went home.

For two or three days after the advent of the dramatic company, Mliss was late at school, and the master's usual Friday afternoon ramble was for once omitted, owing to the absence of his trustworthy guide. As he was putting away his books and preparing to leave the schoolhouse, a small voice piped at his side, "Please, sir!" The master turned, and there stood Aristides Morpher.

"Well, my little man," said the master, impatiently, "what is it?—quick!"

"Please, sir, me and 'Kerg' thinks that Mliss is going to run away agin."

"What's that, sir?" said the master, with that unjust testiness with which we always receive disagreeable news.

"Why, sir, she don't stay home any more, and 'Kerg' and me see her talking

with one of those actor fellers, and she's with him now; and please, sir, yesterday she told 'Kerg' and me she could make a speech as well as Miss Cellerstina Montmoressy, and she spouted right off by heart," and the little fellow paused in a collapsed condition.

"What actor?" asked the master.

"Him as wears the shiny hat. And hair. And gold pin. And gold chain," said the just Aristides, putting periods for commas to eke out his breath.

The master put on his gloves and hat, feeling an unpleasant tightness in his chest and thorax, and walked out in the road. Aristides trotted along by his side, endeavoring to keep pace with his short legs to the master's strides, when the master stopped suddenly, and Aristides bumped up against him. "Where were they talking?" asked the master, as if continuing the conversation.

"At the Arcade," said Aristides.

When they reached the main street the master paused. "Run down home," said he to the boy. "If Mliss is there, come to the Arcade and tell me. If she isn't there, stay home; run!" And off trotted the short-legged Aristides.

The Arcade was just across the way,—a long, rambling building containing a bar-room, billiard-room, and restaurant. As the young man crossed the plaza he noticed that two or three of the passers-by turned and looked after him. He looked at his clothes, took out his handkerchief and wiped his face before he entered the bar-room. It contained the usual number of loungers, who stared at him as he entered. One of them looked at him so fixedly and with such a strange expression that the master stopped and looked again, and then saw it was only his own reflection in a large mirror. This made the master think that perhaps he was a little excited, and so he took up a copy of the *Red Mountain Banner* from one of the tables, and tried to recover his composure by reading the column of advertisements.¹

He then walked through the bar-room, through the restaurant, and into the billiard-room. The child was not there. In the latter apartment a person was standing by one of the tables with a broad-brimmed glazed hat on his head. The master recognized him as the agent of the dramatic company; he

had taken a dislike to him at their first meeting, from the peculiar fashion of wearing his beard and hair. Satisfied that the object of his search was not there, he turned to the man with the glazed hat. He had noticed the master, but tried that common trick of unconsciousness, in which vulgar natures always fail. Balancing a billiard-cue in his hand, he pretended to play with a ball in the center of the table. The master stood opposite to him until he raised his eyes; when their glances met, the master walked up to him.

He had intended to avoid a scene or quarrel, but when he began to speak something kept rising in his throat and retarded his utterance, and his own voice frightened him, it sounded so distant, low, and resonant.

"I understand," he began, "that Melissa Smith, an orphan, and one of my scholars, has talked with you about adopting your profession. Is that so?"

The man with the glazed hat leaned over the table, and made an imaginary shot, that sent the ball spinning round the cushions. Then walking round the table he recovered the ball and placed it upon the spot. This duty discharged, getting ready for another shot, he said,—

"S'pose she has?"

The master choked up again, but, squeezing the cushion of the table in his gloved hand, he went on:—

"If you are a gentleman, I have only to tell you that I am her guardian, and responsible for her career. You know as well as I do the kind of life you offer her. As you may learn of any one here, I have already brought her out of an existence worse than death,—out of the streets and the contamination of vice. I am trying to do so again. Let us talk like men. She has neither father, mother, sister, or brother. Are you seeking to give her an equivalent for these?"

The man with the glazed hat examined the point of his cue, and then looked around for somebody to enjoy the joke with him.

"I know that she is a strange, willful girl," continued the master, "but she is better than she was. I believe that I have some influence over her still. I beg and hope, therefore, that you will take no further steps in this matter, but as a man, as a gentleman, leave her to me. I am

willing"—But here something rose again in the master's throat, and the sentence remained unfinished.

The man with the glazed hat, mistaking the master's silence, raised his head with a coarse, brutal laugh, and said in a loud voice,—

"Want her yourself, do you? That cock won't fight here, young man!"

The insult was more in the tone than the words, more in the glance than tone, and more in the man's instinctive nature than all these. The best appreciable rhetoric to this kind of animal is a blow. The master felt this, and, with his pent-up, nervous energy finding expression in the one act, he struck the brute full in his grinning face. The blow sent the glazed hat one way and the cue another, and tore the glove and skin from the master's hand from knuckle to joint. It opened up the corners of the fellow's mouth, and spoilt the peculiar shape of his beard for some time to come.

There was a shout, an imprecation, a scuffle, and the trampling of many feet. Then the crowd parted right and left, and two sharp quick reports followed each other in rapid succession. Then they closed again about his opponent, and the master was standing alone. He remembered picking bits of burning wadding from his coat-sleeve with his left hand. Some one was holding his other hand. Looking at it, he saw it was still bleeding from the blow, but his fingers were clenched around the handle of a glittering knife. He could not remember when or how he got it.

The man who was holding his hand was Mr. Morpher. He hurried the master to the door, but the master held back, and tried to tell him as well as he could with his parched throat about "Mliss." "It's all right, my boy," said Mr. Morpher. "She's home!" And they passed out into the street together. As they walked along, Mr. Morpher said that Mliss had come running into the house a few moments before, and had dragged him out, saying that somebody was trying to kill the master at the Arcade. Wishing to be alone, the master promised Mr. Morpher that he would not seek the agent again that night, and parted from him, taking the road towards the school-house. He was surprised on nearing it to

find the door open; still more surprised to find Mliss sitting there.

The master's nature, as I have hinted before, had, like most sensitive organizations, a selfish basis. The brutal taunt thrown out by his late adversary still rankled in his heart. It was possible, he thought, that such a construction might be put upon his affection for the child, which at best was foolish and Quixotic. Besides, had she not voluntarily abnegated his authority and affection? And what had everybody else said about her? Why should he alone combat the opinion of all, and be at last obliged tacitly to confess the truth of all they had predicted? And he had been a participant in a low bar-room fight with a common boor, and risked his life, to prove what? What had he proved? Nothing! What would the people say? What would his friends say? What would McSnagley say?

In his self-accusation the last person he should have wished to meet was Mliss. He entered the door, and, going up to his desk, told the child, in a few cold words, that he was busy, and wished to be alone. As she rose he took her vacant seat, and, sitting down, buried his head in his hands. When he looked up again she was still standing there. She was looking at his face with an anxious expression.

"Did you kill him?" she asked.

"No!" said the master.

"That's what I gave you the knife for!" said the child, quickly.

"Gave me the knife?" repeated the master, in bewilderment.

"Yes, gave you the knife. I was there under the bar. Saw you hit him. Saw you both fall. He dropped his old knife. I gave it to you. Why didn't you stick him?" said Mliss rapidly, with an expressive twinkle of the black eyes and a gesture of the little red hand.

The master could only look his astonishment.

"Yes," said Mliss. "If you'd asked me, I'd told you I was off with the play-actors. Why was I off with the play-actors? Because you wouldn't tell me you was going away. I knew it. I heard you tell the Doctor so. I wasn't a goin' to stay here alone with those Morphers. I'd rather die first."

With a dramatic gesture which was perfectly consistent with her character, she drew from her bosom a few limp green leaves, and, holding them out at arm's-length, said in her quick vivid way, and in the queer pronunciation of her old life, which she fell into when unduly excited,—

"That's the poison plant you said would kill me. I'll go with the play-actors, or I'll eat this and die here. I don't care which. I won't stay here, where they hate and despise me! Neither would you let me, if you didn't hate and despise me too!"

The passionate little breast heaved, and two big tears peeped over the edge of Mliss's eyelids, but she whisked them away with the corner of her apron as if they had been wasps.

"If you lock me up in jail," said Mliss fiercely, "to keep me from the play-actors, I'll poison myself. Father killed himself,

—why shouldn't I? You said a mouthful of that root would kill me, and I always carry it here," and she struck her breast with her clenched fist.

The master thought of the vacant plot beside Smith's grave, and of the passionate little figure before him. Seizing her hands in his and looking full into her truthful eyes, he said,—

"Lissy, will you go with *me*?"

The child put her arms around his neck, and said joyfully, "Yes."

"But now—to-night?"

"To-night!"

And, hand in hand, they passed into the road,—the narrow road that had once brought her weary feet to the master's door, and which it seemed she should not tread again alone. The stars glittered brightly above them. For good or ill the lesson had been learned, and behind them the school of Red Mountain closed upon them forever.

MARK TWAIN (1835-1910)

Samuel Langhorne Clemens was born in the village of Florida, Missouri, on a bank of the Salt River, on 30 November, 1835. His father, a lawyer and a storekeeper, came of a good Virginia family. His mother was a Kentuckian. The father was not a weak man, but, nevertheless, had a way of failing in all his enterprises. The family had been settled in Tennessee, where their situation had grown from bad to worse, so that in the spring of 1835 they had gone west to Missouri in the hope of bettering their fortune. It was soon evident that Florida offered no opportunity for this, and in 1839 the family moved to Hannibal, Missouri, a town on the Mississippi. Here young Clemens's boyhood and early youth were passed. How they were passed may be learned from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884) better than from any other source. The opening sentences of the latter state a fact which holds good for both of these books, and also for two volumes (*Life on the Mississippi*, 1883; *Roughing It*, 1872) dealing with immediately following periods of Clemens's life: "You don't know me without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*; but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth." Clemens's father died in 1847, and in the presence of the dead man the boy told his mother he would promise her anything if only he could stop going to school. The condition was accepted, he promised to be a better boy, and he now began to learn the printing trade in the office of the *Hannibal Courier*. He remained a printer's apprentice in Hannibal until June, 1853, when he went to New York, and worked at his trade there and in Philadelphia for about a year. Returning west, he worked as a printer in St. Louis, Keokuk, and Cincinnati until the spring of 1857, when he went to New Orleans by boat, rather vaguely intending later to go thence to South America in pursuance of a crazy scheme for making his fortune. The pilot of the boat was Horace Bixby, and by the time New Orleans was reached Clemens had undergone a revival of his boyhood ambition to become a pilot, had abandoned his design of seeking a fortune in South America, and had arranged with Bixby to learn piloting under his guidance. Thus began the period which is the theme of *Life on the Mississippi*, probably the happiest period of Clemens's life, ended by the stoppage of river traffic with the outbreak of the Civil War.

Thereupon Clemens became a Confederate soldier for a few weeks, but, his company disbanding, he went to Keokuk to visit his older brother, and there he was converted to the Union cause. This brother had just been appointed Secretary of Nevada Territory, and he in turn appointed Clemens his private secretary, and the two went west together. Clemens made some attempts at gold-mining, without any success, and after a short time drifted into employment on the *Territorial Enterprise*, a newspaper of Virginia City. It was here, in 1863, that he began to write over the pseudonym Mark Twain. It was here also, in the same year, that he met Charles F. Browne (Artemus Ward), who became his friend and who served as his model in the humorous speeches which he began to make before leaving Nevada. In 1864 he became a journalist in San Francisco, and in this year heard the story of the jumping frog. *Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog* was published in the *New York Saturday Press* in November, 1865, where it created a sensation and marked the beginning of Mark Twain's Eastern fame. In 1866, full of fear, he gave his first humorous lecture for profit in San Francisco, and achieved a complete triumph. In the following year he was in New York, where he repeated his success as a lecturer, and where he published his first book, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, and Other Sketches*. In the summer of this year he sailed, as the correspondent of the *Alta California*, a newspaper, with a group of people traveling on the steamship *Quaker City* to Europe and the Holy Land. He told the story of the journey in *The Innocents Abroad* (1869). One of his fellow-travelers was the brother of Olivia Langdon, of Elmira, New York. He saw her picture, extracted from her brother the promise of an introduction, and on 2 February, 1870, was married to her. William Dean Howells has finely said: "She was, in a way, the loveliest person I have ever seen—the gentlest, the kindest, without a touch of weakness; she united wonderful tact with wonderful truth, and Clemens not only accepted her rule implicitly, but he rejoiced, he gloried in it. . . . Marriages are what the parties to them alone really know them to be, but from the outside I should say that this marriage was one of the most perfect." Mrs. Clemens, as Howells implies, exerted a strong influence upon her husband, which was probably on the whole salutary, though there is matter for reflection

tion in this saying of one of their daughters when she was yet a small child: "The difference between papa and mamma is, that mamma loves morals and papa loves cats."

The story of Mark Twain's later life is one of great triumphs, but of continued struggles, of tragic losses of relatives, and of slowly increasing bitterness which made him envy the dead their quiet. It is all set forth in Albert Bigelow Paine's excellent biography of him, and cannot even be summarized here. He won a universal popularity which has not been paralleled by any other American writer, and which extended well-nigh around the world. When he was invited to meet the Emperor of Germany his daughter Jane, then eleven years old, observed: "Why, papa, if it keeps on like this, pretty soon there won't be anybody for you to get acquainted with but God." Rudyard Kipling expressed a conclusion which thousands, or hundreds of thousands, must then have shared, when he once wrote to Frank Doubleday, his American publisher: "I love to think of the great and godlike Clemens. He is the biggest man you have on your side of the water by a damn sight, and don't you forget it." The continued struggles of Twain's later life, to which reference has been made, arose, not from any temporary failure of his popularity as either writer or lecturer, but simply from speculative investments which uniformly turned out to be total losses and from the failure of his publishing firm. He assumed all of the firm's debts, and paid them fully after several years of hard work to that end. In this he behaved, as Howells wrote, "like Walter Scott, as millions rejoiced to know who had not known how Walter Scott had behaved till they knew it was like Clemens." He died at "Stormfield," his home at Redding, Connecticut, on 21 April, 1910.

"There are three Mark Twains: there is Mark Twain, the droll comedian, who wrote for the masses and made them laugh; there is Mark Twain, the indignant protester, who arose ever and anon to true eloquence in his denunciation of tyranny and pretense; and there is Mark Twain, the romancer, who in his boyhood had dreamed by the great river and who later caught the romance of a period in American life. The masterpiece of the first is *The Jumping Frog*, of the second *The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg*, and of the third *Life on the Mississippi* and *Roughing It*. It is this third Mark Twain that still lives and that will continue to live in American literature. As the brief and picturesque era faded away he caught the sunset glory of it and embodied it in romance—the steamboat days on the river in the slavery era, the old régime in the South, the barbarism of the Plains, the great buffalo herds, the wild camps in the gold fields of Nevada and California. . . . Nowhere else can one catch so truly certain phases of the spirit of the mid-nineteenth-century West. Over every page of them may be written those words from the Preface of *The Innocents Abroad*, 'I am sure I have written at least honestly, whether wisely or not.'" (F. L. Pattee, *History of American Literature since 1870*, 58-59.)

LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI¹

CHAPTER IV

THE BOYS' AMBITION

WHEN I was a boy, there was but one permanent ambition among my comrades in our village² on the west bank of the Mississippi River. That was, to be a steamboatman. We had transient ambitions of other sorts, but they were only transient. When a circus came and went, it left us all burning

to become clowns; the first negro minstrel show that ever came to our section left us all suffering to try that kind of life; now and then we had a hope that, if we lived and were good, God would permit us to be pirates. These ambitions faded out, each in its turn; but the ambition to be a steamboatman always remained.

Once a day a cheap, gaudy packet arrived upward from St. Louis, and another downward from Keokuk. Before these events, the day was glorious with expectancy; after them, the day was a dead and empty thing. Not only the boys, but the whole village, felt this. After all these years I can picture that old time to myself now, just as it was then: the white town drowsing in the sunshine of a summer's morning; the streets empty, or pretty nearly so; one or two clerks sitting in front of the Water Street stores, with their splint-bottomed chairs tilted back against the walls, chins on breasts, hats slouched over their faces, asleep—with shingle-shavings enough around

¹ The first twenty chapters of this book were contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1875, appearing in seven issues under the title *Old Times on the Mississippi*. They were also published under this title in Toronto in the following year (a pirated edition). In 1882 Clemens journeyed west and revisited the Mississippi, and wrote the portion of the book (more than half) which follows Chap. XX. It was published in 1883, with its present title. When the first installment was printed in the *Atlantic* John Hay wrote to Clemens: "It is perfect; no more nor less. I don't see how you do it."

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² Hannibal, Missouri. (Clemens's note.)

to show what broke them down; a sow and a litter of pigs loafing along the sidewalk, doing a good business in watermelon rinds and seeds; two or three lonely little freight piles scattered about the "levee"; a pile of "skids" on the slope of the stone-paved wharf, and the fragrant town drunkard asleep in the shadow of them; two or three wood flats at the head of the wharf, but nobody to listen to the peaceful lapping of the wavelets against them; the great Mississippi, the majestic, the magnificent Mississippi, rolling its mile-wide tide along, shining in the sun; the dense forest away on the other side; the "point" above the town, and the "point" below, bounding the river-glimpse and turning it into a sort of sea, and withal a very still and brilliant and lonely one. Presently a film of dark smoke appears above one of those remote "points"; instantly a negro drayman, famous for his quick eye and prodigious voice, lifts up the cry, "S-t-e-a-m-boat a-comin'!" and the scene changes! The town drunkard stirs, the clerks wake up, a furious clatter of drays follows, every house and store pours out a human contribution, and all in a twinkling the dead town is alive and moving. Drays, carts, men, boys, all go hurrying from many quarters to a common center, the wharf. Assembled there, the people fasten their eyes upon the coming boat as upon a wonder they are seeing for the first time. And the boat is rather a handsome sight, too. She is long and sharp and trim and pretty; she has two tall, fancy-topped chimneys, with a gilded device of some kind swung between them; a fanciful pilot-house, all glass and "gingerbread," perched on top of the "texas" deck behind them; the paddle-boxes are gorgeous with a picture or with gilded rays above the boat's name; the boiler-deck, the hurricane-deck, and the texas deck are fenced and ornamented with clean white railings; there is a flag gallantly flying from the jack-staff; the furnace doors are open and the fires glaring bravely; the upper decks are black with passengers; the captain stands by the big bell, calm, imposing, the envy of all; great volumes of the blackest smoke are rolling and tumbling out of the chimneys—a husbanded grandeur created with a bit of pitch-pine just before arriving at a town;

the crew are grouped on the forecastle; the broad stage is run far out over the port bow, and an envied deck-hand stands picturesquely on the end of it with a coil of rope in his hand; the pent steam is screaming through the gauge-cocks; the captain lifts his hand, a bell rings, the wheels stop; then they turn back, churning the water to foam, and the steamer is at rest. Then such a scramble as there is to get aboard, and to get ashore, and to take in freight and to discharge freight, all at one and the same time; and such a yelling and cursing as the mates facilitate it all with! Ten minutes later the steamer is under way again, with no flag on the jack-staff and no black smoke issuing from the chimneys. After ten more minutes the town is dead again, and the town drunkard asleep by the skids once more.

My father was a justice of the peace, and I supposed he possessed the power of life and death over all men, and could hang anybody that offended him. This was distinction enough for me as a general thing; but the desire to be a steamboatman kept intruding, nevertheless. I first wanted to be a cabin-boy, so that I could come out with a white apron on and shake a tablecloth over the side, where all my old comrades could see me; later I thought I would rather be the deck-hand who stood on the end of the stage-plank with the coil of rope in his hand, because he was particularly conspicuous. But these were only daydreams—they were too heavenly to be contemplated as real possibilities. By and by one of our boys went away. He was not heard of for a long time. At last he turned up as apprentice engineer or "striker" on a steamboat. This thing shook the bottom out of all my Sunday-school teachings. That boy had been notoriously worldly, and I just the reverse; yet he was exalted to this eminence, and I left in obscurity and misery. There was nothing generous about this fellow in his greatness. He would always manage to have a rusty bolt to scrub while his boat tarried at our town, and he would sit on the inside guard and scrub it, where we all could see him and envy him and loathe him. And whenever his boat was laid up he would come home and swell around the town in his blackest and greasiest clothes, so that nobody could help remembering that

he was a steamboatman; and he used all sorts of steamboat technicalities in his talk, as if he were so used to them that he forgot common people could not understand them. He would speak of the "labboard" side of a horse in an easy, natural way that would make one wish he was dead. And he was always talking about "St. Looy" like an old citizen; he would refer casually to occasions when he was "coming down Fourth Street," or when he was "passing by the Planter's House," or when there was a fire and he took a turn on the brakes of "the old Big Missouri"; and then he would go on and lie about how many towns the size of ours were burned down there that day. Two or three of the boys had long been persons of consideration among us because they had been to St. Louis once and had a vague general knowledge of its wonders, but the day of their glory was over now. They lapsed into a humble silence, and learned to disappear when the ruthless "cub"-engineer approached. This fellow had money, too, and hair-oil. Also an ignorant silver watch and a showy brass watch-chain. He wore a leather belt and used no suspenders. If ever a youth was cordially admired and hated by his comrades, this one was. No girl could withstand his charms. He "cut out" every boy in the village. When his boat blew up at last, it diffused a tranquil contentment among us such as we had not known for months. But when he came home the next week, alive, renowned, and appeared in church all battered up and bandaged, a shining hero, stared at and wondered over by everybody, it seemed to us that the partiality of Providence for an undeserving reptile had reached a point where it was open to criticism.

This creature's career could produce but one result, and it speedily followed. Boy after boy managed to get on the river. The minister's son became an engineer. The doctor's and the postmaster's sons became "mud clerks"; the wholesale liquor dealer's son became a barkeeper on a boat; four sons of the chief merchant, and two sons of the county judge, became pilots. Pilot was the grandest position of all. The pilot, even in those days of trivial wages, had a princely salary—from a hundred and fifty to two

hundred and fifty dollars a month, and no board to pay. Two months of his wages would pay a preacher's salary for a year. Now some of us were left disconsolate. We could not get on the river—at least our parents would not let us.

So, by and by, I ran away. I said I would never come home again till I was a pilot and could come in glory. But somehow I could not manage it. I went meekly aboard a few of the boats that lay packed together like sardines at the long St. Louis wharf, and humbly inquired for the pilots, but got only a cold shoulder and short words from mates and clerks. I had to make the best of this sort of treatment for the time being, but I had comforting day-dreams of a future when I should be a great and honored pilot, with plenty of money, and could kill some of these mates and clerks and pay for them.¹

CHAPTER XVIII

I TAKE A FEW EXTRA LESSONS

DURING the two or two and a half years of my apprenticeship I served under many pilots, and had experience of many kinds of steamboatmen and many varieties of steamboats; for it was not always convenient for Mr. Bixby to have me with him, and in such cases he sent me with somebody else. I am to this day profiting somewhat by that experience; for in that brief, sharp schooling, I got personally and familiarly acquainted with about all the different types of human nature that are to be found in fiction, biography, or history. The fact is daily borne in upon me that the average shore-employment requires as much as forty years to equip a man with this sort of an education. When I say I am still profiting by this thing, I do not mean that it has constituted me a judge of men—no, it has not done that, for judges of men are born, not made. My profit is various in kind and degree, but the feature of it which I value

¹ The titles of the chapters intervening between this and the next one here printed are: V. I Want to be a Cub-Pilot; VI. A Cub-Pilot's Experience; VII. A Darling Deed; VIII. Perplexing Lessons; IX. Continued Perplexities; X. Completing My Education; XI. The River Rises; XII. Sounding; XIII. A Pilot's Needs; XIV. Rank and Dignity of Piloting; XV. The Pilots' Monopoly; XVI. Racing Days; XVII. Cut-offs and Stephen.

most is the zest which that early experience has given to my later reading. When I find a well-drawn character in fiction or biography I generally take a warm personal interest in him, for the reason that I have known him before—met him on the river.

The figure that comes before me oftenest, out of the shadows of that vanished time, is that of Brown, of the steamer *Pennsylvania*—the man referred to in a former chapter, whose memory was so good and tiresome.¹ He was a middle-aged, long, slim, bony, smooth-shaven, horse-faced, ignorant, stingy, malicious, snarling, fault-hunting, mote-magnifying tyrant. I early got the habit of coming on watch with dread at my heart. No matter how good a time I might have been having with the off-watch below, and no matter how high my spirits might be when I started aloft, my soul became lead in my body the moment I approached the pilot-house.

I still remember the first time I ever entered the presence of that man. The boat had backed out from St. Louis and was "straightening down." I ascended to the pilot-house in high feather, and very proud to be semi-officially a member of the executive family of so fast and famous a boat. Brown was at the wheel. I paused in the middle of the room, all fixed to make my bow, but Brown did not look around. I

¹ Chap. XIII. "Mr. Brown would start out with the honest intention of telling you a vastly funny anecdote about a dog. He would be 'so full of laugh' that he could hardly begin; then his memory would start with the dog's breed and personal appearance; drift into a history of his owner; of his owner's family, with descriptions of weddings and burials that had occurred in it, together with recitals of congratulatory verses and obituary poetry provoked by the same; then this memory would recollect that one of these events occurred during the celebrated 'hard winter' of such-and-such a year, and a minute description of that winter would follow, along with the names of people who were frozen to death, and statistics showing the high figures which pork and hay went up to. Pork and hay would suggest corn and fodder; corn and fodder would suggest cows and horses; cows and horses would suggest the circus and certain celebrated bareback riders; the transition from the circus to the menagerie was easy and natural; from the elephant to equatorial Africa was but a step; then of course the heathen savages would suggest religion; and at the end of three or four hours' tedious jaw, the watch would change, and Brown would go out of the pilot-house muttering extracts from sermons he had heard years before about the efficacy of prayer as a means of grace. And the original first mention would be all you had learned about that dog."

thought he took a furtive glance at me out of the corner of his eye, but as not even this notice was repeated, I judged I had been mistaken. By this time he was picking his way among some dangerous "breaks" abreast the woodyards; therefore it would not be proper to interrupt him; so I stepped softly to the high bench and took a seat.

There was silence for ten minutes; then my new boss turned and inspected me deliberately and painstakingly from head to heel for about—as it seemed to me—a quarter of an hour. After which he removed his countenance and I saw it no more for some seconds; then it came around once more, and this question greeted me:

"Are you Horace Bigsby's cub?"

"Yes, sir."

After this there was a pause and another inspection. Then:

"What's your name?"

I told him. He repeated it after me. It was probably the only thing he ever forgot; for although I was with him many months he never addressed himself to me in any other way than "Here!" and then his command followed.

"Where was you born?"

"In Florida, Missouri."

A pause. Then:

"Dern sight better stayed there!"

By means of a dozen or so of pretty direct questions, he pumped my family history out of me.

The leads were going now in the first crossing. This interrupted the inquest. When the leads had been laid in he resumed:

"How long you been on the river?"

I told him. After a pause:

"Where'd you get them shoes?"

I gave him the information.

"Hold up your foot!"

I did so. He stepped back, examined the shoe minutely and contemptuously, scratching his head thoughtfully, tilting his high sugar-loaf hat well forward to facilitate the operation, then ejaculated, "Well, I'll be dod derned!" and returned to his wheel.

What occasion there was to be dod derned about it is a thing which is still as much of a mystery to me now as it was then. It must have been all of fifteen minutes—fifteen minutes of dull, homesick silence—before that long horse-face swung round upon me again

—and then what a change! It was as red as fire, and every muscle in it was working. Now came this shriek:

"Here! You going to set there all day?"

I lit in the middle of the floor, shot there by the electric suddenness of the surprise. As soon as I could get my voice I said apologetically: "I have had no orders, sir."

"You've had no *orders*! My, what a fine bird we are! We must have *orders*! Our father was a *gentleman*—owned slaves—and *we've* been to *school*. Yes, *we* are a gentleman, *too*, and got to have *orders*! ORDERS, is it? ORDERS is what you want! Dod dern my skin, *I'll* learn you to swell yourself up and blow around *here* about your dod-derned *orders*! G'way from the wheel!" (I had approached it without knowing it.)

I moved back a step or two and stood as in a dream, all my senses stupefied by this frantic assault.

"What you standing there for? Take that ice-pitcher down to the texas-tender! Come, move along, and don't you be all day about it!"

The moment I got back to the pilot-house Brown said:

"Here! What was you doing down there all this time?"

"I couldn't find the texas-tender; I had to go all the way to the pantry."

"Derned likely story! Fill up the stove."

I proceeded to do so. He watched me like a cat. Presently he shouted:

"Put down that shovel! Derndest numskull I ever saw—ain't even got sense enough to load up a stove."

All through the watch this sort of thing went on. Yes, and the subsequent watches were much like it during a stretch of months. As I have said, I soon got the habit of coming on duty with dread. The moment I was in the presence, even in the darkest night, I could feel those yellow eyes upon me, and knew their owner was watching for a pretext to spit out some venom on me. Preliminarily he would say:

"Here! Take the wheel."

Two minutes later:

"*Where* in the nation you going to? Pull her down! pull her down!"

After another moment:

"Say! You going to hold her all day? Let her go—meet her! meet her!"

Then he would jump from the bench, snatch the wheel from me, and meet her himself, pouring out wrath upon me all the time.

George Ritchie was the other pilot's cub. He was having good times now; for his boss, George Ealer, was as kind-hearted as Brown wasn't. Ritchie had steered for Brown the season before; consequently, he knew exactly how to entertain himself and plague me, all by the one operation. Whenever I took the wheel for a moment on Ealer's watch, Ritchie would sit back on the bench and play Brown, with continual ejaculations of "Snatch her! snatch her! Derndest mud-cat I ever saw!" "Here! Where are you going *now*? Going to run over that snag?" "Pull her down! Don't you hear me? Pull her down!" "There she goes! *Just* as I expected! I *told* you not to cramp that reef. G'way from the wheel!"

So I always had a rough time of it, no matter whose watch it was; and sometimes it seemed to me that Ritchie's good-natured badgering was pretty nearly as aggravating as Brown's dead-earnest nagging.

I often wanted to kill Brown, but this would not answer. A cub had to take everything his boss gave, in the way of vigorous comment and criticism; and we all believed that there was a United States law making it a penitentiary offense to strike or threaten a pilot who was on duty. However, I could *imagine* myself killing Brown; there was no law against that; and that was the thing I used always to do the moment I was abed. Instead of going over my river in my mind, as was my duty, I threw business aside for pleasure, and killed Brown. I killed Brown every night for months; not in old, stale, commonplace ways, but in new and picturesque ones—ways that were sometimes surprising for freshness of design and ghastliness of situation and environment.

Brown was *always* watching for a pretext to find fault; and if he could find no plausible pretext, he would invent one. He would scold you for shaving a shore, and for not shaving it; for hugging a bar, and for not hugging it; for "pulling down" when not invited, and for *not* pulling down when not invited; for firing up without orders, and for waiting *for* orders. In a word, it was his invariable rule to find fault with *everything* you did; and another invariable rule of his

was to throw all his remarks (to you) into the form of an insult.

One day we were approaching New Madrid, bound down and heavily laden. Brown was at one side of the wheel, steering; I was at the other, standing by to "pull down" or "shove up." He cast a furtive glance at me every now and then. I had long ago learned what that meant; *viz.*, he was trying to invent a trap for me. I wondered what shape it was going to take. By and by he stepped back from the wheel and said in his usual snarly way:

"Here! See if you've got gumption enough to round her to."

This was simply *bound* to be a success; nothing could prevent it; for he had never allowed me to round the boat to before; consequently, no matter how I might do the thing, he could find free fault with it. He stood back there with his greedy eye on me, and the result was what might have been foreseen: I lost my head in a quarter of a minute, and didn't know what I was about; I started too early to bring the boat around, but detected a green gleam of joy in Brown's eye, and corrected my mistake. I started around once more while too high up, but corrected myself again in time. I made other false moves, and still managed to save myself; but at last I grew so confused and anxious that I tumbled into the very worst blunder of all—I got too far *down* before beginning to fetch the boat around. Brown's chance was come.

His face turned red with passion; he made one bound, hurled me across the house with a sweep of his arm, spun the wheel down, and began to pour out a stream of vituperation upon me which lasted till he was out of breath. In the course of this speech he called me all the different kinds of hard names he could think of, and once or twice I thought he was even going to swear—but he had never done that, and he didn't this time. "Dod dern" was the nearest he ventured to the luxury of swearing, for he had been brought up with a wholesome respect for future fire and brimstone.

That was an uncomfortable hour; for there was a big audience on the hurricane-deck. When I went to bed that night, I killed Brown in seventeen different ways—all of them new.

CHAPTER XIX

BROWN AND I EXCHANGE COMPLIMENTS

Two trips later I got into serious trouble. Brown was steering; I was "pulling down." My younger brother appeared on the hurricane-deck, and shouted to Brown to stop at some landing or other, a mile or so below. Brown gave no intimation that he had heard anything. But that was his way: he never condescended to take notice of an under-clerk. The wind was blowing; Brown was deaf (although he always pretended he wasn't), and I very much doubted if he had heard the order. If I had had two heads, I would have spoken; but as I had only one, it seemed judicious to take care of it; so I kept still.

Presently, sure enough, we went sailing by that plantation. Captain Klinefelter appeared on the deck, and said:

"Let her come around, sir, let her come around. Didn't Henry tell you to land here?"

"No, sir!"

"I sent him up to do it."

"He *did* come up; and that's all the good it done, the dod-derned fool. He never said anything."

"Didn't *you* hear him?" asked the captain of me.

Of course I didn't want to be mixed up in this business, but there was no way to avoid it; so I said:

"Yes, sir."

I knew what Brown's next remark would be, before he uttered it. It was:

"Shut your mouth! You never heard anything of the kind."

I closed my mouth, according to instructions. An hour later Henry entered the pilot-house, unaware of what had been going on. He was a thoroughly inoffensive boy, and I was sorry to see him come, for I knew Brown would have no pity on him. Brown began, straightway:

"Here! Why didn't you tell me we'd got to land at that plantation?"

"I did tell you, Mr. Brown."

"It's a lie!"

I said:

"You lie, yourself. He did tell you."

Brown glared at me in unaffected surprise; and for as much as a moment he was entirely speechless; then he shouted to me:

"I'll attend to your case in a half a minute!" then to Henry, "And you leave the pilot-house; out with you!"

It was pilot law, and must be obeyed. The boy started out, and even had his foot on the upper step outside the door, when Brown, with a sudden access of fury, picked up a ten-pound lump of coal and sprang after him; but I was between, with a heavy stool, and I hit Brown a good honest blow which stretched him out.

I had committed the crime of crimes—I had lifted my hand against a pilot on duty! I supposed I was booked for the penitentiary sure, and couldn't be booked any surer if I went on and squared my long account with this person while I had the chance; consequently I stuck to him and pounded him with my fists a considerable time. I do not know how long, the pleasure of it probably made it seem longer than it really was; but in the end he struggled free and jumped up and sprang to the wheel: a very natural solicitude, for, all this time, here was this steamboat tearing down the river at the rate of fifteen miles an hour and nobody at the helm! However, Eagle Bend was two miles wide at this bank-full stage, and correspondingly long and deep: and the boat was steering herself straight down the middle and taking no chances. Still, that was only luck—a body *might* have found her charging into the woods.

Perceiving at a glance that the *Pennsylvania* was in no danger, Brown gathered up the big spy-glass, war-club fashion, and ordered me out of the pilot-house with more than Comanche bluster. But I was not afraid of him now; so, instead of going, I tarried, and criticized his grammar. I reformed his ferocious speeches for him, and put them into good English, calling his attention to the advantage of pure English over the bastard dialect of the Pennsylvania collieries whence he was extracted. He could have done his part to admiration in a cross-fire of mere vituperation, of course; but he was not equipped for this species of controversy; so he presently laid aside his glass and took the wheel, muttering and shaking his head; and I retired to the bench. The racket had

brought everybody to the hurricane-deck, and I trembled when I saw the old captain looking up from amid the crowd. I said to myself, "Now I *am* done for!" for although, as a rule, he was so fatherly and indulgent toward the boat's family, and so patient of minor shortcomings, he could be stern enough when the fault was worth it.

I tried to imagine what he *would* do to a cub pilot who had been guilty of such a crime as mine, committed on a boat guard-deep with costly freight and alive with passengers. Our watch was nearly ended. I thought I would go and hide somewhere till I got a chance to slide ashore. So I slipped out of the pilot-house, and down the steps, and around to the texas-door, and was in the act of gliding within, when the captain confronted me! I dropped my head, and he stood over me in silence a moment or two, then said impressively:

"Follow me."

I dropped into his wake; he led the way to his parlor in the forward end of the texas. We were alone, now. He closed the after door; then moved slowly to the forward one and closed that. He sat down; I stood before him. He looked at me some little time, then said:

"So you have been fighting Mr. Brown?"

I answered meekly:

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know that that is a very serious matter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you aware that this boat was plowing down the river fully five minutes with no one at the wheel?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you strike him first?"

"Yes, sir."

"What with?"

"A stool, sir."

"Hard?"

"Middling, sir."

"Did it knock him down?"

"He—he fell, sir."

"Did you follow it up? Did you do anything further?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did you do?"

"Pounded him, sir."

"Pounded him?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you pound him much? that is, severely?"

"One might call it that, sir, maybe."

"I'm deuced glad of it! Hark ye, never mention that I said that. You have been guilty of a great crime; and don't you ever be guilty of it again, on this boat. *But—* lay for him ashore! Give him a good sound thrashing, do you hear? I'll pay the expenses. Now go—and mind you, not a word of this to anybody. Clear out with you! You've been guilty of a great crime, you whelp!"

I slid out, happy with the sense of a close shave and a mighty deliverance; and I heard him laughing to himself and slapping his fat thighs after I had closed his door.

When Brown came off watch he went straight to the captain, who was talking with some passengers on the boiler-deck, and demanded that I be put ashore in New Orleans—and added:

"I'll never turn a wheel on this boat again while that cub stays."

The captain said:

"But he needn't come round when you are on watch, Mr. Brown."

"I won't even stay on the same boat with him. *One* of us has got to go ashore."

"Very well," said the captain, "let it be yourself," and resumed his talk with the passengers.

During the brief remainder of the trip I knew how an emancipated slave feels, for I was an emancipated slave myself. While we lay at landings I listened to George Ealer's flute, or to his readings from his two Bibles, that is to say, Goldsmith and Shakespeare, or I played chess with him—and would have beaten him sometimes, only he always took back his last move and ran the game out differently.

CHAPTER XX

A CATASTROPHE

WE lay three days in New Orleans, but the captain did not succeed in finding another pilot, so he proposed that I should stand a daylight watch and leave the night watches to George Ealer. But I was afraid; I had never stood a watch of any sort by myself, and I believed I should be sure to get into trouble in the head of some chute, or ground the boat in a near cut through

some bar or other. Brown remained in his place, but he would not travel with me. So the captain gave me an order on the captain of the *A. T. Lacey* for a passage to St. Louis, and said he would find a new pilot there and my steersman's berth could then be resumed. The *Lacey* was to leave a couple of days after the *Pennsylvania*.

The night before the *Pennsylvania* left, Henry and I sat chatting on a freight pile on the levee till midnight. The subject of the chat, mainly, was one which I think we had not exploited before—steamboat disasters. One was then on its way to us, little as we suspected it; the water which was to make the steam which should cause it was washing past some point fifteen hundred miles up the river while we talked—but it would arrive at the right time and the right place. We doubted if persons not clothed with authority were of much use in cases of disaster and attendant panic, still they might be of *some* use; so we decided that if a disaster ever fell within our experience we would at least stick to the boat, and give such minor service as chance might throw in the way. Henry remembered this, afterward, when the disaster came, and acted accordingly.

The *Lacey* started up the river two days behind the *Pennsylvania*. We touched at Greenville, Mississippi, a couple of days out, and somebody shouted:

"The *Pennsylvania* is blown up at Ship Island, and a hundred and fifty lives lost!"

At Napoleon, Arkansas, the same evening, we got an extra, issued by a Memphis paper, which gave some particulars. It mentioned my brother, and said he was not hurt.

Further up the river we got a later extra. My brother was again mentioned, but this time as being hurt beyond help. We did not get full details of the catastrophe until we reached Memphis. This is the sorrowful story:

It was six o'clock on a hot summer morning. The *Pennsylvania* was creeping along, north of Ship Island, about sixty miles below Memphis, on a half-head of steam, towing a wood-flat which was fast being emptied. George Ealer was in the pilot-house—alone, I think; the second engineer and a striker had the watch in the engine-room; the second mate had the watch on deck; George Black,

Mr. Wood, and my brother, clerks, were asleep, as were also Brown and the head engineer, the carpenter, the chief mate, and one striker; Captain Klinefelter was in the barber's chair, and the barber was preparing to shave him. There were a good many cabin passengers aboard, and three or four hundred deck passengers—so it was said at the time—and not very many of them were astir. The wood being nearly all out of the flat now, Ealer rang to "come ahead" full of steam, and the next moment four of the eight boilers exploded with a thunderous crash, and the whole forward third of the boat was hoisted toward the sky! The main part of the mass, with the chimneys, dropped upon the boat again, a mountain of riddled and chaotic rubbish—and then, after a little, fire broke out.

Many people were flung to considerable distances and fell in the river; among these were Mr. Wood and my brother and the carpenter. The carpenter was still stretched upon his mattress when he struck the water seventy-five feet from the boat. Brown, the pilot, and George Black, chief clerk, were never seen or heard of after the explosion. The barber's chair, with Captain Klinefelter in it and unhurt, was left with its back overhanging vacancy—everything forward of it, floor and all, had disappeared; and the stupefied barber, who was also unhurt, stood with one toe projecting over space, still stirring his lather unconsciously and saying not a word.

When George Ealer saw the chimneys plunging aloft in front of him, he knew what the matter was; so he muffled his face in the lapels of his coat, and pressed both hands there tightly to keep this protection in its place so that no steam could get to his nose or mouth. He had ample time to attend to these details while he was going up and returning. He presently landed on top of the unexploded boilers, forty feet below the former pilot-house, accompanied by his wheel and a rain of other stuff, and enveloped in a cloud of scalding steam. All of the many who breathed that steam died; none escaped. But Ealer breathed none of it. He made his way to the free air as quickly as he could; and when the steam cleared away he returned and climbed up on the boilers again, and patiently hunted out each and every one of

his chessmen and the several joints of his flute.

By this time the fire was beginning to threaten. Shrieks and groans filled the air. A great many persons had been scalded, a great many crippled; the explosion had driven an iron crowbar through one man's body—I think they said he was a priest. He did not die at once, and his sufferings were very dreadful. A young French naval cadet of fifteen, son of a French admiral, was fearfully scalded, but bore his tortures manfully. Both mates were badly scalded, but they stood to their posts, nevertheless. They drew the wood-boat aft, and they and the captain fought back the frantic herd of frightened immigrants till the wounded could be brought there and placed in safety first.

When Mr. Wood and Henry fell in the water they struck out for shore, which was only a few hundred yards away; but Henry presently said he believed he was not hurt (what an unaccountable error!) and therefore would swim back to the boat and help save the wounded. So they parted and Henry returned.

By this time the fire was making fierce headway, and several persons who were imprisoned under the ruins were begging piteously for help. All efforts to conquer the fire proved fruitless, so the buckets were presently thrown aside and the officers fell to with axes and tried to cut the prisoners out. A striker was one of the captives; he said he was not injured, but could not free himself, and when he saw that the fire was likely to drive away the workers he begged that some one would shoot him, and thus save him from the more dreadful death. The fire did drive the axmen away, and they had to listen, helpless, to this poor fellow's supplications till the flames ended his miseries.

The fire drove all into the wood-flat that could be accommodated there; it was cut adrift then, and it and the burning steamer floated down the river toward Ship Island. They moored the flat at the head of the island, and there, unsheltered from the blazing sun, the half-naked occupants had to remain, without food or stimulants, or help for their hurts, during the rest of the day. A steamer came along, finally, and carried the unfortunates to Memphis, and there the most lavish assistance was at once

forthcoming. By this time Henry was insensible. The physicians examined his injuries and saw that they were fatal, and naturally turned their main attention to patients who could be saved.

Forty of the wounded were placed upon pallets on the floor of a great public hall, and among these was Henry. There the ladies of Memphis came every day, with flowers, fruits, and dainties and delicacies of all kinds, and there they remained and nursed the wounded. All the physicians stood watches there, and all the medical students; and the rest of the town furnished money, or whatever else was wanted. And Memphis knew how to do all these things well; for many a disaster like the *Pennsylvania's* had happened near her doors, and she was experienced, above all other cities on the river, in the gracious office of the Good Samaritan.

The sight I saw when I entered that large hall was new and strange to me. Two long rows of prostrate forms—more than forty in all—and every face and head a shapeless wad of loose raw cotton. It was a gruesome spectacle. I watched there six days and nights, and a very melancholy experience it was. There was one daily incident which was peculiarly depressing: this was the removal of the doomed to a chamber apart. It was done in order that the *morale* of the other patients might not be injuriously affected by seeing one of their number in the death-agony. The fated one was always carried out with as little stir as possible, and the stretcher was always hidden from sight by a wall of assistants; but no matter: everybody knew what that cluster of bent forms, with its muffled step and its slow movement, meant; and all eyes watched it wistfully, and a shudder went abreast of it like a wave.

I saw many poor fellows removed to the "death-room," and saw them no more afterward. But I saw our chief mate carried thither more than once. His hurts were frightful, especially his scalds. He was clothed in linseed oil and raw cotton to his waist, and resembled nothing human. He was often out of his mind; and then his pains would make him rave and shout and sometimes shriek. Then, after a period of dumb exhaustion, his disordered imagination would suddenly transform the great apartment into a fore-castle, and the hurrying throng of nurses

into the crew; and he would come to a sitting posture and shout, "Hump yourselves, *hump* yourselves, you petrifications, snail-bellies, pall-bearers! going to be all *day* getting that hatful of freight out!" and supplement this explosion with a firmament-obliterating irruption of profanity which nothing could stay or stop till his crater was empty. And now and then while these frenzies possessed him, he would tear off handfuls of the cotton and expose his cooked flesh to view. It was horrible. It was bad for the others, of course—this noise and these exhibitions; so the doctors tried to give him morphine to quiet him. But, in his mind or out of it, he would not take it. He said his wife had been killed by that treacherous drug, and he would die before he would take it. He suspected that the doctors were concealing it in his ordinary medicines and in his water—so he ceased from putting either to his lips. Once, when he had been without water during two sweltering days, he took the dipper in his hand, and the sight of the limpid fluid, and the misery of his thirst, tempted him almost beyond his strength; but he mastered himself and threw it away, and after that he allowed no more to be brought near him. Three times I saw him carried to the death-room, insensible and supposed to be dying; but each time he revived, cursed his attendants, and demanded to be taken back. He lived to be mate of a steamboat again.

But he was the only one who went to the death-room and returned alive. Dr. Peyton, a principal physician, and rich in all the attributes that go to constitute high and flawless character, did all that educated judgment and trained skill could do for Henry; but, as the newspapers had said in the beginning, his hurts were past help. On the evening of the sixth day his wandering mind busied itself with matters far away, and his nerveless fingers "picked at his coverlet." His hour had struck; we bore him to the death-room, poor boy.

CHAPTER XXI

A SECTION IN MY BIOGRAPHY

IN due course I got my license. I was a pilot now, full-fledged. I dropped into casual employments; no misfortunes resulting, intermittent work gave place to steady

and protracted engagements. Time drifted smoothly and prosperously on, and I supposed—and hoped—that I was going to follow the river the rest of my days, and die at the wheel when my mission was ended. But by and by the war came, commerce was suspended, my occupation was gone.

I had to seek another livelihood. So I became a silver-miner in Nevada; next, a newspaper reporter; next, a gold-miner in California; next, a reporter in San Francisco; next, a special correspondent in the Sandwich Islands; next, a roving correspondent in Europe and the East; next, an instructional torch-bearer on the lecture platform; and, finally, I became a scribbler of books, and an immovable fixture among the other rocks of New England.

In so few words have I disposed of the twenty-one slow-drifting years that have come and gone since I last looked from the windows of a pilot-house.

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CHAPTER L

THE "ORIGINAL JACOBS"

WE had some talk about Captain Isaiah Sellers, now many years dead. He was a fine man, a high-minded man, and greatly respected both ashore and on the river. He was very tall, well built, and handsome; and in his old age—as I remember him—his hair was as black as an Indian's, and his eye and hand were as strong and steady and his nerve and judgment as firm and clear as anybody's, young or old, among the fraternity of pilots. He was the patriarch of the craft; he had been a keelboat pilot before the day of steamboats; and a steamboat pilot before any other steamboat pilot, still surviving at the time I speak of, had ever turned a wheel. Consequently, his brethren held him in the sort of awe in which illustrious survivors of a bygone age are always held by their associates. He knew how he was regarded, and perhaps this fact added some trifle of stiffening to his natural dignity, which had been sufficiently stiff in its original state.

* * * * *

Whenever Captain Sellers approached a body of gossiping pilots, a chill fell there, and talking ceased. For this reason: when-

ever six pilots were gathered together, there would always be one or two newly fledged ones in the lot, and the elder ones would be always "showing off" before these poor fellows; making them sorrowfully feel how callow they were, how recent their nobility, and how humble their degree, by talking largely and vaporously of old-time experiences on the river; always making it a point to date everything back as far as they could, so as to make the new men feel their newness to the sharpest degree possible, and envy the old stagers in the like degree. And how these complacent baldheads *would* swell, and brag, and lie, and date back—ten, fifteen, twenty years, and how they did enjoy the effect produced upon the marveling and envying youngsters!

And perhaps just at this happy stage of the proceedings, the stately figure of Captain Isaiah Sellers, that real and only genuine Son of Antiquity, would drift solemnly into the midst. Imagine the size of the silence that would result on the instant! And imagine the feelings of those baldheads, and the exultation of their recent audience, when the ancient captain would begin to drop casual and indifferent remarks of a reminiscent nature—about islands that had disappeared, and cut-offs that had been made, a generation before the oldest baldhead in the company had ever set his foot in a pilot-house!

Many and many a time did this ancient mariner appear on the scene in the above fashion, and spread disaster and humiliation around him. If one might believe the pilots, he always dated his islands back to the misty dawn of river history; and he never used the same island twice; and never did he employ an island that still existed, or give one a name which anybody present was old enough to have heard of before. If you might believe the pilots, he was always conscientiously particular about little details; never spoke of "the state of Mississippi," for instance—no, he would say, "When the state of Mississippi was where Arkansas now is"; and would never speak of Louisiana or Missouri in a general way, and leave an incorrect impression on your mind—no, he would say, "When Louisiana was up the river farther," or "When Missouri was on the Illinois side."

The old gentleman was not of literary turn or capacity, but he used to jot down brief

paragraphs of plain, practical information about the river, and sign them "MARK TWAIN," and give them to the New Orleans *Picayune*. They related to the stage and condition of the river, and were accurate and valuable; and thus far they contained no poison. But in speaking of the stage of the river to-day at a given point, the captain was pretty apt to drop in a little remark about this being the first time he had seen the water so high or so low at that particular point in forty-nine years; and now and then he would mention Island so-and-so, and follow it, in parentheses, with some such observation as "disappeared in 1807, if I remember rightly." In these antique interjections lay poison and bitterness for the other old pilots, and they used to chaff the "Mark Twain" paragraphs with unsparing mockery.

It so chanced that one of these paragraphs¹ became the text for my first newspaper article. I burlesqued it broadly, very broadly, stringing my fantastics out to the extent of eight hundred or a thousand words. I was a "cub" at the time. I showed my performance to some pilots, and they eagerly rushed it into print in the New Orleans *True Delta*. It was a great pity; for it did nobody any worthy service, and it sent a pang deep into a good man's heart. There was no malice in my rubbish; but it laughed at the captain. It laughed at a man to whom such a thing was new and strange and dreadful. I did not know then, though I do now, that there is no suffering comparable with that which a private person feels when he is for the first time pilloried in print.

Captain Sellers did me the honor to profoundly detest me from that day forth. When I say he did me the honor, I am not using empty words. It was a very real honor to be in the thoughts of so great a man as Captain Sellers, and I had wit enough to

¹ The original MS. of it, in the captain's own hand, has been sent to me from New Orleans. It reads as follows:

"VICKSBURG, May 4, 1859.

"My opinion for the benefit of the citizens of New Orleans: The water is higher this far up than it has been since 1815. My opinion is that the water will be 4 feet deep in Canal Street before the first of next June. Mrs. Turner's plantation at the head of Big Black Island is all under water, and it has not been since 1815.

"I. SELLERS."

(Clemens's note.)

appreciate it and be proud of it. It was distinction to be loved by such a man; but it was a much greater distinction to be hated by him, because he loved scores of people; but he didn't sit up nights to hate anybody but me.

He never printed another paragraph while he lived, and he never again signed "Mark Twain" to anything. At the time that the telegraph brought the news of his death, I was on the Pacific coast. I was a fresh, new journalist, and needed a *nom de guerre*; so I confiscated the ancient mariner's discarded one, and have done my best to make it remain what it was in his hands—a sign and symbol and warrant that whatever is found in its company may be gambled on as being the petrified truth. How I've succeeded, it would not be modest in me to say.

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CHAPTER LX

SPECULATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

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It² is a very wonderful town, indeed, and is not finished yet. All the streets are obstructed with building-material, and this is being compacted into houses as fast as possible, to make room for more—for other people are anxious to build, as soon as they can get the use of the streets to pile up their bricks and stuff in.

How solemn and beautiful is the thought that the earliest pioneer of civilization, the van-leader of civilization, is never the steamboat, never the railroad, never the newspaper, never the Sabbath-school, never the missionary—but always whisky! Such is the case. Look history over; you will see. The missionary comes after the whisky—I mean he arrives after the whisky has arrived; next comes the poor immigrant, with ax and hoe and rifle; next, the trader; next, the miscellaneous rush; next, the gambler, the desperado, the highwayman, and all their kindred in sin of both sexes; and next, the smart chap who has bought up an old grant that covers all the land; this brings the lawyer tribe; the vigilance committee brings the undertaker. All these interests bring the newspaper; the

² St. Paul, Minnesota. It is at the head of uninterrupted navigation on the Mississippi.

newspaper starts up politics and a railroad; all hands turn to and build a church and a jail—and behold! civilization is established forever in the land. But whisky, you see, was the van-leader in this beneficent work. It always is. It was like a foreigner—and excusable in a foreigner—to be ignorant of this great truth, and wander off into astronomy to borrow a symbol.¹ But if he had been

¹ Bishop George Berkeley wrote (1726) *Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America*. They were inspired by his dream of establishing a college in Bermuda. As Berkeley actually wrote it, however, the first line of his last stanza does not contain the phrase “star of empire.” It reads:

“Westward the course of empire takes its way.”

conversant with the facts, he would have said:

Westward the Jug of Empire takes its way.

This great van-leader arrived upon the ground which St. Paul now occupies, in June, 1837. Yes, at that date, Pierre Parrant, a Canadian, built the first cabin, uncorked his jug, and began to sell whisky to the Indians.² The result is before us.

* * * * *

² Cf. Franklin's remarks concerning rum and the Indians, reprinted in Part I, p. 110.

JOHN MUIR (1838-1914)

Muir was born in Dunbar, Scotland, on 21 April, 1838. His father, a severe man and one fanatical in his devotion to the literal word of the Bible, was a merchant there. Muir received his early education in the schools of Dunbar; and this was supplemented by his father, who made him learn well-nigh all of the Bible by heart. He said that when he was eleven he could repeat the whole of the New Testament without a stop. At this time (1849) his father brought the family to America, and settled in the Wisconsin forest, where there followed years of grinding work in the creation of a farm out of wild and wooded land. John was treated by his father with what we should call extraordinary severity, was whipped for the slightest offense regardless of his intentions, was compelled to labor unremittingly, even when he was ill, so long as he could move arms and legs, and was allowed no time for study or play, until, one day, his father remarked that he could get up as early as he pleased in the mornings. John promptly took advantage of this permission to arise at one o'clock, and so secured for himself several free hours each day. He found it, however, in the winter too cold for him to read or study, and consequently he turned to mechanical invention, in which he was ingenious and successful. Among other things, he contrived a timepiece made of wood which, attached to his bed, turned it up on end at any time that he wanted to get up, setting him suddenly standing upon the bed's footboard. When he was twenty-two he was encouraged by neighbors to carry some of his inventions to the fair of the State Agricultural Society at Madison. They believed he could thus secure employment in a machine-shop, and the prospect appealed to him, even though he was diffident and bashful, and reluctant to face strangers. At Madison he did attract attention, and was in turn attracted by the then small and struggling State University, and he determined to attend it. He managed, with practically no help from his father, to remain there three years. It was his intention to go from Madison to Ann Arbor and there to study medicine. Apparently it was only accident which kept him from doing so. And before he had left Madison, in the spring of 1863, another accident had turned him unconsciously in the direction of his life's work. It had been a chance question from a fellow-student about a locust blossom which, since Muir was ignorant of botany, had led to talk about the family relationship of that tree. "This fine lesson," Muir later wrote, "charmed me and sent me flying to the woods and meadows in wild enthusiasm."

Thus he had begun, without knowing it, his career as a naturalist, impulsively, enthusiastically, plunging without reflection into a delight which was to hold him enchanted, and contemptuous of the world of men, through the rest of his days. He was shrewd and capable, and there was little or nothing of sentimentalism in his devotion to nature, but there was also nothing prosaic or tame or half-hearted about it. After he left Madison he spent some months with a sister and her husband and then, in the spring of 1864, went on a botanical journey into Canada. In the winter he found opportunity at a mill for a further test of his inventive power, and he remained in Canada until the mill was burned, and then, in the spring of 1866, went to Indianapolis to work in a carriage-material factory. There the accidental piercing of his right eye by a file threatened him for a time with blindness. Upon his recovery he bade farewell to factories. He wrote: "As soon as I got out into Heaven's light I started on another long excursion, making haste with all my heart to store my mind with the Lord's beauty and thus be ready for any fate, light or dark. And it was from this time that my long continuous wanderings may be said to have fairly commenced."

He himself recognized that there were in him fires of restlessness, unmeasured desires, which sent him wandering whether he would or no, but so long as he was in the country air, in forest or wild meadow land or, above all, among mountains, he was content. In the fall of 1867 he walked a thousand miles from Louisville, Kentucky, through Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida to the Gulf of Mexico. Thence he went to California, in the spring of 1868, and in the mountains of that state found his true home. There in the Yosemite Valley, in 1871, Emerson found him, and was so impressed by his attainments as to exclaim that he was a greater naturalist than Thoreau. In 1880 he married Louie Wanda Strentzel, an event which caused him to settle down long enough to establish a fruit ranch, in which he was so successful that after ten years he was again in full possession of his time, with a permanent and sufficient income. Even, however, during those ten years there were several journeys to Alaska, undertaken primarily because of his geological studies; and later there

were longer ones, to Scotland, around the world through Europe, Asia, and Australia, and to South America and South Africa. But California remained his home, and in his later years he rendered the far West and all America a great public service in championing the cause of our national parks, whose very existence is probably due more to him than to all others. He died in a hospital in Los Angeles on 24 December, 1914.

It has been said that Muir published comparatively little because he did not wish to write, because he was content to enjoy the world of nature for its own sake. It is true that in the beginning, though he always kept full journals and note-books, he had no thought of becoming a writer for publication; but he was very early urged by discerning friends to write, and he soon agreed that he ought to do so. The fact is, however, that when he tried he found it extremely difficult. He wrote and rewrote almost in agony; he made many false beginnings; and as a consequence he often postponed the execution of his literary projects until some later day. As he grew older he pathetically and sorrowfully realized that many of his projected books, for which he had gathered full material, would probably lie unfinished at his death. Nevertheless, he did begin publishing papers in periodicals as early as 1871, and he published, besides several lesser books, four notable descriptive volumes, *The Mountains of California* (1894), *Our National Parks* (1901), *My First Summer in the Sierra* (1911), and *Travels in Alaska* (1915), and an autobiographical narrative of the highest interest, *The Story of My Boyhood and Youth* (1913). And, moreover, at his death his journals and notes passed into the hands of a capable and sympathetic editor, William Frederic Badè (also Muir's biographer), who has published three additional volumes, *A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf* (1916), *The Cruise of the Corwin* (1917), and *Steep Trails* (1918).

THE MOUNTAINS OF CALIFORNIA¹

CHAPTER III

THE SNOW

THE first snow that whitens the Sierra, usually falls about the end of October or early in November, to a depth of a few inches, after months of the most charming Indian summer weather imaginable. But in a few days, this light covering mostly melts from the slopes exposed to the sun and causes but little apprehension on the part of mountaineers who may be lingering among the high peaks at this time. The first general winter storm that yields snow that is to form a lasting portion of the season's supply, seldom breaks on the mountains before the end of November. Then, warned by the sky, cautious mountaineers, together with the wild sheep, deer, and most of the birds and bears, make haste to the lowlands or

foot-hills; and burrowing marmots, mountain beavers, wood-rats, and such people go into winter quarters, some of them not again to see the light of day until the general awakening and resurrection of the spring in June or July. The first heavy fall is usually from about two to four feet in depth. Then, with intervals of splendid sunshine, storm succeeds storm, heaping snow on snow, until thirty to fifty feet has fallen. But on account of its settling and compacting, and the almost constant waste from melting and evaporation, the average depth actually found at any time seldom exceeds ten feet in the forest region, or fifteen feet along the slopes of the summit peaks.

Even during the coldest weather evaporation never wholly ceases, and the sunshine that abounds between the storms is sufficiently powerful to melt the surface more or less through all the winter months. Waste from melting also goes on to some extent on the bottom from heat stored up in the rocks, and given off slowly to the snow in contact with them, as is shown by the rising of the streams on all the higher regions after the first snowfall, and their steady sustained flow all winter.

The greater portion of the snow deposited around the lofty summits of the range falls in small crisp flakes and broken crystals, or, when accompanied by strong winds and low temperature, the crystals, instead of being locked together in their fall to form tufted

¹ "More and more, as time goes on, and as later botanists, geographers, physiographers, and geologists supplement Muir's studies till they are covered over with accretions, as if they belonged to an earlier geological age, we shall go to such books as *The Mountains of California*, *Our National Parks*, and *My First Summer in the Sierra* for a living and accurate picture of the Great West such as no one else is likely soon to duplicate." (Norman Foerster, *Nature in American Literature*.)

The chapters here reprinted (from the New and Enlarged Edition of 1911) are used with the permission of the Century Company.

flakes, are beaten and broken into meal and fine dust. But down in the forest region the greater portion comes gently to the ground, light and feathery, some of the flakes in mild weather being nearly an inch in diameter, and it is evenly distributed and kept from drifting to any great extent by the shelter afforded by the large trees. Every tree during the progress of gentle storms is loaded with fairy bloom at the coldest and darkest time of year, bending the branches, and hushing every singing needle. But as soon as the storm is over, and the sun shines, the snow at once begins to shift and settle and fall from the branches in miniature avalanches, and the white forest soon becomes green again. The snow on the ground also settles and thaws every bright day, and freezes at night, until it becomes coarsely granulated, and loses every trace of its rayed crystalline structure, and then a man may walk firmly over its frozen surface as if on ice. The forest region up to an elevation of 7000 feet is usually in great part free from snow in June, but at this time the higher regions are still heavy-laden, and are not touched by spring weather to any considerable extent before the middle or end of July.

One of the most striking effects of the snow on the mountains is the burial of the rivers and small lakes.

As the snow falls in the river
A moment white, then lost forever,

sang Burns, in illustrating the fleeting character of human pleasure. The first snowflakes that fall into the Sierra rivers vanish thus suddenly; but in great storms, when the temperature is low, the abundance of the snow at length chills the water nearly to the freezing-point, and then, of course, it ceases to melt and consume the snow so suddenly. The falling flakes and crystals form cloud-like masses of blue sludge, which are swept forward with the current and carried down to warmer climates many miles distant, while some are lodged against logs and rocks and projecting points of the banks, and last for days, piled high above the level of the water, and show white again, instead of being at once "lost forever," while the rivers themselves are at length lost for months during the snowy period. The snow is first built out from the banks in bossy, over-

curling drifts, compacting and cementing until the streams are spanned. They then flow in the dark beneath a continuous covering across the snowy zone, which is about thirty miles wide. All the Sierra rivers and their tributaries in these high regions are thus lost every winter, as if another glacial period had come on. Not a drop of running water is to be seen excepting at a few points where large falls occur, though the rush and rumble of the heavier currents may still be heard. Toward spring, when the weather is warm during the day and frosty at night, repeated thawing and freezing and new layers of snow render the bridging-masses dense and firm, so that one may safely walk across the streams, or even lead a horse across them without danger of falling through. In June the thinnest parts of the winter ceiling, and those most exposed to sunshine, begin to give way, forming dark, rugged-edged, pit-like sinks, at the bottom of which the rushing water may be seen. At the end of June only here and there may the mountaineer find a secure snow-bridge. The most lasting of the winter bridges, thawing from below as well as from above, because of warm currents of air passing through the tunnels, are strikingly arched and sculptured; and by the occasional freezing of the oozing, dripping water of the ceiling they become brightly and picturesquely icy. In some of the reaches, where there is a free margin, we may walk through them. Small skylights appearing here and there, these tunnels are not very dark. The roaring river fills all the arching way with impressively loud reverberating music, which is sweetened at times by the ouzel, a bird that is not afraid to go wherever a stream may go, and to sing wherever a stream sings.

All the small alpine pools and lakelets are in like manner obliterated from the winter landscapes, either by being first frozen and then covered by snow, or by being filled in by avalanches. The first avalanche of the season shot into a lake basin may perhaps find the surface frozen. Then there is a grand crashing of breaking ice and dashing of waves mingled with the low, deep booming of the avalanche. Detached masses of the invading snow, mixed with fragments of ice, drift about in sludgy, island-like heaps, while the main body of it forms a talus with its base wholly or in part resting on the

bottom of the basin, as controlled by its depth and the size of the avalanche. The next avalanche, of course, encroaches still farther, and so on with each in succession until the entire basin may be filled and its water sponged up or displaced. This huge mass of sludge, more or less mixed with sand, stones, and perhaps timber, is frozen to a considerable depth, and much sun-heat is required to thaw it. Some of these unfortunate lakelets are not clear of ice and snow until near the end of summer. Others are never quite free, opening only on the side opposite the entrance of the avalanches. Some show only a narrow crescent of water lying between the shore and sheer bluffs of icy compacted snow, masses of which breaking off float in front like icebergs in a miniature Arctic Ocean, while the avalanche heaps leaning back against the mountains look like small glaciers. The frontal cliffs are in some instances quite picturesque, and with the berg-dotted waters in front of them lighted with sunshine are exceedingly beautiful. It often happens that while one side of a lake basin is hopelessly snow-buried and frozen, the other, enjoying sunshine, is adorned with beautiful flower-gardens. Some of the smaller lakes are extinguished in an instant by a heavy avalanche either of rocks or snow. The rolling, sliding, ponderous mass entering on one side sweeps across the bottom and up the opposite side, displacing the water and even scraping the basin clean, and shoving the accumulated rocks and sediments up the farther bank and taking full possession. The dislodged water is in part absorbed, but most of it is sent around the front of the avalanche and down the channel of the outlet, roaring and hurrying as if frightened and glad to escape.

SNOW-BANNERS

THE most magnificent storm phenomenon I ever saw, surpassing in showy grandeur the most imposing effects of clouds, floods, or avalanches, was the peaks of the High Sierra, back of Yosemite Valley, decorated with snow-banners. Many of the starry snow-flowers, out of which these banners are made, fall before they are ripe, while most of those that do attain perfect development as six-rayed crystals glint and chafe against one

another in their fall through the frosty air, and are broken into fragments. This dry fragmentary snow is still further prepared for the formation of banners by the action of the wind. For, instead of finding rest at once, like the snow which falls into the tranquil depths of the forests, it is rolled over and over, beaten against rock-ridges, and swirled in pits and hollows, like boulders, pebbles, and sand in the pot-holes of a river, until finally the delicate angles of the crystals are worn off, and the whole mass is reduced to dust. And whenever storm-winds find this prepared snow-dust in a loose condition on exposed slopes, where there is a free upward sweep to leeward, it is tossed back into the sky, and borne onward from peak to peak in the form of banners or cloudy drifts, according to the velocity of the wind and the conformation of the slopes up or around which it is driven. While thus flying through the air, a small portion makes good its escape, and remains in the sky as vapor. But far the greater part, after being driven into the sky again and again, is at length locked fast in bossy drifts, or in the wombs of glaciers, some of it to remain silent and rigid for centuries before it is finally melted and sent singing down the mountain-sides to the sea.

Yet, notwithstanding the abundance of winter snow-dust in the mountains, and the frequency of high winds, and the length of time the dust remains loose and exposed to their action, the occurrence of well-formed banners is, for causes we shall hereafter note, comparatively rare. I have seen only one display of this kind that seemed in every way perfect. This was in the winter of 1873, when the snow-laden summits were swept by a wild "norther." I happened at the time to be wintering in Yosemite Valley, that sublime Sierra temple where every day one may see the grandest sights. Yet even here the wild gala-day of the north wind seemed surpassingly glorious. I was awakened in the morning by the rocking of my cabin and the beating of pine-burs on the roof. Detached torrents and avalanches from the main wind-flood overhead were rushing wildly down the narrow side cañons, and over the precipitous walls, with loud resounding roar, rousing the pines to enthusiastic action, and making the whole

valley vibrate as though it were an instrument being played.

But afar on the lofty exposed peaks of the range standing so high in the sky, the storm was expressing itself in still grander characters, which I was soon to see in all their glory. I had long been anxious to study some points in the structure of the ice-cone that is formed every winter at the foot of the upper Yosemite fall, but the blinding spray by which it is invested had hitherto prevented me from making a sufficiently near approach. This morning the entire body of the fall was torn into gauzy shreds, and blown horizontally along the face of the cliff, leaving the cone dry; and while making my way to the top of an overlooking ledge to seize so favorable an opportunity to examine the interior of the cone, the peaks of the Merced group came in sight over the shoulder of the South Dome, each waving a resplendent banner against the blue sky, as regular in form, and as firm in texture, as if woven of fine silk. So rare and splendid a phenomenon, of course, overbore all other considerations, and I at once let the ice-cone go, and began to force my way out of the valley to some dome or ridge sufficiently lofty to command a general view of the main summits, feeling assured that I should find them bannered still more gloriously; nor was I in the least disappointed. Indian Cañon, through which I climbed, was choked with snow that had been shot down in avalanches from the high cliffs on either side, rendering the ascent difficult; but inspired by the roaring storm, the tedious wallowing brought no fatigue, and in four hours I gained the top of a ridge above the valley, 8000 feet high. And there in bold relief, like a clear painting, appeared a most imposing scene. Innumerable peaks, black and sharp, rose grandly into the dark blue sky, their bases set in solid white, their sides streaked and splashed with snow, like ocean rocks with foam; and from every summit, all free and unconfused, was streaming a beautiful silky silvery banner, from half a mile to a mile in length, slender at the point of attachment, then widening gradually as it extended from the peak until it was about 1000 or 1500 feet in breadth, as near as I could estimate. The cluster of peaks called the "Crown of the Sierra," at the head of the Merced and

Tuolumne rivers,—Mounts Dana, Gibbs, Conness, Lyell, Maclure, Ritter, with their nameless compeers,—each had its own resplendent banner, waving with a clearly visible motion in the sunglow, and there was not a single cloud in the sky to mar their simple grandeur. Fancy yourself standing on this Yosemite ridge looking eastward. You notice a strange garish glitter in the air. The gale drives wildly overhead with a fierce, tempestuous roar, but its violence is not felt, for you are looking through a sheltered opening in the woods as through a window. There, in the immediate foreground of your picture, rises a majestic forest of Silver Fir blooming in eternal freshness, the foliage yellow-green, and the snow beneath the trees strewn with their beautiful plumes, plucked off by the wind. Beyond, and extending over all the middle ground, are somber swaths of pine, interrupted by huge swelling ridges and domes; and just beyond the dark forest you see the monarchs of the High Sierra waving their magnificent banners. They are twenty miles away, but you would not wish them nearer, for every feature is distinct, and the whole glorious show is seen in its right proportions. After this general view, mark how sharply the dark snowless ribs and buttresses and summits of the peaks are defined, excepting the portions veiled by the banners, and how delicately their sides are streaked with snow, where it has come to rest in narrow flutings and gorges. Mark, too, how grandly the banners wave as the wind is deflected against their sides, and how trimly each is attached to the very summit of its peak, like a streamer at a masthead; how smooth and silky they are in texture, and how finely their fading fringes are penciled on the azure sky. See how dense and opaque they are at the point of attachment, and how filmy and translucent toward the end, so that the peaks back of them are seen dimly, as though you were looking through ground glass. Yet again observe how some of the longest, belonging to the loftiest summits, stream perfectly free all the way across intervening notches and passes from peak to peak, while others overlap and partly hide each other. And consider how keenly every particle of this wondrous cloth of snow is flashing out jets of light. These are the main features of

the beautiful and terrible picture as seen from the forest window; and it would still be surpassingly glorious were the fore- and middle-grounds obliterated altogether, leaving only the black peaks, the white banners, and the blue sky.

Glancing now in a general way at the formation of snow-banners, we find that the main causes of the wondrous beauty and perfection of those we have been contemplating were the favorable direction and great force of the wind, the abundance of snow-dust, and the peculiar conformation of the slopes of the peaks. It is essential not only that the wind should move with great velocity and steadiness to supply a sufficiently copious and continuous stream of snow-dust, but that it should come from the north. No perfect banner is ever hung on the Sierra peaks by a south wind. Had the gale that day blown from the south, leaving other conditions unchanged, only a dull, confused, fog-like drift would have been produced; for the snow, instead of being spouted up over the tops of the peaks in concentrated currents to be drawn out as streamers, would have been shed off around the sides, and piled down into the glacier wombs. The cause of the concentrated action of the north wind is found in the peculiar form of the north sides of the peaks, where the amphitheaters of the residual glaciers are. In general the south sides are convex and irregular, while the north sides are concave both in their vertical and horizontal sections; the wind in ascending these curves converges toward the summits, carrying the snow in concentrating currents with it, shooting it almost straight up into the air above the peaks, from which it is then carried away in a horizontal direction.

This difference in form between the north and south sides of the peaks was almost wholly produced by the difference in the kind and quantity of the glaciation to which they have been subjected, the north sides having been hollowed by residual shadow-glaciers of a form that never existed on the sun-beaten sides.

It appears, therefore, that shadows in great part determine not only the forms of lofty icy mountains, but also those of the snow-banners that the wild winds hang on them.

CHAPTER IV

A NEAR VIEW OF THE HIGH SIERRA

EARLY one bright morning in the middle of Indian summer, while the glacier meadows were still crisp with frost crystals, I set out from the foot of Mount Lyell, on my way down to Yosemite Valley, to replenish my exhausted store of bread and tea. I had spent the past summer, as many preceding ones, exploring the glaciers that lie on the head waters of the San Joaquin, Tuolumne, Merced, and Owen's rivers; measuring and studying their movements, trends, crevasses, moraines, *etc.*, and the part they had played during the period of their greater extension in the creation and development of the landscapes of this alpine wonderland. The time for this kind of work was nearly over for the year, and I began to look forward with delight to the approaching winter with its wondrous storms, when I would be warmly snow-bound in my Yosemite cabin with plenty of bread and books; but a tinge of regret came on when I considered that possibly I might not see this favorite region again until the next summer, excepting distant views from the heights about the Yosemite walls.

To artists, few portions of the High Sierra are, strictly speaking, picturesque. The whole massive uplift of the range is one great picture, not clearly divisible into smaller ones; differing much in this respect from the older, and what may be called, riper mountains of the Coast Range. All the landscapes of the Sierra, as we have seen, were born again, remodeled from base to summit by the developing ice-floods of the last glacial winter. But all these new landscapes were not brought forth simultaneously; some of the highest, where the ice lingered longest, are tens of centuries younger than those of the warmer regions below them. In general, the younger the mountain-landscapes,—younger, I mean, with reference to the time of their emergence from the ice of the glacial period,—the less separable are they into artistic bits capable of being made into warm, sympathetic, lovable pictures with appreciable humanity in them.

Here, however, on the head waters of the Tuolumne, is a group of wild peaks on which

the geologist may say that the sun has but just begun to shine, which is yet in a high degree picturesque, and in its main features so regular and evenly balanced as almost to appear conventional—one somber cluster of snow-laden peaks with gray pine-fringed granite bosses braided around its base, the whole surging free into the sky from the head of a magnificent valley, whose lofty walls are beveled away on both sides so as to embrace it all without admitting anything not strictly belonging to it. The foreground was now aflame with autumn colors, brown and purple and gold, ripe in the mellow sunshine; contrasting brightly with the deep, cobalt blue of the sky, and the black and gray, and pure, spiritual white of the rocks and glaciers. Down through the midst, the young Tuolumne was seen pouring from its crystal fountains, now resting in glassy pools as if changing back again into ice, now leaping in white cascades as if turning to snow; gliding right and left between granite bosses, then sweeping on through the smooth, meadowy levels of the valley, swaying pensively from side to side with calm, stately gestures past dipping willows and sedges, and around groves of arrowy pine; and throughout its whole eventful course, whether flowing fast or slow, singing loud or low, ever filling the landscape with spiritual animation, and manifesting the grandeur of its sources in every movement and tone.

Pursuing my lonely way down the valley, I turned again and again to gaze on the glorious picture, throwing up my arms to inclose it as in a frame. After long ages of growth in the darkness beneath the glaciers, through sunshine and storms, it seemed now to be ready and waiting for the elected artist, like yellow wheat for the reaper; and I could not help wishing that I might carry colors and brushes with me on my travels, and learn to paint. In the mean time I had to be content with photographs on my mind and sketches in my note-books. At length, after I had rounded a precipitous headland that puts out from the west wall of the valley, every peak vanished from sight, and I pushed rapidly along the frozen meadows, over the divide between the waters of the Merced and Tuolumne, and down through the forests that clothe the slopes of Cloud's

Rest, arriving in Yosemite in due time—which, with me, is *any* time. And, strange to say, among the first people I met here were two artists who, with letters of introduction, were awaiting my return. They inquired whether in the course of my explorations in the adjacent mountains I had ever come upon a landscape suitable for a large painting; whereupon I began a description of the one that had so lately excited my admiration. Then, as I went on further and further into details, their faces began to glow, and I offered to guide them to it, while they declared that they would gladly follow, far or near, whithersoever I could spare the time to lead them.

Since storms might come breaking down through the fine weather at any time, burying the colors in snow, and cutting off the artists' retreat, I advised getting ready at once.

I led them out of the valley by the Vernal and Nevada Falls, thence over the main dividing ridge to the Big Tuolumne Meadows, by the old Mono trail, and thence along the upper Tuolumne River to its head. This was my companions' first excursion into the High Sierra, and as I was almost always alone in my mountaineering, the way that the fresh beauty was reflected in their faces made for me a novel and interesting study. They naturally were affected most of all by the colors—the intense azure of the sky, the purplish grays of the granite, the red and browns of dry meadows, and the translucent purple and crimson of huckleberry bogs; the flaming yellow of aspen groves, the silvery flashing of the streams, and the bright green and blue of the glacier lakes. But the general expression of the scenery—rocky and savage—seemed sadly disappointing; and as they threaded the forest from ridge to ridge, eagerly scanning the landscapes as they were unfolded, they said: "All this is huge and sublime, but we see nothing as yet at all available for effective pictures. Art is long, and art is limited, you know; and here are foregrounds, middle-grounds, backgrounds, all alike; bare rock-waves, woods, groves, diminutive flecks of meadow, and strips of glittering water." "Never mind," I replied, "only bide a wee, and I will show you something you will like."

At length, toward the end of the second day, the Sierra Crown began to come into

view, and when we had fairly rounded the projecting headland before mentioned, the whole picture stood revealed in the flush of the alpenglow. Their enthusiasm was excited beyond bounds, and the more impulsive of the two, a young Scotchman, dashed ahead, shouting and gesticulating and tossing his arms in the air like a madman. Here, at last, was a typical alpine landscape.

After feasting awhile on the view, I proceeded to make camp in a sheltered grove a little way back from the meadow, where pine-boughs could be obtained for beds, and where there was plenty of dry wood for fires, while the artists ran here and there, along the river-bends and up the sides of the cañon, choosing foregrounds for sketches. After dark, when our tea was made and a rousing fire had been built, we began to make our plans. They decided to remain several days, at the least, while I concluded to make an excursion in the mean time to the untouched summit of Ritter.

It was now about the middle of October, the springtime of snow-flowers. The first winter-clouds had already bloomed, and the peaks were strewn with fresh crystals, without, however, affecting the climbing to any dangerous extent. And as the weather was still profoundly calm, and the distance to the foot of the mountain only a little more than a day, I felt that I was running no great risk of being storm-bound.

Mount Ritter is king of the mountains of the middle portion of the High Sierra, as Shasta of the north and Whitney of the south sections. Moreover, as far as I know, it had never been climbed. I had explored the adjacent wilderness summer after summer, but my studies thus far had never drawn me to the top of it. Its height above sea-level is about 13,300 feet, and it is fenced round by steeply inclined glaciers, and cañons of tremendous depth and ruggedness, which render it almost inaccessible. But difficulties of this kind only exhilarate the mountaineer.

Next morning, the artists went heartily to their work and I to mine. Former experiences had given good reason to know that passionate storms, invisible as yet, might be brooding in the calm sun-gold; therefore, before bidding farewell, I warned the artists not to be alarmed should I fail to appear

before a week or ten days, and advised them, in case a snow-storm should set in, to keep up big fires and shelter themselves as best they could, and on no account to become frightened and attempt to seek their way back to Yosemite alone through the drifts.

My general plan was simply this: to scale the cañon wall, cross over to the eastern flank of the range, and then make my way southward to the northern spurs of Mount Ritter in compliance with the intervening topography; for to push on directly southward from camp through the innumerable peaks and pinnacles that adorn this portion of the axis of the range, however interesting, would take too much time, besides being extremely difficult and dangerous at this time of year.

All my first day was pure pleasure; simply mountaineering indulgence, crossing the dry pathways of the ancient glaciers, tracing happy streams, and learning the habits of the birds and marmots in the groves and rocks. Before I had gone a mile from camp, I came to the foot of a white cascade that beats its way down a rugged gorge in the cañon wall, from a height of about nine hundred feet, and pours its throbbing waters into the Tuolumne. I was acquainted with its fountains, which, fortunately, lay in my course. What a fine traveling companion it proved to be, what songs it sang, and how passionately it told the mountain's own joy! Gladly I climbed along its dashing border, absorbing its divine music, and bathing from time to time in waftings of irised spray. Climbing higher, higher, new beauty came streaming on the sight: painted meadows, late-blooming gardens, peaks of rare architecture, lakes here and there, shining like silver, and glimpses of the forested middle region and the yellow lowlands far in the west. Beyond the range I saw the so-called Mono Desert, lying dreamily silent in thick purple light—a desert of heavy sun-glare beheld from a desert of ice-burnished granite. Here the waters divide, shouting in glorious enthusiasm, and falling eastward to vanish in the volcanic sands and dry sky of the Great Basin, or westward to the Great Valley of California, and thence through the Bay of San Francisco and the Golden Gate to the sea.

Passing a little way down over the summit until I had reached an elevation of about 10,000 feet, I pushed on southward toward a group of savage peaks that stand guard about Ritter on the north and west, groping my way, and dealing instinctively with every obstacle as it presented itself. Here a huge gorge would be found cutting across my path, along the dizzy edge of which I scrambled until some less precipitous point was discovered where I might safely venture to the bottom and then, selecting some feasible portion of the opposite wall, re-ascend with the same slow caution. Massive, flat-topped spurs alternate with the gorges, plunging abruptly from the shoulders of the snowy peaks, and planting their feet in the warm desert. These were everywhere marked and adorned with characteristic sculptures of the ancient glaciers that swept over this entire region like one vast ice-wind, and the polished surfaces produced by the ponderous flood are still so perfectly preserved that in many places the sunlight reflected from them is about as trying to the eyes as sheets of snow.

God's glacial-mills grind slowly, but they have been kept in motion long enough in California to grind sufficient soil for a glorious abundance of life, though most of the grist has been carried to the lowlands, leaving these high regions comparatively lean and bare; while the post-glacial agents of erosion have not yet furnished sufficient available food over the general surface for more than a few tufts of the hardiest plants, chiefly carices and eriogonæ. And it is interesting to learn in this connection that the sparseness and repressed character of the vegetation at this height is caused more by want of soil than by harshness of climate; for, here and there, in sheltered hollows (countersunk beneath the general surface) into which a few rods of well-ground moraine chips have been dumped, we find groves of spruce and pine thirty to forty feet high, trimmed around the edges with willow and huckleberry bushes, and oftentimes still further by an outer ring of tall grasses, bright with lupines, larkspurs, and showy columbines, suggesting a climate by no means repressingly severe. All the streams, too, and the pools at this elevation are furnished with little gardens wherever soil can be made

to lie, which, though making scarce any show at a distance, constitute charming surprises to the appreciative observer. In these bits of leafiness a few birds find grateful homes. Having no acquaintance with man, they fear no ill, and flock curiously about the stranger, almost allowing themselves to be taken in the hand. In so wild and so beautiful a region was spent my first day, every sight and sound inspiring, leading one far out of himself, yet feeding and building up his individuality.

Now came the solemn, silent evening. Long, blue, spiky shadows crept out across the snow-fields, while a rosy glow, at first scarce discernible, gradually deepened and suffused every mountain-top, flushing the glaciers and the harsh crags above them. This was the alpenglow, to me one of the most impressive of all the terrestrial manifestations of God. At the touch of this divine light, the mountains seemed to kindle to a rapt, religious consciousness, and stood hushed and waiting like devout worshipers. Just before the alpenglow began to fade, two crimson clouds came streaming across the summit like wings of flame, rendering the sublime scene yet more impressive; then came darkness and the stars.

Icy Ritter was still miles away, but I could proceed no farther that night. I found a good camp-ground on the rim of a glacier basin about 11,000 feet above the sea. A small lake nestles in the bottom of it, from which I got water for my tea, and a stormbeaten thicket near by furnished abundance of resiny fire-wood. Sombre peaks, hacked and shattered, circled half-way around the horizon, wearing a savage aspect in the gloaming, and a waterfall chanted solemnly across the lake on its way down from the foot of a glacier. The fall and the lake and the glacier were almost equally bare; while the scraggy pines anchored in the rock-fissures were so dwarfed and shorn by storm-winds that you might walk over their tops. In tone and aspect the scene was one of the most desolate I ever beheld. But the darkest scriptures of the mountains are illumined with bright passages of love that never fail to make themselves felt when one is alone.

I made my bed in a nook of the pine-thicket, where the branches were pressed

and crinkled overhead like a roof, and bent down around the sides. These are the best bedchambers the high mountains afford—snug as squirrel-nests, well ventilated, full of spicy odors, and with plenty of wind-played needles to sing one asleep. I little expected company, but, creeping in through a low side-door, I found five or six birds nestling among the tassels. The night-wind began to blow soon after dark; at first only a gentle breathing, but increasing toward midnight to a rough gale that fell upon my leafy roof in ragged surges like a cascade, bearing wild sounds from the crags overhead. The waterfall sang in chorus, filling the old ice-fountain with its solemn roar, and seeming to increase in power as the night advanced—fit voice for such a landscape. I had to creep out many times to the fire during the night, for it was biting cold and I had no blankets. Gladly I welcomed the morning star.

The dawn in the dry, wavering air of the desert was glorious. Everything encouraged my undertaking and betokened success. There was no cloud in the sky, no storm-tone in the wind. Breakfast of bread and tea was soon made. I fastened a hard, durable crust to my belt by way of provision, in case I should be compelled to pass a night on the mountain-top; then, securing the remainder of my little stock against wolves and wood-rats, I set forth free and hopeful.

How glorious a greeting the sun gives the mountains! To behold this alone is worth the pains of any excursion a thousand times over. The highest peaks burned like islands in a sea of liquid shade. Then the lower peaks and spires caught the glow, and long lances of light, streaming through many a notch and pass, fell thick on the frozen meadows. The majestic form of Ritter was full in sight, and I pushed rapidly on over rounded rock-bosses and pavements, my iron-shod shoes making a clanking sound, suddenly hushed now and then in rugs of bryanthus, and sedgy lake-margins soft as moss. Here, too, in this so-called "land of desolation," I met cassiope, growing in fringes among the battered rocks. Her blossoms had faded long ago, but they were still clinging with happy memories to the evergreen sprays, and still so beautiful as to thrill every fiber of one's being. Winter and

summer, you may hear her voice, the low, sweet melody of her purple bells. No evangel among all the mountain plants speaks Nature's love more plainly than cassiope. Where she dwells, the redemption of the coldest solitude is complete. The very rocks and glaciers seem to feel her presence, and become imbued with her own fountain sweetness. All things were warming and awakening. Frozen rills began to flow, the marmots came out of their nests in boulder-piles and climbed sunny rocks to bask, and the dun-headed sparrows were flitting about seeking their breakfasts. The lakes seen from every ridge-top were brilliantly rippled and spangled, shimmering like the thickets of the low Dwarf Pines. The rocks, too, seemed responsive to the vital heat—rock-crystals and snow-crystals thrilling alike. I strode on exhilarated, as if never more to feel fatigue, limbs moving of themselves, every sense unfolding like the thawing flowers, to take part in the new day harmony.

All along my course thus far, excepting when down in the cañons, the landscapes were mostly open to me, and expansive, at least on one side. On the left were the purple plains of Mono, reposing dreamily and warm; on the right, the near peaks springing keenly into the thin sky with more and more impressive sublimity. But these larger views were at length lost. Rugged spurs, and moraines, and huge, projecting buttresses began to shut me in. Every feature became more rigidly alpine, without, however, producing any chilling effect; for going to the mountains is like going home. We always find that the strangest objects in these fountain wilds are in some degree familiar, and we look upon them with a vague sense of having seen them before.

On the southern shore of a frozen lake, I encountered an extensive field of hard, granular snow, up which I scampered in fine tone, intending to follow it to its head, and cross the rocky spur against which it leans, hoping thus to come direct upon the base of the main Ritter peak. The surface was pitted with oval hollows, made by stones and drifted pine-needles that had melted themselves into the mass by the radiation of absorbed sun-heat. These afforded good footholds, but the surface curved more and

more steeply at the head, and the pits became shallower and less abundant, until I found myself in danger of being shed off like avalanching snow. I persisted, however, creeping on all fours, and shuffling up the smoothest places on my back, as I had often done on burnished granite, until, after slipping several times, I was compelled to retrace my course to the bottom, and make my way around the west end of the lake, and thence up to the summit of the divide between the head waters of Rush Creek and the northernmost tributaries of the San Joaquin.

Arriving on the summit of this dividing crest, one of the most exciting pieces of pure wilderness was disclosed that I ever discovered in all my mountaineering. There, immediately in front, loomed the majestic mass of Mount Ritter, with a glacier swooping down its face nearly to my feet, then curving westward and pouring its frozen flood into a dark blue lake, whose shores were bound with precipices of crystalline snow; while a deep chasm drawn between the divide and the glacier separated the massive picture from everything else. I could see only the one sublime mountain, the one glacier, the one lake; the whole veiled with one blue shadow—rock, ice, and water close together without a single leaf or sign of life. After gazing spellbound, I began instinctively to scrutinize every notch and gorge and weathered buttress of the mountain, with reference to making the ascent. The entire front above the glacier appeared as one tremendous precipice, slightly receding at the top, and bristling with spires and pinacles set above one another in formidable array. Massive lichen-stained battlements stood forward here and there, hacked at the top with angular notches, and separated by frosty gullies and recesses that have been veiled in shadow ever since their creation; while to right and left, as far as I could see, were huge, crumbling buttresses, offering no hope to the climber. The head of the glacier sends up a few finger-like branches through narrow *coulloirs*; but these seemed too steep and short to be available, especially as I had no ax with which to cut steps, and the numerous narrow-throated gullies down which stones and snow are avalanched seemed hopelessly steep, besides being interrupted

by vertical cliffs; while the whole front was rendered still more terribly forbidding by the chill shadow and the gloomy blackness of the rocks.

Descending the divide in a hesitating mood, I picked my way across the yawning chasm at the foot, and climbed out upon the glacier. There were no meadows now to cheer with their brave colors, nor could I hear the dun-headed sparrows, whose cheery notes so often relieve the silence of our highest mountains. The only sounds were the gurgling of small rills down in the veins and crevasses of the glacier, and now and then the rattling report of falling stones, with the echoes they shot out into the crisp air.

I could not distinctly hope to reach the summit from this side, yet I moved on across the glacier as if driven by fate. Contending with myself, the season is too far spent, I said, and even should I be successful, I might be storm-bound on the mountain; and in the cloud-darkness, with the cliffs and crevasses covered with snow, how could I escape? No; I must wait till next summer. I would only approach the mountain now, and inspect it, creep about its flanks, learn what I could of its history, holding myself ready to flee on the approach of the first storm-cloud. But we little know until tried how much of the uncontrollable there is in us, urging across glaciers and torrents, and up dangerous heights, let the judgment forbid as it may.

I succeeded in gaining the foot of the cliff on the eastern extremity of the glacier, and there discovered the mouth of a narrow avalanche gully, through which I began to climb, intending to follow it as far as possible, and at least obtain some fine wild views for my pains. Its general course is oblique to the plane of the mountain-face, and the metamorphic slates of which the mountain is built are cut by cleavage planes in such a way that they weather off in angular blocks, giving rise to irregular steps that greatly facilitate climbing on the sheer places. I thus made my way into a wilderness of crumbling spires and battlements, built together in bewildering combinations, and glazed in many places with a thin coating of ice, which I had to hammer off with stones. The situation was becoming gradually more

perilous; but, having passed several dangerous spots, I dared not think of descending; for, so steep was the entire ascent, one would inevitably fall to the glacier in case a single misstep were made. Knowing, therefore, the tried danger beneath, I became all the more anxious concerning the developments to be made above, and began to be conscious of a vague foreboding of what actually befell: not that I was given to fear, but rather because my instincts, usually so positive and true, seemed vitiated in some way, and were leading me astray. At length, after attaining an elevation of about 12,800 feet, I found myself at the foot of a sheer drop in the bed of the avalanche channel I was tracing, which seemed absolutely to bar further progress. It was only about forty-five or fifty feet high, and somewhat roughened by fissures and projections; but these seemed so slight and insecure, as footholds, that I tried hard to avoid the precipice altogether, by scaling the wall of the channel on either side. But, though less steep, the walls were smoother than the obstructing rock, and repeated efforts only showed that I must either go right ahead or turn back. The tried dangers beneath seemed even greater than that of the cliff in front; therefore, after scanning its face again and again, I began to scale it, picking my holds with intense caution. After gaining a point about half-way to the top, I was suddenly brought to a dead stop, with arms outspread, clinging close to the face of the rock, unable to move hand or foot either up or down. My doom appeared fixed. I *must* fall. There would be a moment of bewilderment, and then a lifeless rumble down the one general precipice to the glacier below.

When this final danger flashed upon me, I became nerve-shaken for the first time since setting foot on the mountains, and my mind seemed to fill with a stifling smoke. But this terrible eclipse lasted only a moment, when life blazed forth again with preternatural clearness. I seemed suddenly to become possessed of a new sense. The other self, bygone experiences, Instinct, or Guardian Angel,—call it what you will,—came forward and assumed control. Then my trembling muscles became firm again, every rift and flaw in the rock was seen as through a microscope, and my limbs moved

with a positiveness and precision with which I seemed to have nothing at all to do. Had I been borne aloft upon wings, my deliverance could not have been more complete.

Above this memorable spot, the face of the mountain is still more savagely hacked and torn. It is a maze of yawning chasms and gullies, in the angles of which rise beetling crags and piles of detached boulders that seem to have been gotten ready to be launched below. But the strange influx of strength I had received seemed inexhaustible. I found a way without effort, and soon stood upon the topmost crag in the blessed light.

How truly glorious the landscape circled around this noble summit!—giant mountains, valleys innumerable, glaciers and meadows, rivers and lakes, with the wide blue sky bent tenderly over them all. But in my first hour of freedom from that terrible shadow, the sunlight in which I was laving seemed all in all.

Looking southward along the axis of the range, the eye is first caught by a row of exceedingly sharp and slender spires, which rise openly to a height of about a thousand feet, above a series of short, residual glaciers that lean back against their bases; their fantastic sculpture and the unrelieved sharpness with which they spring out of the ice rendering them peculiarly wild and striking. These are "The Minarets." Beyond them you behold a sublime wilderness of mountains, their snowy summits towering together in crowded abundance, peak beyond peak, swelling higher, higher as they sweep on southward, until the culminating point of the range is reached on Mount Whitney, near the head of the Kern River, at an elevation of nearly 14,700 feet above the level of the sea.

Westward, the general flank of the range is seen flowing sublimely away from the sharp summits, in smooth undulations; a sea of huge gray granite waves dotted with lakes and meadows, and fluted with stupendous cañons that grow steadily deeper as they recede in the distance. Below this gray region lies the dark forest zone, broken here and there by upswelling ridges and domes; and yet beyond lies a yellow, hazy belt, marking the broad plain of the San Joaquin, bounded on its farther side by the blue mountains of the coast.

Turning now to the northward, there in the immediate foreground is the glorious Sierra Crown, with Cathedral Peak, a temple of marvelous architecture, a few degrees to the left of it; the gray, massive form of Mammoth Mountain to the right; while Mounts Ord, Gibbs, Dana, Conness, Tower Peak, Castle Peak, Silver Mountain, and a host of noble companions, as yet nameless, make a sublime show along the axis of the range.

Eastward, the whole region seems a land of desolation covered with beautiful light. The torrid volcanic basin of Mono, with its one bare lake fourteen miles long; Owen's Valley and the broad lava table-land at its head, dotted with craters, and the massive Inyo Range, rivaling even the Sierra in height; these are spread, map-like, beneath you, with countless ranges beyond, passing and overlapping one another and fading on the glowing horizon.

At a distance of less than 3,000 feet below the summit of Mount Ritter you may find tributaries of the San Joaquin and Owen's rivers, bursting forth from the ice and snow of the glaciers that load its flanks; while a little to the north of here are found the highest affluents of the Tuolumne and Merced. Thus, the fountains of four of the principal rivers of California are within a radius of four or five miles.

Lakes are seen gleaming in all sorts of places,—round, or oval, or square, like very mirrors; others narrow and sinuous, drawn close around the peaks like silver zones, the highest reflecting only rocks, snow, and the sky. But neither these nor the glaciers, nor the bits of brown meadow and moorland that occur here and there, are large enough to make any marked impression upon the mighty wilderness of mountains. The eye, rejoicing in its freedom, roves about the vast expanse, yet returns again and again to the fountain peaks. Perhaps some one of the multitude excites special attention, some gigantic castle with turret and battlement, or some Gothic cathedral more abundantly spired than Milan's. But, generally, when looking for the first time from an all-embracing standpoint like this, the inexperienced observer is oppressed by the incomprehensible grandeur, variety, and abundance of the mountains rising shoulder

to shoulder beyond the reach of vision; and it is only after they have been studied one by one, long and lovingly, that their far-reaching harmonies become manifest. Then, penetrate the wilderness where you may, the main telling features, to which all the surrounding topography is subordinate, are quickly perceived, and the most complicated clusters of peaks stand revealed harmoniously correlated and fashioned like works of art—eloquent monuments of the ancient ice-rivers that brought them into relief from the general mass of the range. The cañons, too, some of them a mile deep, mazing wildly through the mighty host of mountains, however lawless and ungovernable at first sight they appear, are at length recognized as the necessary effects of causes which followed each other in harmonious sequence—Nature's poems carved on tables of stone—the simplest and most emphatic of her glacial compositions.

Could we have been here to observe during the glacial period, we should have overlooked a wrinkled ocean of ice as continuous as that now covering the landscapes of Greenland; filling every valley and cañon with only the tops of the fountain peaks rising darkly above the rock-encumbered ice-waves like islets in a stormy sea—those islets the only hints of the glorious landscapes now smiling in the sun. Standing here in the deep, brooding silence all the wilderness seems motionless, as if the work of creation were done. But in the midst of this outer steadfastness we know there is incessant motion and change. Ever and anon, avalanches are falling from yonder peaks. These cliff-bound glaciers, seemingly wedged and immovable, are flowing like water and grinding the rocks beneath them. The lakes are lapping their granite shores and wearing them away, and every one of these rills and young rivers is fretting the air into music, and carrying the mountains to the plains. Here are the roots of all the life of the valleys, and here more simply than elsewhere is the eternal flux of nature manifested. Ice changing to water, lakes to meadows, and mountains to plains. And while we thus contemplate Nature's methods of landscape creation, and, reading the records she has carved on the rocks, reconstruct, however imperfectly, the landscapes

of the past, we also learn that as these we now behold have succeeded those of the pre-glacial age, so they in turn are withering and vanishing to be succeeded by others yet unborn.

But in the midst of these fine lessons and landscapes, I had to remember that the sun was wheeling far to the west, while a new way down the mountain had to be discovered to some point on the timber line where I could have a fire; for I had not even burdened myself with a coat. I first scanned the western spurs, hoping some way might appear through which I might reach the northern glacier, and cross its snout; or pass around the lake into which it flows, and thus strike my morning track. This route was soon sufficiently unfolded to show that, if practicable at all, it would require so much time that reaching camp that night would be out of the question. I therefore scrambled back eastward, descending the southern slopes obliquely at the same time. Here the crags seemed less formidable, and the head of a glacier that flows northeast came in sight, which I determined to follow as far as possible, hoping thus to make my way to the foot of the peak on the east side, and thence across the intervening cañons and ridges to camp.

The inclination of the glacier is quite moderate at the head, and, as the sun had softened the *névé*, I made safe and rapid progress, running and sliding, and keeping up a sharp outlook for crevasses. About half a mile from the head, there is an ice-cascade, where the glacier pours over a sharp declivity and is shattered into massive blocks separated by deep, blue fissures. To thread my way through the slippery mazes of this crevassed portion seemed impossible, and I endeavored to avoid it by climbing off to the shoulder of the mountain. But the slopes rapidly steepened and at length fell away in sheer precipices, compelling a return to the ice. Fortunately, the day had been warm enough to loosen the ice-crystals so as to admit of hollows being dug in the rotten portions of the blocks, thus enabling me to pick my way with far less difficulty than I had anticipated. Continuing down over the snout, and along the left lateral moraine, was only a confident saunter, showing that the ascent of the mountain by way

of this glacier is easy, provided one is armed with an ax to cut steps here and there.

The lower end of the glacier was beautifully waved and barred by the outcropping edges of the bedded ice-layers which represent the annual snowfalls, and to some extent the irregularities of structure caused by the weathering of the walls of crevasses, and by separate snowfalls which have been followed by rain, hail, thawing and freezing, *etc.* Small rills were gliding and swirling over the melting surface with a smooth, oily appearance, in channels of pure ice—their quick, compliant movements contrasting most impressively with the rigid, invisible flow of the glacier itself, on whose back they all were riding.

Night drew near before I reached the eastern base of the mountain, and my camp lay many a rugged mile to the north; but ultimate success was assured. It was now only a matter of endurance and ordinary mountain-craft. The sunset was, if possible, yet more beautiful than that of the day before. The Mono landscape seemed to be fairly saturated with warm, purple light. The peaks marshaled along the summit were in shadow, but through every notch and pass streamed vivid sunfire, soothing and irradiating their rough, black angles, while companies of small, luminous clouds hovered above them like very angels of light.

Darkness came on, but I found my way by the trends of the cañons and the peaks projected against the sky. All excitement died with the light, and then I was weary. But the joyful sound of the waterfall across the lake was heard at last, and soon the stars were seen reflected in the lake itself. Taking my bearings from these, I discovered the little pine thicket in which my nest was, and then I had a rest such as only a tired mountaineer may enjoy. After lying loose and lost for awhile, I made a sunrise fire, went down to the lake, dashed water on my head, and dipped a cupful for tea. The revival brought about by bread and tea was as complete as the exhaustion from excessive enjoyment and toil. Then I crept beneath the pine-tassels to bed. The wind was frosty and the fire burned low, but my sleep was none the less sound, and the evening constellations had swept far to the west before I awoke.

After thawing and resting in the morning sunshine, I sauntered home,—that is, back to the Tuolumne camp,—bearing away toward a cluster of peaks that hold the fountain snows of one of the north tributaries of Rush Creek. Here I discovered a group of beautiful glacier lakes, nestled together in a grand amphitheater. Toward evening, I crossed the divide separating the Mono waters from those of the Tuolumne, and entered the glacier basin that now holds the fountain snows of the stream that forms the upper Tuolumne cascades. This stream I traced down through its many dells and gorges, meadows and bogs, reaching the brink of the main Tuolumne at dusk.

A loud whoop for the artists was answered again and again. Their camp-fire came in sight, and half an hour afterward I was with them. They seemed unreasonably glad to see me. I had been absent only three days; nevertheless, though the weather was fine, they had already been weighing chances as to whether I would ever return, and trying to decide whether they should wait longer or begin to seek their way back to the lowlands. Now their curious troubles were over. They packed their precious sketches, and next morning we set out homeward bound, and in two days entered the Yosemite Valley from the north by way of Indian Cañon.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS (1837-1920)

Howells was born at Martin's Ferry, Ohio, on 1 March, 1837. His grandfather, a Quaker, had come to America from Wales in 1808. His father, mild, wise, generous, honorable, and wholly impractical, was a Swedenborgian, devoted to books, who tried unsuccessfully to make his living as a printer and newspaper publisher. Howells had little formal schooling. Even earlier than his friend Mark Twain, he was at work in a printing office, remembering, in later life, a time when he could not yet read, but no time when he was ignorant of typesetting. He was different enough from Mark Twain, however, in other ways. He shared the usual pleasures and sports of boyhood, and enjoyed the social contacts of youth, but, nevertheless, somehow found time for a long course of reading and study which took him through Goldsmith, Irving, Cervantes, Pope, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Dickens, Macaulay, Thackeray, Longfellow, Tennyson, and Hawthorne, which made him familiar with the Latin, Greek, Spanish, French, and German languages, and which gave his own literary work from its beginning the distinction and strength which come from a full cultural background. His earliest ambition was to be a poet, and a "correct" poet after the manner of Pope—an ambition mistaken in more ways than one, though not without its revealing quality and its later influence upon his mature work, notable for its formal excellence and its eminently "correct" tone. During these years he led, with his family, a wandering life of varied employment as compositor and journalist, not without severe hardships. In 1840 the family moved to Hamilton, Ohio, in 1848 to Dayton, in 1851 to Columbus, and then in 1852 to Ashtabula, and, after a short interval, to Jefferson. From 1856 to 1861 Howells was a journalist in Columbus, and was giving proof of his practical sagacity, while he was winning more than local recognition of his literary promise. He afterwards looked back on his last two winters in Columbus as the heyday of his life. "There has been no time like them since, though there have been smiling and prosperous times a plenty." One factor in the retrospective brightness of this time he has best written of himself, in *Years of My Youth* (1916): "Very likely those dances lasted through the winter, but I cannot be sure; I can only be sure that they summed up the raptures of the time, which was the most memorable of my whole life; for now I met her who was to be my wife. We were married the next year, and she became with her unerring artistic taste and conscience my constant impulse toward reality and sincerity in my work. She was the first to blame and the first to praise, as she was the first to read what I wrote. Forty-seven years we were together here, and then she died. But in that gayest time when we met it did not seem as if there could be an end of time for us, or any time less radiant."

Before he married Elinor G. Mead, of Brattleboro, Vermont, in Paris, on 24 December, 1862, Howells had, in 1860, written a campaign life of Lincoln which had prepared the way for his appointment in 1861 as U. S. Consul at Venice, where he remained until 1865. He had few duties, and spent much time in the study of Italian literature, while also writing the series of letters to a Boston newspaper which were collected under the title *Venetian Life* (1866), and gathering the material for another charmingly written book, *Italian Journeys* (1867). His four years in Italy, he thought, changed the course of his literary life. He wrote much poetry, but found himself, almost without willing it, turning to "critical observance of books and men in their actuality." He was on the path towards realism, though some time was to pass before he would arrive, almost imperceptibly, at the writing of novels. When he returned to America in 1865 he obtained, after certain failures in other directions, a post under E. L. Godkin on the *New York Nation*, only to exchange it after a few months—in January, 1866—for the assistant editorship of the *Atlantic Monthly*, a position which he held until 1872, when he became editor. He remained editor of the *Atlantic* until 1881. His critical essays of this period "would show, had he written nothing else, how strong and steady was his drift toward his mature creed. Not alone by deliberate thought nor even by the stimulus of polemic was he carried forward, but rather by a natural process of growth which, more than an artistic matter alone, included his entire philosophy. From his childhood he had been intensely humane—sensitive and charitable. This humaneness now revealed itself as a passionate love for the simple truth of human life, and a suspicion, a quiet scorn for those romantic dreams and exaggerations by which less contented lovers of life try to escape it." (C. Van Doren, *The American Novel*, 134-135.) But during this period he had also become known as a realistic novelist, skillfully practicing what he preached. *Their Wedding Journey* (1871) was something between a novel and a travel book. It was followed by many novels—*A Chance Acquaintance* (1873), *A Fregone Conclusion* (1875), *The Lady of the Aroostook* (1879), *An Undiscovered Country* (1880), and *Dr. Breen's Practice* (1881). With these books and other lesser ones he not only ended his apprenticeship but fairly made himself the leading American exponent of realistic fiction, and he

went on immediately to write three novels of almost priceless quality, *A Modern Instance* (1882), *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1884), and *Indian Summer* (1885). He later wrote other novels which are probably equally perfect in manner and method, but none which also equals these three in their union of profound understanding with vividness and sustained interest.

About 1886 Howells fell under the influence of Tolstoy. His allegiance was unqualified, and the change shows itself clearly in much of his later work, though its extent can be, perhaps has been, exaggerated. He did not become an American Tolstoy, but remained the same cheerful, companionable, urbane lover of the commonplace that he had been, with only a more intimate and moving sense of social injustices, and a new vision of life "not as a chase of a forever impossible personal happiness, but as a field for endeavor toward the happiness of the whole human family." The golden age of perfect justice and social felicity he pictured in *A Traveler from Altruria* (1894) and in *Through the Eye of the Needle* (1907). His new social consciousness also found expression in *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1889), and in other succeeding novels. Perhaps the most nearly perfect of his later works of fiction is *The Kentons* (1902)—"that perfectly classic illustration of your spirit and your form," as his friend Henry James wrote to him.

Meanwhile in 1886 Howells had established himself in New York, where he remained in close connection with Messrs. Harper and Brothers until within a few years of his death. From 1886 until 1891 he conducted the "Editor's Study" in *Harper's Monthly*, and thereafter he occupied the "Easy Chair" of the same periodical. About this time he also began the writing of several books of singularly pleasant, even delightful, reminiscence, which constitute not the least of the treasures he has bequeathed to his readers. *A Boy's Town* had appeared in 1890, and it was followed by *My Literary Passions* (1895), *Literary Friends and Acquaintance* (1900), *My Mark Twain* (1910), and *Years of My Youth* (1916). He died in New York on 11 May, 1920. He had been since 1909 President of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and he had received degrees from Yale, Columbia, Harvard, Princeton, and Oxford, which helped to signalize his high position attained without the aid of academic institutions. He did not in any of his work quite reach the heights of unquestioned greatness. He was, perhaps, too easily pleased and too ready to see only what did please him. Realist though he was, he closed his eyes alike to the misery and to the grandeur of life, while he sunned himself upon its level plains. He made, surely, no conscious sacrifice of integrity, but this can only mean that his gentle optimism was dearly purchased by blindness to some of the most significant aspects of life. Equable, kindly, humane, companionable, he lacked concentration and intensity. On the other hand, he remains the unequaled, if one-sided, historian of an age and a culture, while in his criticism he left a body of charming and distinguished writing which will not soon lose either its interest or its value.

CRITICISM AND FICTION¹

II

* * * * *

"As for those called critics," the author says,² "they have generally sought the rule

¹ "I am not sure that Mr. Howells has written better English than that of *Criticism and Fiction*, and I should hardly know whither to betake myself in the search for finer specimens of grave, vigorous, and supple prose. . . . With a finish unsurpassed in other work, it unites a vigor, a serene mastery, as of some great chancellor in the empire of literature, which only the ripe man in the utterance of his ripest convictions could command. The language was worthy of the critic who was to give, not originality, but finality, to the enunciation of a master truth." (O. W. Firkins, *William Dean Howells, A Study*.)

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² Edmund Burke, in his *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 1756.

of the arts in the wrong place; they have sought among poems, pictures, engravings, statues, and buildings; but art can never give the rules that make an art. This is, I believe, the reason why artists in general, and poets principally, have been confined in so narrow a circle; they have been rather imitators of one another than of nature. Critics follow them, and therefore can do little as guides. I can judge but poorly of anything while I measure it by no other standard than itself. The true standard of the arts is in every man's power; and an easy observation of the most common, sometimes of the meanest things, in nature will give the truest lights, where the greatest sagacity and industry that slights such observation must leave us in the dark, or, what is worse, amuse and mislead us by false lights."

If this should happen to be true—and it certainly commends itself to acceptance—it might portend an immediate danger to

the vested interests of criticism, only that it was written a hundred years ago; and we shall probably have the "sagacity and industry that slights the observation" of nature long enough yet to allow most critics the time to learn some more useful trade than criticism as they pursue it. Nevertheless, I am in hopes that the communistic era in taste foreshadowed by Burke is approaching, and that it will occur within the lives of men now overawed by the foolish old superstition that literature and art are anything but the expression of life, and are to be judged by any other test than that of their fidelity to it. The time is coming, I hope, when each new author, each new artist, will be considered, not in his proportion to any other author or artist, but in his relation to the human nature, known to us all, which it is his privilege, his high duty, to interpret. "The true standard of the artist is in every man's power" already, as Burke says; Michelangelo's "light of the piazza," the glance of the common eye, is and always was the best light on a statue; Goethe's "boys and blackbirds" have in all ages been the real connoisseurs of berries; but hitherto the mass of common men have been afraid to apply their own simplicity, naturalness, and honesty to the appreciation of the beautiful. They have always cast about for the instruction of some one who professed to know better, and who browbeat wholesome common-sense into the self-distrust that ends in sophistication. They have fallen generally to the worst of this bad species, and have been "amused and misled" (how pretty that quaint old use of amuse is!) "by the false lights" of critical vanity and self-righteousness. They have been taught to compare what they see and what they read, not with the things that they have observed and known, but with the things that some other artist or writer has done. Especially if they have themselves the artistic impulse in any direction they are taught to form themselves, not upon life, but upon the masters who became masters only by forming themselves upon life. The seeds of death are planted in them, and they can produce only the still-born, the academic. They are not told to take their work into the public square and see if it seems true to the chance passer, but to

test it by the work of the very men who refused and decried any other test of their own work. The young writer who attempts to report the phrase and carriage of everyday life, who tries to tell just how he has heard men talk and seen them look, is made to feel guilty of something low and unworthy by the stupid people who would like to have him show how Shakespeare's men talked and looked, or Scott's, or Thackeray's, or Balzac's, or Hawthorne's, or Dickens's; he is instructed to idealize his personages, that is, to take the life-likeness out of them, and put the book-likeness into them. He is approached in the spirit of the wretched pedantry into which learning, much or little, always decays when it withdraws itself and stands apart from experience in an attitude of imagined superiority, and which would say with the same confidence to the scientist: "I see that you are looking at a grasshopper there which you have found in the grass, and I suppose you intend to describe it. Now don't waste your time and sin against culture in that way. I've got a grasshopper here, which has been evolved at considerable pains and expense out of the grasshopper in general; in fact, it's a type. It's made up of wire and card-board, very prettily painted in a conventional tint, and it's perfectly indestructible. It isn't very much like a real grasshopper, but it's a great deal nicer, and it's served to represent the notion of a grasshopper ever since man emerged from barbarism. You may say that it's artificial. Well, it is artificial; but then it's ideal too; and what you want to do is to cultivate the ideal. You'll find the books full of my kind of grasshopper, and scarcely a trace of yours in any of them. The thing that you are proposing to do is commonplace; but if you say that it isn't commonplace, for the very reason that it hasn't been done before, you'll have to admit that it's photographic."

As I said, I hope the time is coming when not only the artist, but the common, average man, who always "has the standard of the arts in his power," will have also the courage to apply it, and will reject the ideal grasshopper wherever he finds it, in science, in literature, in art, because it is not "simple, natural, and honest," because it is not like

a real grasshopper. But I will own that I think the time is yet far off, and that the people who have been brought up on the ideal grasshopper, the heroic grasshopper, the impassioned grasshopper, the self-devoted, adventurous, good old romantic card-board grasshopper, must die out before the simple, honest, and natural grasshopper can have a fair field. I am in no haste to compass the end of these good people, whom I find in the mean time very amusing. It is delightful to meet one of them, either in print or out of it—some sweet elderly lady or excellent gentleman whose youth was pastured on the literature of thirty or forty years ago—and to witness the confidence with which they preach their favorite authors as all the law and the prophets. They have commonly read little or nothing since, or, if they have, they have judged it by a standard taken from these authors, and never dreamed of judging it by nature; they are destitute of the documents in the case of the later writers; they suppose that Balzac was the beginning of realism, and that Zola is its wicked end; they are quite ignorant, but they are ready to talk you down, if you differ from them, with an assumption of knowledge sufficient for any occasion. The horror, the resentment, with which they receive any question of their literary saints is genuine; you descend at once very far in the moral and social scale, and anything short of offensive personality is too good for you; it is expressed to you that you are one to be avoided, and put down even a little lower than you have naturally fallen.

These worthy persons are not to blame; it is part of their intellectual mission to represent the petrification of taste, and to preserve an image of a smaller and cruder and emptier world than we now live in, a world which was feeling its way towards the simple, the natural, the honest, but was a good deal "amused and misled" by lights now no longer mistakable for heavenly luminaries. They belong to a time, just passing away, when certain authors were considered authorities in certain kinds, when they must be accepted entire and not questioned in any particular. Now we are beginning to see and to say that no author is an authority except in those moments

when he held his ear close to Nature's lips and caught her very accent. These moments are not continuous with any authors in the past, and they are rare with all. Therefore I am not afraid to say now that the greatest classics are sometimes not at all great, and that we can profit by them only when we hold them, like our meanest contemporaries, to a strict accounting, and verify their work by the standard of the arts which we all have in our power, the simple, the natural, and the honest.

Those good people, those curious and interesting if somewhat musty back-numbers, must always have a hero, an idol of some sort, and it is droll to find Balzac, who suffered from their sort such bitter scorn and hate for his realism while he was alive, now became a fetich in his turn, to be shaken in the faces of those who will not blindly worship him. But it is no new thing in the history of literature: whatever is established is sacred with those who do not think. At the beginning of the century, when romance was making the same fight against effete classicism which realism is making to-day against effete romanticism, the Italian poet Monti declared that "the romantic was the cold grave of the Beautiful," just as the realistic is now supposed to be. The romantic of that day and the real of this are in certain degree the same. Romanticism then sought, as realism seeks now, to widen the bounds of sympathy, to level every barrier against æsthetic freedom, to escape from the paralysis of tradition. It exhausted itself in this impulse; and it remained for realism to assert that fidelity to experience and probability of motive are essential conditions of a great imaginative literature. It is not a new theory, but it has never before universally characterized literary endeavor. When realism becomes false to itself, when it heaps up facts merely, and maps life instead of picturing it, realism will perish too. Every true realist instinctively knows this, and it is perhaps the reason why he is careful of every fact, and feels himself bound to express or to indicate its meaning at the risk of over-moralizing. In life he finds nothing insignificant; all tells for destiny and character; nothing that God has made is contemptible. He cannot look upon human

life and declare this thing or that thing unworthy of notice, any more than the scientist can declare a fact of the material world beneath the dignity of his inquiry. He feels in every nerve the equality of things and the unity of men; his soul is exalted, not by vain shows and shadows and ideals, but by realities, in which alone the truth lives. In criticism it is his business to break the images of false gods and misshapen heroes, to take away the poor silly toys that many grown people would still like to play with. He cannot keep terms with Jack the Giant-killer or Puss in Boots, under any name or in any place, even when they reappear as the convict Vautrec, or the Marquis de Montrivaut, or the Sworn Thirteen Noblemen. He must say to himself that Balzac, when he imagined these monsters, was not Balzac, he was Dumas; he was not realistic, he was romantic.

IV

IN the beginning of any art even the most gifted worker must be crude in his methods, and we ought to keep this fact always in mind when we turn, say, from the purblind worshipers of Scott to Scott himself, and recognize that he often wrote a style cumbrous and diffuse; that he was tediously analytical where the modern novelist is dramatic, and evolved his characters by means of long-winded explanation and commentary; that, except in the case of his lower-class personages, he made them talk as seldom man and never woman talked; that he was tiresomely descriptive; that on the simplest occasions he went about half a mile to express a thought that could be uttered in ten paces across lots; and that he trusted his readers' intuitions so little that he was apt to rub in his appeals to them. He was probably right: the generation which he wrote for was duller than this; slower-witted, æsthetically untrained, and in maturity not so apprehensive of an artistic intention as the children of to-day. All this is not saying Scott was not a great man; he was a great man, and a very great novelist as compared with the novelists who went before him. He can still amuse young people, but they ought to be instructed how false and how mistaken he often is, with his medieval ideals, his blind Jacobitism, his

intense devotion to aristocracy and royalty; his acquiescence in the division of men into noble and ignoble, patrician and plebeian, sovereign and subject, as if it were the law of God; for all which, indeed, he is not to blame as he would be if he were one of our contemporaries. Something of this is true of another master, greater than Scott in being less romantic, and inferior in being more German, namely, the great Goethe himself. He taught us, in novels otherwise now antiquated, and always full of German clumsiness, that it was false to good art—which is never anything but the reflection of life—to pursue and round the career of the persons introduced, whom he often allowed to appear and disappear in our knowledge as people in the actual world do. This is a lesson which the writers able to profit by it can never be too grateful for; and it is equally a benefaction to readers; but there is very little else in the conduct of the Goethean novels which is in advance of their time; this remains almost their sole contribution to the science of fiction. They are very primitive in certain characteristics, and unite with their calm, deep insight, an amusing helplessness in dramatization. "Wilhelm retired to his room, and indulged in the following reflections," is a mode of analysis which would not be practiced nowadays; and all that fancifulness of nomenclature in *Wilhelm Meister* is very drolly sentimental and feeble. The adventures with robbers seem as if dreamed out of books of chivalry, and the tendency to allegorization affects one like an endeavor on the author's part to escape from the unrealities which he must have felt harassingly, German as he was. Mixed up with the shadows and illusions are honest, wholesome, everyday people, who have the air of wandering homelessly about among them, without definite direction; and the mists are full of a luminosity which, in spite of them, we know for common-sense and poetry. What is useful in any review of Goethe's methods is the recognition of the fact, which it must bring, that the greatest master cannot produce a masterpiece in a new kind. The novel was too recently invented in Goethe's day not to be, even in his hands, full of the faults of apprentice work.

XV

WHICH brings us again, after this long way about,¹ to the divine Jane and her novels, and that troublesome question about them. She was great and they were beautiful, because she and they were honest, and dealt with nature nearly a hundred years ago as realism deals with it to-day. Realism is nothing more and nothing less than the truthful treatment of material, and Jane Austen was the first and the last of the English novelists to treat material with entire truthfulness. Because she did this, she remains the most artistic of the English novelists, and alone worthy to be matched with the great Scandinavian and Slavic and Latin artists. It is not a question of intellect, or not wholly that. The English have mind enough;² but they have not taste enough; or, rather, their taste has been perverted by their false criticism, which is based upon personal preference, and not upon principle; which instructs a man to think that what he likes is good, instead of teaching him first to distinguish what is good before he likes it. The art of fiction, as Jane Austen knew it, declined from her through Scott, and Bulwer, and Dickens, and Charlotte Brontë, and Thackeray, and even George Eliot, because the mania of romanticism had seized upon all Europe, and these great writers could not escape the taint of their time; but it has shown few signs of recovery in England, because English criticism, in the presence of the Continental masterpieces, has continued provincial and special and personal, and has expressed a love and a hate which had to do with the quality of the artist rather than the character of his work. It was inevitable that in their time the English romanticists should treat, as Señor

Valdés says, "the barbarous customs of the Middle Ages, softening and disfiguring them, as Walter Scott and his kind did"; that they should "devote themselves to falsifying nature, refining and subtilizing sentiment, and modifying psychology after their own fancy," like Bulwer and Dickens, as well as like Rousseau and Madame de Staël, not to mention Balzac, the worst of of all that sort at his worst. This was the natural course of the disease; but it really seems as if it were their criticism that was to blame for the rest: not, indeed, for the performance of this writer or that, for criticism can never affect the actual doing of a thing; but for the esteem in which this writer or that is held through the perpetuation of false ideals. The only observer of English middle-class life since Jane Austen worthy to be named with her was not George Eliot, who was first ethical and then artistic, who transcended her in everything but the form and method most essential to art, and there fell hopelessly below her. It was Anthony Trollope who was most like her in simple honesty and instinctive truth, as unphilosophized as the light of common day; but he was so warped from a wholesome ideal as to wish at times to be like the caricaturist Thackeray, and to stand about in his scene, talking it over with his hands in his pockets, interrupting the action, and spoiling the illusion in which alone the truth of art resides. Mainly, his instinct was too much for his ideal, and with a low view of life in its civic relations and a thoroughly bourgeois soul, he yet produced works whose beauty is surpassed only by the effect of a more poetic writer in the novels of Thomas Hardy. Yet if a vote of English criticism even at this late day, when all continental Europe has the light of æsthetic truth, could be taken, the majority against these artists would be overwhelmingly in favor of a writer who had so little artistic sensibility, that he never hesitated on any occasion, great or small, to make a foray among his characters, and catch them up to show them to the reader and tell him how beautiful or ugly they were; and cry out over their amazing properties.

Doubtless the ideal of those poor islanders will be finally changed. If the truth could become a fad it would be accepted by all

¹ In one of the opening paragraphs of Section XIII Howells asks: "How . . . could people who had once known the simple verity, the refined perfection of Miss Austen, enjoy anything less refined and less perfect?" He then begins an indirect answer by way of citations from, and comments on, an essay by the Spanish realistic novelist, Armando Palacio Valdés, and this carries him through Sections XIII and XIV.

² Henry James wrote (in a letter of September, 1888): "I am getting to know English life better than American . . . and to understand the English character, or at least the mind, as well as if I had invented it—which indeed I think I could have done without any very extraordinary expenditure of ingenuity."

their "smart people," but truth is something rather too large for that; and we must await the gradual advance of civilization among them. Then they will see that their criticism has misled them; and that it is to this false guide they owe, not precisely the decline of fiction among them, but its continued debasement as an art.

XVIII

IN General Grant's confession of novel-reading¹ there is a sort of inference that he had wasted his time, or else the guilty conscience of the novelist in me imagines such an inference. But however this may be, there is certainly no question concerning the intention of a correspondent who once wrote to me after reading some rather bragging claims I had made for fiction as a mental and moral means. "I have very grave doubts," he said, "as to the whole list of magnificent things that you seem to think novels have done for the race, and can witness in myself many evil things which they have done for me. Whatever in my mental make-up is wild and visionary, whatever is untrue, whatever is injurious, I can trace to the perusal of some work of fiction. Worse than that, they beget such high-strung and supersensitive ideas of life that plain industry and plodding perseverance are despised, and matter-of-fact poverty, or every-day, commonplace distress, meets with no sympathy, if indeed noticed at all, by one who has wept over the impossibly accumulated sufferings of some gaudy hero or heroine."

I am not sure that I had the controversy with this correspondent that he seemed to suppose; but novels are now so fully accepted by every one pretending to cultivated taste—and they really form the whole intellectual life of such immense numbers of people, without question of their influence, good or bad, upon the mind—that it is refreshing to have them frankly denounced, and to be invited to revise one's ideas and feelings in regard to them. A little honesty, or a great deal of honesty, in this quest will do the novel, as we hope yet to have it, and as we have already begun to

have it, no harm; and for my own part I will confess that I believe fiction in the past to have been largely injurious, as I believe the stage play to be still almost wholly injurious, through its falsehood, its folly, its wantonness, and its aimlessness. It may be safely assumed that most of the novel-reading which people fancy an intellectual pastime is the emptiest dissipation, hardly more related to thought or the wholesome exercise of the mental faculties than opium-eating; in either case the brain is drugged, and left weaker and crazier for the debauch. If this may be called the negative result of the fiction habit, the positive injury that most novels work is by no means so easily to be measured in the case of young men whose character they help so much to form or deform, and the women of all ages whom they keep so much in ignorance of the world they misrepresent. Grown men have little harm from them, but in the other cases, which are the vast majority, they hurt because they are not true—not because they are malevolent, but because they are idle lies about human nature and the social fabric, which it behooves us to know and to understand, that we may deal justly with ourselves and with one another. One need not go so far as our correspondent, and trace to the fiction habit "whatever is wild and visionary, whatever is untrue, whatever is injurious," in one's life; bad as the fiction habit is it is probably not responsible for the whole sum of evil in its victims, and I believe that if the reader will use care in choosing from this fungus-growth with which the fields of literature teem every day, he may nourish himself as with the true mushroom, at no risk from the poisonous species.

The tests are very plain and simple, and they are perfectly infallible. If a novel flatters the passions, and exalts them above the principles, it is poisonous; it may not kill, but it will certainly injure; and this test will alone exclude an entire class of fiction, of which eminent examples will occur to all. Then the whole spawn of so-called unmoral romances, which imagine a world where the sins of sense are unvisited by the penalties following, swift or slow, but inexorably sure, in the real world, are deadly poison: these do kill. The novels

¹ In his *Memoirs* (1885–1886), which Howells briefly discusses in the closing paragraphs of Section XVII.

that merely tickle our prejudices and lull our judgment, or that coddle our sensibilities or pamper our gross appetite for the marvelous, are not so fatal, but they are innutritious, and clog the soul with unwholesome vapors of all kinds. No doubt they too help to weaken the moral fiber, and make their readers indifferent to "plodding perseverance and plain industry," and to "matter-of-fact poverty and commonplace distress."

Without taking them too seriously, it still must be owned that the "gaudy hero and heroine" are to blame for a great deal of harm in the world. That heroine long taught by example, if not precept, that Love, or the passion or fancy she mistook for it, was the chief interest of a life, which is really concerned with a great many other things; that it was lasting in the way she knew it; that it was worthy of every sacrifice, and was altogether a finer thing than prudence, obedience, reason; that love alone was glorious and beautiful, and these were mean and ugly in comparison with it. More lately she has begun to idolize and illustrate Duty, and she is hardly less mischievous in this new rôle, opposing duty, as she did love, to prudence, obedience, and reason. The stock hero, whom, if we met him, we could not fail to see was a most deplorable person, has undoubtedly imposed himself upon the victims of the fiction habit as admirable. With him, too, love was and is the great affair, whether in its old romantic phase of chivalrous achievement or manifold suffering for love's sake, or its more recent development of the "virile," the bullying, and the brutal, or its still more recent agonies of self-sacrifice, as idle and useless as the moral experiences of the insane asylums. With his vain posturings and his ridiculous splendor he is really a painted barbarian, the prey of his passions and his delusions, full of obsolete ideals, and the motives and ethics of a savage, which the guilty author of his being does his best—or his worst—in spite of his own light and knowledge, to foist upon the reader as something generous and noble. I am not merely bringing this charge against that sort of fiction which is beneath literature and outside of it, "the shoreless lakes of ditch-water," whose miasms fill the air below the empyrean where the great ones sit; but I am accusing the work of some of the most famous, who have,

in this instance or in that, sinned against the truth, which can alone exalt and purify men. I do not say that they have constantly done so, or even commonly done so; but that they have done so at all marks them as of the past, to be read with the due historical allowance for their epoch and their conditions. For I believe that, while inferior writers will and must continue to imitate them in their foibles and their errors, no one hereafter will be able to achieve greatness who is false to humanity, either in its facts or its duties. The light of civilization has already broken even upon the novel, and no conscientious man can now set about painting an image of life without perpetual question of the verity of his work, and without feeling bound to distinguish so clearly that no reader of his may be misled, between what is right and what is wrong, what is noble and what is base, what is health and what is perdition, in the actions and the characters he portrays.

The fiction that aims merely to entertain—the fiction that is to serious fiction as the opera-bouffe, the ballet, and the pantomime are to the true drama—need not feel the burden of this obligation so deeply; but even such fiction will not be gay or trivial to any reader's hurt, and criticism will hold it to account if it passes from painting to teaching folly.

More and more not only the criticism which prints its opinions, but the infinitely vaster and powerfuler criticism which thinks and feels them merely, will make this demand. I confess that I do not care to judge any work of the imagination without first of all applying this test to it. We must ask ourselves before we ask anything else, Is it true?—true to the motives, the impulses, the principles that shape the life of actual men and women? This truth, which necessarily includes the highest morality and the highest artistry—this truth given, the book cannot be wicked and cannot be weak; and without it all graces of style and feats of invention and cunning of construction are so many superfluities of naughtiness. It is well for the truth to have all these, and shine in them, but for falsehood they are merely meretricious, the bedizenment of the wanton; they atone for nothing, they count for nothing. But in fact they come naturally of

truth, and grace it without solicitation; they are added unto it. In the whole range of fiction we know of no true picture of life—that is, of human nature—which is not also a masterpiece of literature, full of divine and natural beauty. It may have no touch or tint of this special civilization or of that; it had better have this local color well ascertained; but the truth is deeper and finer than aspects, and if the book is true to what men and women know of one another's souls it will be true enough, and it will be great and beautiful. It is the conception of literature as something apart from life, superfinely aloof, which makes it really unimportant to the great mass of mankind, without a message or a meaning for them; and it is the notion that a novel may be false in its portrayal of causes and effects that makes literary art contemptible even to those whom it amuses, that forbids them to regard the novelist as a serious or right-minded person. If they do not in some moment of indignation cry out against all novels, as my correspondent does, they remain besotted in the fume of the delusions purveyed to them, with no higher feeling for the author than such maudlin affection as the habitué of an opium-joint perhaps knows for the attendant who fills his pipe with the drug.

Or, as in the case of another correspondent who writes that in his youth he "read a great many novels, but always regarded it as an amusement, like horse-racing and card-playing," for which he had no time when he entered upon the serious business of life, it renders them merely contemptuous. His view of the matter may be commended to the brotherhood and sisterhood of novelists as full of wholesome if bitter suggestion; and we urge them not to dismiss it with high literary scorn as that of some Bæotian dull to the beauty of art. Refuse it as we may, it is still the feeling of the vast majority of people for whom life is earnest, and who find only a distorted and misleading likeness of it in our books. We may fold ourselves in our scholars' gowns, and close the doors of our studies, and affect to despise this rude voice; but we cannot shut it out. It comes to us from wherever men are at work, from wherever they are truly living, and accuses us of unfaithfulness, of triviality, of mere stage-play; and none of us can escape conviction

except he prove himself worthy of his time—a time in which the great masters have brought literature back to life, and filled its ebbing veins with the red tides of reality. We cannot all equal them; we need not copy them; but we can all go to the sources of their inspiration and their power; and to draw from these no one need go far—no one need really go out of himself.

Fifty years ago, Carlyle, in whom the truth was always alive, but in whom it was then unperverted by suffering, by celebrity, and by despair, wrote in his study of Diderot: "Were it not reasonable to prophesy that this exceeding great multitude of novel-writers and such like must, in a new generation, gradually do one of two things: either retire into the nurseries, and work for children, minors, and semi-fatuous persons of both sexes, or else, what were far better, sweep their novel-fabric into the dust-cart, and betake themselves with such faculty as they have to understand and record what is true, of which surely there is, and will forever be, a whole infinitude unknown to us of infinite importance to us? Poetry, it will more and more come to be understood, is nothing but higher knowledge; and the only genuine Romance (for grown persons), Reality."

If, after half a century, fiction still mainly works for "Children, minors, and semi-fatuous persons of both sexes," it is nevertheless one of the hopefulest signs of the world's progress that it has begun to work for "grown persons," and if not exactly in the way that Carlyle might have solely intended in urging its writers to compile memoirs instead of building the "novel-fabric," still it has, in the highest and widest sense, already made Reality its Romance. I cannot judge it, I do not even care for it, except as it has done this; and I can hardly conceive of a literary self-respect in these days compatible with the old trade of make-believe, with the production of the kind of fiction which is too much honored by classification with card-playing and horse-racing. But let fiction cease to lie about life; let it portray men and women as they are, actuated by the motives and passions in the measure we all know; let it leave off painting dolls and working them by springs and wires; let it show the different interests in their

true proportions; let it forbear to preach pride and revenge, folly and insanity, egotism and prejudice, but frankly own these for what they are, in whatever figures and occasions they appear; let it not put on fine literary airs; let it speak the dialect, the language, that most Americans know—the language of unaffected people everywhere—and there can be no doubt of an unlimited future, not only of delightfulness but of usefulness, for it.

XIX

THIS is what I say in my severer moods, but at other times I know that, of course, no one is going to hold all fiction to such strict account. There is a great deal of it which may be very well left to amuse us, if it can, when we are sick or when we are silly, and I am not inclined to despise it in the performance of this office. Or, if people find pleasure in having their blood curdled for the sake of having it uncurdled again at the end of the book, I would not interfere with their amusement, though I do not desire it. There is a certain demand in primitive natures for the kind of fiction that does this, and the author of it is usually very proud of it. The kind of novels he likes, and likes to write, are intended to take his reader's mind, or what that reader would probably call his mind, off himself; they make one forget life and all its cares and duties; they are not in the least like the novels which make you think of these, and shame you into at least wishing to be a helpfuler and wholesomer creature than you are. No sordid details of verity here, if you please; no wretched being humbly and weakly struggling to do right and to be true, suffering for his follies and his sins, tasting joy only through the mortification of self, and in the help of others; nothing of all this, but a great, whirling splendor of peril and achievement, a wild scene of heroic adventure and of emotional ground and lofty tumbling, with a stage "picture" at the fall of the curtain, and all the good characters in a row, their left hands pressed upon their hearts, and kissing their right hands to the audience, in the good old way that has always charmed and always will charm, Heaven bless it!

In a world which loves the spectacular drama and the practically bloodless sports of the modern amphitheater the author of

this sort of fiction has his place, and we must not seek to destroy him because he fancies it the first place. In fact, it is a condition of his doing well the kind of work he does that he should think it important, that he should believe in himself; and I would not take away this faith of his, even if I could. As I say, he has his place. The world often likes to forget itself, and he brings on his heroes, his goblins, his feats, his hair-breadth escapes, his imminent deadly breaches, and the poor, foolish, childish old world renews the excitements of its nonage. Perhaps this is a work of beneficence; and perhaps our brave conjurer in his cabalistic robe is a philanthropist in disguise.

Within the last four or five years there has been throughout the whole English-speaking world what Mr. Grant Allen happily calls the "recrudescence" of taste in fiction. The effect is less noticeable in America than in England, where effete Philistinism, conscious of the dry-rot of its conventionality, is casting about for cure in anything that is wild and strange and unlike itself. But the recrudescence has been evident enough here, too; and a writer in one of our periodicals has put into convenient shape some common errors concerning popularity as a test of merit in a book. He seems to think, for instance, that the love of the marvelous and impossible in fiction, which is shown not only by "the unthinking multitude clamoring about the book counters" for fiction of that sort, but by the "literary elect" also, is proof of some principle in human nature which ought to be respected as well as tolerated. He seems to believe that the ebullition of this passion forms a sufficient answer to those who say that art should represent life, and that the art which misrepresents life is feeble art and false art. But it appears to me that a little careful reasoning from a little closer inspection of the facts would not have brought him to these conclusions. In the first place, I doubt very much whether the "literary elect" have been fascinated in great numbers by the fiction in question; but if I supposed them to have really fallen under that spell, I should still be able to account for their fondness and that of the "unthinking multitude" upon the same grounds, without honoring either very much. It is the habit of hasty casuists to regard

civilization as inclusive of all the members of a civilized community; but this is a palpable error. Many persons in every civilized community live in a state of more or less evident savagery with respect to their habits, their morals, and their propensities; and they are held in check only by the law. Many more yet are savage in their tastes, as they show by the decoration of their houses and persons, and by their choice of books and pictures; and these are left to the restraints of public opinion. In fact, no man can be said to be thoroughly civilized or always civilized; the most refined, the most enlightened person has his moods, his moments of barbarism, in which the best, or even the second best, shall not please him. At these times the lettered and unlettered are alike primitive and their gratifications are of the same simple sort; the highly cultivated person may then like melodrama, impossible fiction, and the trapeze as sincerely and thoroughly as a boy of thirteen or a barbarian of any age.

I do not blame him for these moods; I find something instructive and interesting in them; but if they lastingly established themselves in him, I could not help deploring the state of that person. No one can really think that the "literary elect," who are said to have joined the "unthinking multitude" in clamoring about the book counters for the romances of no-man's land, take the same kind of pleasure in them as they do in a novel of Tolstoï, Tourguéneff, George Eliot, Thackeray, Balzac, Manzoni, Hawthorne, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, Palacio Valdés, or even Walter Scott. They have joined the "unthinking multitude," perhaps because they are tired of thinking, and expect to find relaxation in feeling—feeling crudely, grossly, merely. For once in a way there is no great harm in this; perhaps no harm at all. It is perfectly natural; let them have their innocent debauch. But let us distinguish, for our own sake and guidance, between the different kinds of things that please the same kind of people; between the things that please them habitually and those that please them occasionally; between the pleasures that edify them and those that amuse them. Otherwise we shall be in danger of becoming permanently part of the "unthinking multitude," and of remaining puerile, primitive,

savage. We shall be so in moods and at moments; but let us not fancy that those are high moods or fortunate moments. If they are harmless, that is the most that can be said for them. They are lapses from which we can perhaps go forward more vigorously; but even this is not certain.

My own philosophy of the matter, however, would not bring me to prohibition of such literary amusements as the writer quoted seems to find significant of a growing indifference to truth and sanity in fiction. Once more, I say, these amusements have their place, as the circus has, and the burlesque and negro minstrelsy, and the ballet and prestidigitation. No one of these is to be despised in its place; but we had better understand that it is not the highest place, and that it is hardly an intellectual delight. The lapse of all the "literary elect" in the world could not dignify unreality; and their present mood, if it exists, is of no more weight against that beauty in literature which comes from truth alone, and never can come from anything else, than the permanent state of the "unthinking multitude."

Yet even as regards the "unthinking multitude," I believe I am not able to take the attitude of the writer I have quoted. I am afraid that I respect them more than he would like to have me, though I cannot always respect their taste, any more than that of the "literary elect." I respect them for their good sense in most practical matters; for their laborious, honest lives; for their kindness, their good-will; for that aspiration towards something better than themselves which seems to stir, however dumbly, in every human breast not abandoned to literary pride or other forms of self-righteousness. I find every man interesting, whether he thinks or unthinks, whether he is savage or civilized; for this reason I cannot thank the novelist who teaches us not to know but to unknow our kind. Yet I should by no means hold him to such strict account as Emerson, who felt the absence of the best motive, even in the greatest of the masters, when he said of Shakespeare that, after all, he was only master of the revels. The judgment is so severe, even with the praise which precedes it, that one winces under it; and if one is still young, with the world gay before him, and life full of joyous promise, one is

apt to ask, defiantly, Well, what is better than being such a master of the revels as Shakespeare was? Let each judge for himself. To the heart again of serious youth uncontaminate and exigent of ideal good, it must always be a grief that the great masters seem so often to have been willing to amuse the leisure and vacancy of meaner men, and leave their mission to the soul but partially fulfilled. This, perhaps, was what Emerson had in mind; and if he had it in mind of Shakespeare, who gave us, with his histories and comedies and problems, such a searching homily as *Macbeth*, one feels that he scarcely recognized the limitations of the dramatist's art. Few consciences, at times, seem so enlightened as that of this personally unknown person, so withdrawn into his work, and so lost to the intensest curiosity of after-time; at other times he seems merely Elizabethan in his coarseness, his courtliness, his imperfect sympathy.

XXII

* * * * *

IN fine, I would have our American novelists be as American as they unconsciously can. Matthew Arnold complained that he found no "distinction" in our life, and I would gladly persuade all artists intending greatness in any kind among us that the recognition of the fact pointed out by Mr. Arnold ought to be a source of inspira-

tion to them, and not discouragement. We have been now some hundred years building up a state on the affirmation of the essential equality of men in their rights and duties, and whether we have been right or been wrong the gods have taken us at our word, and have responded to us with a civilization in which there is no "distinction" perceptible to the eye that loves and values it. Such beauty and such grandeur as we have is common beauty, common grandeur, or the beauty and grandeur in which the quality of solidarity so prevails that neither distinguishes itself to the disadvantage of anything else. It seems to me that these conditions invite the artist to the study and the appreciation of the common, and to the portrayal in every art of those finer and higher aspects which unite rather than sever humanity, if he would thrive in our new order of things. The talent that is robust enough to front the every-day world and catch the charm of its work-worn, care-worn, brave, kindly face, need not fear the encounter, though it seems terrible to the sort nurtured in the superstition of the romantic, the bizarre, the heroic, the distinguished, as the things alone worthy of painting or carving or writing. The arts must become democratic, and then we shall have the expression of America in art; and the reproach which Mr. Arnold was half right in making us shall have no justice in it any longer; we shall be "distinguished."

HENRY JAMES (1843-1916)

James's grandfather was an Irishman who had so successful a business career in Albany, New York, as to leave several millions of dollars to be divided among some twelve heirs. Thus his father was not a man of great wealth by present-day standards, but had means ample for a completely independent life. He was a theologian of philosophic temper who, like many other Americans of his day, owed the starting-point of his intellectual life to the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Gifted with an original, independent mind and with an attractive and vivid style, he wrote a number of books which fell strangely dead from the press and which now lie wholly, though very unjustly, neglected. He married Mary Walsh, a New York woman of Scotch descent, and they had five children, of whom the philosopher William James was the eldest, and Henry the second (born on 15 April, 1843). It was the wish of Henry's father that his children's education should not cramp the free development of their individualities. To this end he kept them from remaining any long time under the care of any one teacher or school, while he also varied their youthful impressions by carrying them often from one city or country to another. They were to be made citizens of the great world, and were only to form allegiances when they were capable of doing so deliberately and consciously. In appearance their education was extraordinarily haphazard, but its actual results seem to have been pretty nearly those aimed at. Henry was carried from New York to Europe in the summer of 1844, then back to Albany for rather more than a year, and then to New York, where the family remained, save in the summers, until 1855, when they departed for Europe, to stay three years. In Europe they lived in Geneva, London, Paris, and Boulogne. In 1858 and 1859 they were back in America, living at Newport for a year, but the winter of 1859-1860 saw them again in Europe, at Geneva, and in the summer of 1860 Henry was at Bonn, as the private pupil of a professor there. But in the autumn they returned to Newport in order that William might study painting under William Hunt. Henry was now seventeen, and was asking what he was to do with his life. But even then the question was really decided. On the one hand, he later thought that he had been infected by the "European virus" in the years 1855-1858; on the other, he was already in 1860 writing many romantic stories, under the influence of Balzac. He was not yet prepared, however, to declare for a literary career, and the outbreak of the Civil War found him still in Newport with the question of his future still undetermined. He was prevented by a strain, which long made his health uncertain, from enlisting, as did his two younger brothers, and in 1862 he went to Harvard and enrolled himself in the Law School. Apparently he had no serious intention of becoming a lawyer, but took this step in the lack of any other definite plan.

It proved fortunate. James was thrown into a literary circle in Cambridge, soon became the friend of Charles Eliot Norton, and presently was contributing critical papers to the *North American Review* and the *Nation*. A few years later he became acquainted with William Dean Howells when he came to Boston as assistant editor of the *Atlantic*, and many years afterward he wrote to Howells gratefully: "You held out your open editorial hand to me at the time I began to write—and I allude especially to the summer of 1866—with a frankness and sweetness of hospitality that was really the making of me, the making of the confidence that required help and sympathy and that I should otherwise, I think, have strayed and stumbled about a long time without acquiring. You showed me the way and opened me the door." The door was opened to tales which exhibited the young James working under the influence of Hawthorne and, less noticeably, of George Eliot and Balzac. Later he was to feel the influence of Flaubert and was to become the almost enchanted admirer of Turgenev. Meanwhile, after several years of literary work the desire to revisit Europe became overpowering, and in the spring of 1869 he sailed for London, to remain there and on the Continent until the spring of 1870. His first serial publication in the *Atlantic* had been *Gabrielle de Bergerac*, a charming French tale (1869, not reprinted until 1918). He now contributed another to the same periodical, *Watch and Ward*, a slight performance which he later practically disowned (1871, reprinted 1878), but he did not yet trust himself for a really long flight, and he was hardly back in America before he felt again, and insistently, the call of Europe. It was only later, as far as is known, that he consciously formulated his reasons, but the trend of his desires appears clearly in a sentence written at the beginning of 1872, when he still thought it a duty to live in America: "It's a complex fate, being an American, and one of the responsibilities it entails is fighting against a superstitious valuation of Europe." In the spring of 1872 he went to England, and remained abroad, spending most of his time on the Continent, until the fall of 1874. He had

a commission to write his *Transatlantic Sketches* for the *Nation* (reprinted 1875, when his first volume of fiction, *A Passionate Pilgrim, and Other Tales*, was also published); and during the latter part of this period he wrote for the *Atlantic* his first full-length novel, *Roderick Hudson* (reprinted 1876). This, despite certain weaknesses, is a mature piece of work, and it clearly marks the end of James's literary apprenticeship.

Another momentous period in his life was marked in the autumn of 1875 by his return to Europe with the definite intention of making his home there. His reasons appear plainly in much of his fiction, but were most explicitly announced in the volume on Hawthorne which he contributed (1879) to the "English Men of Letters" series, where he condemned American life as provincial and uninteresting. When his friend Howells protested, he replied that Americans were necessarily provincial, just as were Russians, the Portuguese, Danes, Laplanders, and Australians, and for the same reason: because all of these peoples live on the edges of civilization and derive their culture, such as it may be, not from their own long, indigenous development, but from the center, from Italy, France, and England. And, he continued, "I sympathize even less with your protest against the idea that it takes an old civilization to set a novelist in motion—a proposition that seems to me so true as to be a truism. It is on manners, customs, usages, habits, forms, upon all these things matured and established, that a novelist lives—they are the very stuff his work is made of; and in saying that in the absence of those 'dreary and worn-out paraphernalia' which I enumerate as being wanting in American society, 'we have simply the whole of human life left,' you beg (to my sense) the question. I should say we had just so much less of it as these same 'paraphernalia' represent, and I think they represent an enormous quantity of it." He went to Europe, then, in order to experience the impact of the highest civilization, in order to know social life at its fullest and richest, in order to exhibit in his novels, not a culturally impoverished and jejune society, but one which was the flower of a long native growth, set off against a deep background of multiplied traditions and elaborate decorum. Since he sought experiential truth concerning society, he desired the best and richest experience. Since, also, he was an American in Europe, he inevitably considered what he learned to some extent in terms of international social contacts;—he wrote of Americans in Europe, and became identified with the so-called international novel.

When he migrated to Europe he first settled himself in Paris, but after a year he found that as a foreigner he could only hope to hover on the edge of tightly closed French intellectual and social circles. Hence he could not find in Paris real nourishment for his imagination, and, upon reflection, he saw little in this to regret. He confessed that Frenchmen were likely to dazzle upon a first acquaintance, but added that they were also likely to appear as something less than remarkable upon further observation. Accordingly, he removed to London before the close of 1876, and England remained his home through the rest of his life. He made many visits to the Continent, and spent the winters of 1881–1882, 1882–1883, and 1904–1905 in America, but these were interludes. In later years he established himself at Lamb House, in Rye, though he always maintained quarters in London. During his earlier English years his chief novels and tales were: *The American* (1877), *The Europeans* (1878), *Daisy Miller* (1879), *An International Episode* (1879), *Confidence* (1880), *Washington Square* (1881), and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). *Daisy Miller* was "a really quite extraordinary hit," as James told his mother, and *The Portrait of a Lady* has been very generally regarded as one of the best of all his novels. A volume of substantial essays in criticism was also published at this time, *French Poets and Novelists* (1878), to be followed after an interval of ten years by another volume of critical papers, *Partial Portraits* (1888). Meanwhile tales and novels had continued to appear, besides several travel-books, and with the publication of *The Bostonians* and *The Princess Casamassima* (both 1886) James fairly discovered that the public for his work was not to be a large one. Earlier indications had pointed towards approaching popular success, and he was disappointed. He attempted to capture a large public through plays, and was again disappointed. The result was not to turn him from his work, but to send him to it with a freer mind, which was not altogether fortunate. He proceeded to compose fiction without regard for the public which did not regard him, aiming to please only his own exacting taste. In following years he was never without devoted admirers and his high position was never seriously questioned, but he did almost hopelessly alienate the general public. Difficulty, he confessed, was what most attracted him and aroused his powers, and he tended to become excessively subtle in his thought and over-elaborate in his expression, so that he became proverbial not only among the empty-headed and the frivolous, but even among serious readers, for unintelligibility. And this unfortunate, and on the whole not really justified, reputation helped to prevent adequate appreciation of the greatness of his achievement in many of his later tales and in three of his later novels, *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), and *The Golden Bowl* (1904). In these three perfect books—most of all in *The Ambassadors*, which he himself rightly considered the best of his novels—he reached a purity of form and a height of imaginative creation which has not been equaled or even

approached by any other American writer, and which is not soon likely to be. In his last years, when other work tended to become impossible because of failing health, he turned to reminiscence, and published two autobiographical volumes, *A Small Boy and Others* (1913) and *Notes of a Son and Brother* (1914), while he left a third (*The Middle Years*, 1917) unfinished at his death. He died on 28 February, 1916. In July, 1915, he had become naturalized as a British subject, taking this step chiefly by way of protest against America's failure promptly to support the Allies in the Great War. In January, 1916, the British Government bestowed upon him the Order of Merit, the highest distinction which it could give him, and one which has been awarded to very few men of letters.

James wrote a subtle and invaluable commentary upon his own work and, at the same time, upon the art of fiction in the series of prefaces which he contributed to the New York Edition of his novels and tales (26 volumes, 1907-1917). Notwithstanding his helping hand thus extended to them, however, his work has continued singularly to baffle critics. Here it must suffice to say that as early as 1888 he confessed himself "deadly weary of the whole 'international' state of mind"; and that the "international" aspect of his work was never primary with him, but only a means to a far deeper end. He was devoted to the practice of his art, not, as some have contended, to the exclusion or at least subordination of life, but precisely because he saw in imaginative creation at once the highest exercise of man's faculties and the unique gateway to a genuine appreciation of spiritual values, of goodness and beauty and truth, as eternally supreme for humanity even amidst inevitable temporal defeat. The most illuminating comment which has thus far been made upon the real character of his thought and work has come from Miss Theodora Bosanquet (*Henry James at Work*, "Hogarth Essays"): "To-day, with the complete record before us—the novels, criticisms, biographies, plays, and letters—we can understand how little those international relations that engaged Henry James's attention mattered to his genius. Wherever he might have lived and whatever human interactions he might have observed, he would in all probability have reached much the same conclusion that he arrived at by the way of America, France, and England. When he walked out of the refuge of his study into the world and looked about him, he saw a place of torment, where creatures of prey perpetually thrust their claws into the quivering flesh of the doomed, defenseless children of light. He had the abiding comfort of an inner certainty (and perhaps he did bring that from New England) that the children of light had an eternal advantage; he was aware to the finest fiber of his being that the 'poor sensitive gentlemen' he so numerously treated possessed a treasure that would outlast all the glittering paste of the world and the flesh; he knew that nothing in life mattered compared with spiritual decency. We may conclude that the nationalities of his betrayed and triumphant victims are not an important factor. . . . The essential fact is that wherever he looked Henry James saw fineness, apparently sacrificed to grossness, beauty to avarice, truth to a bold front. He realized how constantly the tenderness of growing life is at the mercy of personal tyranny and he hated the tyranny of persons over each other. His novels are a repeated exposure of this wickedness, a reiterated and passionate plea for the fullest freedom of development, unimpered by reckless and barbarous stupidity. He was himself most scrupulously careful not to exercise any tyrannical power over other people. . . . His Utopia was an anarchy where nobody would be responsible for any other human being but only for his own civilized character."

THE DEATH OF THE LION¹

I

I HAD simply, I suppose, a change of heart, and it must have begun when I received my manuscript back from Mr. Pinhorn. Mr. Pinhorn was my "chief," as he was called

¹ First published in *The Yellow Book*, 1894. Republished in *Terminations*, 1895, from which it is here reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers. James included this tale in the New York Edition—and in the Preface to the volume containing it has delightfully told of the visit which Henry Harland and Aubrey Beardsley made, to invite him to contribute to *The Yellow Book*—but it has seemed preferable to reproduce the tale in its earlier form, even though in this instance the alterations which were made for the New York Edition were relatively slight.

in the office: he had accepted the high mission of bringing the paper up. This was a weekly periodical, and had been supposed to be almost past redemption when he took hold of it. It was Mr. Deedy who had let it down so dreadfully: he was never mentioned in the office now save in connection with that misdemeanor. Young as I was I had been in a manner taken over from Mr. Deedy, who had been owner as well as editor; forming part of a promiscuous lot, mainly plant and office-furniture, which poor Mrs. Deedy, in her bereavement and depression, parted with at a rough valuation. I could account for my continuity only on the supposition that I had been cheap. I rather resented the practice of fathering all flatness

on my late protector, who was in his unhonored grave; but as I had my way to make I found matter enough for complacency in being on a "staff." At the same time I was aware that I was exposed to suspicion as a product of the old lowering system. This made me feel that I was doubly bound to have ideas, and had doubtless been at the bottom of my proposing to Mr. Pinhorn that I should lay my lean hands on Neil Paraday. I remember that he looked at me first as if he had never heard of this celebrity, who indeed at that moment was by no means in the center of the heavens; and even when I had knowingly explained he expressed but little confidence in the demand for any such matter. When I had reminded him that the great principle on which we were supposed to work was just to create the demand we required, he considered a moment and then rejoined: "I see; you want to write him up."

"Call it that if you like."

"And what's your inducement?"

"Bless my soul—my admiration!"

Mr. Pinhorn pursed up his mouth. "Is there much to be done with him?"

"Whatever there is, we should have it all to ourselves, for he hasn't been touched."

This argument was effective, and Mr. Pinhorn responded: "Very well, touch him." Then he added: "But where can you do it?"

"Under the fifth rib!"

Mr. Pinhorn stared. "Where's that?"

"You want me to go down and see him?"

I inquired when I had enjoyed his visible search for this obscure suburb.

"I don't 'want' anything—the proposal's your own. But you must remember that that's the way we do things *now*," said Mr. Pinhorn, with another dig at Mr. Deedy.

Unregenerate as I was, I could read the queer implications of this speech. The present owner's superior virtue as well as his deeper craft spoke in his reference to the late editor as one of that baser sort who deal in false representations. Mr. Deedy would as soon have sent me to call on Neil Paraday as he would have published a "holiday-number"; but such scruples presented themselves as mere ignoble thrift to his successor, whose own sincerity took the form of ringing door-bells and whose definition of genius was the art of finding people at home. It was as

if Mr. Deedy had published reports without his young men's having, as Pinhorn would have said, really been there. I was unregenerate, as I have hinted, and I was not concerned to straighten out the journalistic morals of my chief, feeling them indeed to be an abyss over the edge of which it was better not to peer. Really to be there this time moreover was a vision that made the idea of writing something subtle about Neil Paraday only the more inspiring. I would be as considerate as even Mr. Deedy could have wished, and yet I should be as present as only Mr. Pinhorn could conceive. My allusion to the sequestered manner in which Mr. Paraday lived (which had formed part of my explanation, though I knew of it only by hearsay) was, I could divine, very much what had made Mr. Pinhorn nibble. It struck him as inconsistent with the success of his paper that any one should be so sequestered as that. And then was not an immediate exposure of everything just what the public wanted? Mr. Pinhorn effectually called me to order by reminding me of the promptness with which I had met Miss Braby at Liverpool on her return from her fiasco in the States. Hadn't we published, while its freshness and flavor were unimpaired, Miss Braby's own version of that great international episode? I felt somewhat uneasy at this lumping of the actress and the author, and I confess that after having enlisted Mr. Pinhorn's sympathies I procrastinated a little. I had succeeded better than I wished, and I had, as it happened, work nearer at hand. A few days later I called on Lord Crouchley and carried off in triumph the most unintelligible statement that had yet appeared of his lordship's reasons for his change of front. I thus set in motion in the daily papers columns of virtuous verbiage. The following week I ran down to Brighton for a chat, as Mr. Pinhorn called it, with Mrs. Bounder, who gave me, on the subject of her divorce, many curious particulars that had not been articulated in court. If ever an article flowed from the primal fount it was that article on Mrs. Bounder. By this time, however, I became aware that Neil Paraday's new book was on the point of appearing and that its approach had been the ground of my original appeal to Mr. Pinhorn, who was now annoyed with

me for having lost so many days. He bundled me off—we would at least not lose another. I have always thought his sudden alertness a remarkable example of the journalistic instinct. Nothing had occurred, since I first spoke to him, to create a visible urgency, and no enlightenment could possibly have reached him. It was a pure case of professional *flair*—he had smelt the coming glory as an animal smells its distant prey.

II

I MAY as well say at once that this little record pretends in no degree to be a picture either of my introduction to Mr. Paraday or of certain proximate steps and stages. The scheme of my narrative allows no space for these things, and in any case a prohibitory sentiment would be attached to my recollection of so rare an hour. These meager notes are essentially private, so that if they see the light the insidious forces that, as my story itself shows, make at present for publicity will simply have overmastered my precautions. The curtain fell lately enough on the lamentable drama. My memory of the day I alighted at Mr. Paraday's door is a fresh memory of kindness, hospitality, compassion, and of the wonderful illuminating talk in which the welcome was conveyed. Some voice of the air had taught me the right moment, the moment of his life at which an act of unexpected young allegiance might most come home. He had recently recovered from a long, grave illness. I had gone to the neighboring inn for the night, but I spent the evening in his company, and he insisted the next day on my sleeping under his roof. I had not an indefinite leave: Mr. Pinhorn supposed us to put our victims through on the gallop. It was later, in the office, that the dance was set to music. I fortified myself, however, as my training had taught me to do, by the conviction that nothing could be more advantageous for my article than to be written in the very atmosphere. I said nothing to Mr. Paraday about it, but in the morning, after my removal from the inn, while he was occupied in his study, as he had notified me that he should need to be, I committed to paper the quintessence of my impressions. Then thinking to commend myself to Mr. Pinhorn by my celerity, I walked

out and posted my little packet before luncheon. Once my paper was written I was free to stay on, and if it was designed to divert attention from my frivolity in so doing I could reflect with satisfaction that I had never been so clever. I don't mean to deny of course that I was aware it was much too good for Mr. Pinhorn; but I was equally conscious that Mr. Pinhorn had the supreme shrewdness of recognizing from time to time the cases in which an article was not too bad only because it was too good. There was nothing he loved so much as to print on the right occasion a thing he hated. I had begun my visit to Mr. Paraday on a Monday, and on the Wednesday his book came out. A copy of it arrived by the first post, and he let me go out into the garden with it immediately after breakfast. I read it from beginning to end that day, and in the evening he asked me to remain with him the rest of the week and over the Sunday.

That night my manuscript came back from Mr. Pinhorn, accompanied with a letter, of which the gist was the desire to know what I meant by sending him such stuff. That was the meaning of the question, if not exactly its form, and it made my mistake immense to me. Such as this mistake was I could now only look it in the face and accept it. I knew where I had failed, but it was exactly where I couldn't have succeeded. I had been sent down there to be personal, and in point of fact I hadn't been personal at all: what I had sent up to London was just a little finicking, feverish study of my author's talent. Anything less relevant to Mr. Pinhorn's purpose couldn't well be imagined, and he was visibly angry at my having (at his expense, with a second-class ticket) approached the object of our arrangement only to be so deucedly distant. For myself, I knew but too well what had happened, and how a miracle—as pretty as some old miracle of legend—had been wrought on the spot to save me. There had been a big brush of wings, the flash of an opaline robe, and then, with a great cool stir of the air, the sense of an angel's having swooped down and caught me to his bosom. He held me only till the danger was over, and it all took place in a minute. With my manuscript back on my hands I understood the phenomenon better, and the reflections I made on it are what I

meant, at the beginning of this anecdote, by my change of heart. Mr. Pinhorn's note was not only a rebuke decidedly stern, but an invitation immediately to send him (it was the case to say so) the genuine article, the revealing and reverberating sketch to the promise of which—and of which alone—I owed my squandered privilege. A week or two later I recast my peccant paper, and giving it a particular application to Mr. Paraday's new book, obtained for it the hospitality of another journal, where, I must admit, Mr. Pinhorn was so far justified that it attracted not the least attention.

III

I WAS frankly, at the end of three days, a very prejudiced critic, so that one morning when, in the garden, Neil Paraday had offered to read me something I quite held my breath as I listened. It was the written scheme of another book—something he had put aside long ago, before his illness, and lately taken out again to reconsider. He had been turning it round when I came down upon him, and it had grown magnificently under this second hand. Loose, liberal, confident, it might have passed for a great gossiping, eloquent letter—the overflow into talk of an artist's amorous plan. The subject I thought singularly rich, quite the strongest he had yet treated; and this familiar statement of it, full too of fine maturities, was really, in summarized splendor, a mine of gold, a precious, independent work. I remember rather profanely wondering whether the ultimate production could possibly be so happy. His reading of the epistle, at any rate, made me feel as if I were, for the advantage of posterity, in close correspondence with him—were the distinguished person to whom it had been affectionately addressed. It was high distinction simply to be told such things. The idea he now communicated had all the freshness, the flushed fairness of the conception untouched and untried: it was Venus rising from the sea, before the airs had blown upon her. I had never been so throbbingly present at such an unveiling. But when he had tossed the last bright word after the others, as I had seen cashiers in banks, weighing mounds of coin, drop a final sovereign into the tray, I

became conscious of a sudden prudent alarm.

"My dear master, how, after all, are you going to do it?" I asked. "It's infinitely noble, but what time it will take, what patience and independence, what assured, what perfect conditions it will demand! Oh for a lone isle in a tepid sea!"

"Isn't this practically a lone isle, and aren't you, as an encircling medium, tepid enough?" he replied, alluding with a laugh to the wonder of my young admiration and the narrow limits of his little provincial home. "Time isn't what I've lacked hitherto: the question hasn't been to find it, but to use it. Of course my illness made a great hole, but I daresay there would have been a hole at any rate. The earth we tread has more pockets than a billiard-table. The great thing is now to keep on my feet."

"That's exactly what I mean."

Neil Paraday looked at me with eyes—such pleasant eyes as he had—in which, as I now recall their expression, I seem to have seen a dim imagination of his fate. He was fifty years old, and his illness had been cruel, his convalescence slow. "It isn't as if I weren't all right."

"Oh, if you weren't all right I wouldn't look at you!" I tenderly said.

We had both got up, quickened by the full sound of it all, and he had lighted a cigarette. I had taken a fresh one, and, with an intenser smile, by way of answer to my exclamation, he touched it with the flame of his match. "If I weren't better I shouldn't have thought of *that*!" He flourished his epistle in his hand.

"I don't want to be discouraging, but that's not true," I returned. "I'm sure that during the months you lay here in pain you had visitations sublime. You thought of a thousand things. You think of more and more all the while. That's what makes you, if you will pardon my familiarity, so respectable. At a time when so many people are spent you come into your second wind. But, thank God, all the same, you're better! Thank God, too, you're not, as you were telling me yesterday, 'successful.' If *you* weren't a failure, what would be the use of trying? That's my one reserve on the subject of your recovery—that it makes you 'score,' as the newspapers say. It looks

well in the newspapers, and almost anything that does that is horrible. 'We are happy to announce that Mr. Paraday, the celebrated author, is again in the enjoyment of excellent health.' Somehow I shouldn't like to see it."

"You won't see it; I'm not in the least celebrated—my obscurity protects me. But couldn't you bear even to see I was dying or dead?" my companion asked.

"Dead—*passe encore*, there's nothing so safe. One never knows what a living artist may do—one has mourned so many. However, one must make the worst of it; you must be as dead as you can."

"Don't I meet that condition in having just published a book?"

"Adequately, let us hope; for the book is verily a masterpiece."

At this moment the parlor-maid appeared in the door that opened into the garden: Paraday lived at no great cost, and the frisk of petticoats, with a timorous "Sherry, sir?" was about his modest mahogany. He allowed half his income to his wife, from whom he had succeeded in separating without redundancy of legend. I had a general faith in his having behaved well, and I had once, in London, taken Mrs. Paraday down to dinner. He now turned to speak to the maid, who offered him, on a tray, some card or note, while agitated, excited, I wandered to the end of the garden. The idea of his security became supremely dear to me, and I asked myself if I were the same young man who had come down a few days before to scatter him to the four winds. When I retraced my steps he had gone into the house, and the woman (the second London post had come in) had placed my letters and a newspaper on a bench. I sat down there to the letters, which were a brief business, and then, without heeding the address, took the paper from its envelope. It was the journal of highest renown, *The Empire* of that morning. It regularly came to Paraday, but I remembered that neither of us had yet looked at the copy already delivered. This one had a great mark on the "editorial" page, and, uncrumpling the wrapper, I saw it to be directed to my host and stamped with the name of his publishers. I instantly divined that *The Empire* had spoken of him, and I have not forgotten the odd little shock of the circumstance. It checked all eagerness

and made me drop the paper a moment. As I sat there conscious of a palpitation I think I had a vision of what was to be. I had also a vision of the letter I would presently address to Mr. Pinhorn, breaking as it were with Mr. Pinhorn. Of course, however, the next minute the voice of *The Empire* was in my ears.

The article was not, I thanked heaven, a review; it was a "leader," the last of three, presenting Neil Paraday to the human race. His new book, the fifth from his hand, had been but a day or two out, and *The Empire*, already aware of it, fired, as if on the birth of a prince, a salute of a whole column. The guns had been booming these three hours in the house without our suspecting them. The big blundering newspaper had discovered him, and now he was proclaimed and anointed and crowned. His place was assigned him as publicly as if a fat usher with a wand had pointed to the topmost chair; he was to pass up and still up, higher and higher, between the watching faces and the envious sounds—away up to the daïs and the throne. The article was a date; he had taken rank at a bound—waked up a national glory. A national glory was needed, and it was an immense convenience he was there. What all this meant rolled over me, and I fear I grew a little faint—it meant so much more than I could say "yea" to on the spot. In a flash, somehow, all was different; the tremendous wave I speak of had swept something away. It had knocked down, I suppose, my little customary altar, my twinkling tapers and my flowers, and had reared itself into the likeness of a temple vast and bare. When Neil Paraday should come out of the house he would come out a contemporary. That was what had happened: the poor man was to be squeezed into his horrible age. I felt as if he had been overtaken on the crest of the hill and brought back to the city. A little more and he would have dipped down the short cut to posterity and escaped.

IV

WHEN he came out it was exactly as if he had been in custody, for beside him walked a stout man with a big black beard, who, save that he wore spectacles, might have been a policeman, and in whom at a second

glance I recognized the highest contemporary enterprise.

"This is Mr. Morrow," said Paraday, looking, I thought, rather white: "he wants to publish heaven knows what about me."

I winced as I remembered that this was exactly what I myself had wanted. "Already?" I exclaimed, with a sort of sense that my friend had fled to me for protection.

Mr. Morrow glared, agreeably, through his glasses: they suggested the electric headlights of some monstrous modern ship, and I felt as if Paraday and I were tossing terrified under his bows. I saw that his momentum was irresistible. "I was confident that I should be the first in the field," he declared. "A great interest is naturally felt in Mr. Paraday's surroundings."

"I hadn't the least idea of it," said Paraday, as if he had been told he had been snoring.

"I find he has not read the article in *The Empire*," Mr. Morrow remarked to me. "That's so very interesting—it's something to start with," he smiled. He had begun to pull off his gloves, which were violently new, and to look encouragingly round the little garden. As a "surrounding" I felt that I myself had already been taken in; I was a little fish in the stomach of a bigger one. "I represent," our visitor continued, "a syndicate of influential journals, no less than thirty-seven, whose public—whose publics, I may say—are in peculiar sympathy with Mr. Paraday's line of thought. They would greatly appreciate any expression of his views on the subject of the art he so brilliantly practices. Besides my connection with the syndicate just mentioned, I hold a particular commission from *The Tatler*, whose most prominent department, 'Smatter and Chatter'—I daresay you've often enjoyed it—attracts such attention. I was honored only last week, as a representative of *The Tatler*, with the confidence of Guy Walsingham, the author of *Obsessions*. She expressed herself thoroughly pleased with my sketch of her method; she went so far as to say that I had made her genius more comprehensible even to herself."

Neil Paraday had dropped upon the garden-bench and sat there at once detached and confused; he looked hard at a bare spot

in the lawn, as if with an anxiety that had suddenly made him grave. His movement had been interpreted by his visitor as an invitation to sink sympathetically into a wicker chair that stood hard by, and as Mr. Morrow so settled himself I felt that he had taken official possession and that there was no undoing it. One had heard of unfortunate people's having "a man in the house," and this was just what we had. There was a silence of a moment, during which we seemed to acknowledge in the only way that was possible the presence of universal fate; the sunny stillness took no pity, and my thought, as I was sure Paraday's was doing, performed within the minute a great distant revolution. I saw just how emphatic I should make my rejoinder to Mr. Pinhorn, and that having come, like Mr. Morrow, to betray, I must remain as long as possible to save. Not because I had brought my mind back, but because our visitor's last words were in my ear, I presently inquired with gloomy irrelevance if Guy Walsingham were a woman.

"Oh yes, a mere pseudonym; but convenient, you know, for a lady who goes in for the larger latitude. '*Obsessions*, by Miss So-and-so,' would look a little odd, but men are more naturally indelicate. Have you peeped into *Obsessions*?" Mr. Morrow continued sociably to our companion.

Paraday, still absent, remote, made no answer, as if he had not heard the question: a manifestation that appeared to suit the cheerful Mr. Morrow as well as any other. Imperturbably bland, he was a man of resources—he only needed to be on the spot. He had pocketed the whole poor place while Paraday and I were woolgathering, and I could imagine that he had already got his "heads." His system, at any rate, was justified by the inevitability with which I replied, to save my friend the trouble: "Dear, no; he hasn't read it. He doesn't read such things!" I unwarily added.

"Things that are *too* far over the fence, eh?" I was indeed a godsend to Mr. Morrow. It was the psychological moment; it determined the appearance of his notebook, which, however, he at first kept slightly behind him, even as the dentist, approaching his victim, keeps the horrible forceps. "Mr. Paraday holds with the good old

proprieties—I see!” And thinking of the thirty-seven influential journals, I found myself, as I found poor Paraday, helplessly gazing at the promulgation of this ineptitude. “There’s no point on which distinguished views are so acceptable as on this question—raised perhaps more strikingly than ever by Guy Walsingham—of the permissibility of the larger latitude. I have an appointment, precisely in connection with it, next week, with Dora Forbes, the author of *The Other Way Round*, which everybody is talking about. Has Mr. Paraday glanced at *The Other Way Round*?” Mr. Morrow now frankly appealed to me. I took upon myself to repudiate the supposition, while our companion, still silent, got up nervously and walked away. His visitor paid no heed to his withdrawal; he only opened out the notebook with a more motherly pat. “Dora Forbes, I gather, takes the ground, the same as Guy Walsingham’s, that the larger latitude has simply got to come. He holds that it has got to be squarely faced. Of course his sex makes him a less prejudiced witness. But an authoritative word from Mr. Paraday—from the point of view of *his* sex, you know—would go right round the globe. He takes the line that we *haven’t* got to face it?”

I was bewildered: it sounded somehow as if there were three sexes. My interlocutor’s pencil was poised, my private responsibility great. I simply sat staring, however, and only found presence of mind to say: “Is this Miss Forbes a gentleman?”

Mr. Morrow hesitated an instant, smiling. “It wouldn’t be ‘Miss’—there’s a wife!”

“I mean is she a man?”

“The wife?”—Mr. Morrow, for a moment, was as confused as myself. But when I explained that I alluded to Dora Forbes in person he informed me, with visible amusement at my being so out of it, that this was the “pen-name” of an indubitable male—he had a big red mustache. “He only assumes a feminine personality because the ladies are such popular favorites. A great deal of interest is felt in this assumption, and there’s every prospect of its being widely imitated.” Our host at this moment joined us again, and Mr. Morrow remarked invitingly that he should be happy to make a note of any observation the movement in question, the bid for success under a lady’s

name, might suggest to Mr. Paraday. But the poor man, without catching the allusion, excused himself, pleading that, though he was greatly honored by his visitor’s interest, he suddenly felt unwell and should have to take leave of him—have to go and lie down and keep quiet. His young friend might be trusted to answer for him, but he hoped Mr. Morrow didn’t expect great things even of his young friend. His young friend, at this moment, looked at Neil Paraday with an anxious eye, greatly wondering if he were doomed to be ill again; but Paraday’s own kind face met his question reassuringly, seemed to say in a glance intelligible enough: “Oh, I’m not ill, but I’m scared: get him out of the house as quietly as possible.” Getting newspaper-men out of the house was odd business for an emissary of Mr. Pinhorn, and I was so exhilarated by the idea of it that I called after him as he left us:

“Read the article in *The Empire*, and you’ll soon be all right!”

V

“DELICIOUS my having come down to tell him of it!” Mr. Morrow ejaculated. “My cab was at the door twenty minutes after *The Empire* had been laid upon my breakfast-table. Now what have you got for me?” he continued, dropping again into his chair, from which, however, the next moment he quickly rose. “I was shown into the drawing-room, but there must be more to see—his study, his literary sanctum, the little things he has about, or other domestic objects or features. He wouldn’t be lying down on his study-table? There’s a great interest always felt in the scene of an author’s labors. Sometimes we’re favored with very delightful peeps. Dora Forbes showed me all his table-drawers, and almost jammed my hand into one into which I made a dash! I don’t ask that of you, but if we could talk things over right there where he sits I feel as if I should get the keynote.”

I had no wish whatever to be rude to Mr. Morrow, I was much too initiated not to prefer the safety of other ways; but I had a quick inspiration and I entertained an insurmountable, an almost superstitious objection to his crossing the threshold of my friend’s little lonely, shabby, consecrated

workshop. "No, no—we sha'n't get at his life that way," I said. "The way to get at his life is to— But wait a moment!" I broke off and went quickly into the house; then, in three minutes, I reappeared before Mr. Morrow with the two volumes of Paraday's new book. "His life's here," I went on, "and I'm so full of this admirable thing that I can't talk of anything else. The artist's life's his work, and this is the place to observe him. What he has to tell us he tells us with *this* perfection. My dear sir, the best interviewer's the best reader."

Mr. Morrow good-humoredly protested. "Do you mean to say that no other source of information should be open to us?"

"None other till this particular one—by far the most copious—has been quite exhausted. Have you exhausted it, my dear sir? Had you exhausted it when you came down here? It seems to me in our time almost wholly neglected, and something should surely be done to restore its ruined credit. It's the course to which the artist himself at every step, and with such pathetic confidence, refers us. This last book of Mr. Paraday's is full of revelations."

"Revelations?" panted Mr. Morrow, whom I had forced again into his chair.

"The only kind that count. It tells you with a perfection that seems to me quite final all the author thinks, for instance, about the advent of the 'larger latitude.'"

"Where does it do that?" asked Mr. Morrow, who had picked up the second volume and was insincerely thumbing it.

"Everywhere—in the whole treatment of his case. Extract the opinion, disengage the answer—those are the real acts of homage."

Mr. Morrow, after a minute, tossed the book away. "Ah, but you mustn't take me for a reviewer."

"Heaven forbid I should take you for anything so dreadful! You came down to perform a little act of sympathy, and so, I may confide to you, did I. Let us perform our little act together. These pages overflow with the testimony we want: let us read them and taste them and interpret them. You will of course have perceived for yourself that one scarcely does read Neil Paraday till one reads him aloud; he gives out to the ear an extraordinary quality, and it's only when you expose it confidently to that test

that you really get near his style. Take up your book again and let me listen, while you pay it out, to that wonderful fifteenth chapter. If you feel that you can't do it justice, compose yourself to attention while I produce for you—I think I can!—this scarcely less admirable ninth."

Mr. Morrow gave me a straight glance which was as hard as a blow between the eyes; he had turned rather red, and a question had formed itself in his mind which reached my sense as distinctly as if he had uttered it: "What sort of a damned fool are *you*?" Then he got up, gathering together his hat and gloves, buttoning his coat, projecting hungrily all over the place the big transparency of his mask. It seemed to flare over Fleet Street and somehow made the actual spot distressingly humble: there was so little for it to feed on unless he counted the blisters of our stucco or saw his way to do something with the roses. Even the poor roses were common kinds. Presently his eyes fell upon the manuscript from which Paraday had been reading to me and which still lay on the bench. As my own followed them I saw that it looked promising, looked pregnant, as if it gently throbbed with the life the reader had given it. Mr. Morrow indulged in a nod toward it and a vague thrust of his umbrella. "What's that?"

"Oh, it's a plan—a secret."

"A secret!" There was an instant's silence, and then Mr. Morrow made another movement. I may have been mistaken, but it affected me as the translated impulse of the desire to lay hands on the manuscript, and this led me to indulge in a quick anticipatory grab which may very well have seemed ungraceful, or even impertinent, and which at any rate left Mr. Paraday's two admirers very erect, glaring at each other while one of them held a bundle of papers well behind him. An instant later Mr. Morrow quitted me abruptly, as if he had really carried something off with him. To reassure myself, watching his broad back recede, I only grasped my manuscript the tighter. He went to the back-door of the house, the one he had come out from, but on trying the handle he appeared to find it fastened. So he passed round into the front garden, and by listening intently enough I

could presently hear the outer gate close behind him with a bang. I thought again of the thirty-seven influential journals and wondered what would be his revenge. I hasten to add that he was magnanimous: which was just the most dreadful thing he could have been. *The Tatler* published a charming, chatty, familiar account of Mr. Paraday's "Home-life," and on the wings of the thirty-seven influential journals it went, to use Mr. Morrow's own expression, right round the globe.

VI

A WEEK later, early in May, my glorified friend came up to town, where, it may be veraciously recorded, he was the king of the beasts of the year. No advancement was ever more rapid, no exaltation more complete, no bewilderment more teachable. His book sold but moderately, though the article in *The Empire* had done unwonted wonders for it; but he circulated in person in a manner that the libraries might well have envied. His formula had been found—he was a "revelation." His momentary terror had been real, just as mine had been—the overclouding of his passionate desire to be left to finish his work. He was far from unsociable, but he had the finest conception of being let alone that I have ever met. For the time, however, he took his profit where it seemed most to crowd upon him, having in his pocket the portable sophistries about the nature of the artist's task. Observation too was a kind of work and experience a kind of success; London dinners were all material and London ladies were fruitful toil. "No one has the faintest conception of what I'm trying for," he said to me, "and not many have read three pages that I've written; but I must dine with them first—they'll find out why when they've time." It was rather rude justice, perhaps; but the fatigue had the merit of being a new sort, and the phantasmagoric town was probably after all less of a battlefield than the haunted study. He once told me that he had had no personal life to speak of since his fortieth year, but had had more than was good for him before. London closed the parenthesis and exhibited him in relations; one of the most inevitable of these being that in which

he found himself to Mrs. Weeks Wimbush, wife of the boundless brewer and proprietress of the universal menagerie. In this establishment, as everybody knows, on occasions when the crush is great, the animals rub shoulders freely with the spectators and the lions sit down for whole evenings with the lambs.

It had been ominously clear to me from the first that in Neil Paraday this lady, who, as all the world agreed, was tremendous fun, considered that she had secured a prime attraction, a creature of almost heraldic oddity. Nothing could exceed her enthusiasm over her capture, and nothing could exceed the confused apprehensions it excited in me. I had an instinctive fear of her which I tried without effect to conceal from her victim, but which I let her perceive with perfect impunity. Paraday heeded it, but she never did, for her conscience was that of a romping child. She was a blind, violent force, to which I could attach no more idea of responsibility than to the creaking of a sign in the wind. It was difficult to say what she conduced to but to circulation. She was constructed of steel and leather, and all I asked of her for our tractable friend was not to do him to death. He had consented for a time to be of india-rubber, but my thoughts were fixed on the day he should resume his shape or at least get back into his box. It was evidently all right, but I should be glad when it was well over. I had a special fear—the impression was ineffaceable of the hour when, after Mr. Morrow's departure, I had found him on the sofa in his study. That pretext of indisposition had not in the least been meant as a snub to the envoy of *The Tatler*—he had gone to lie down in very truth. He had felt a pang of his old pain, the result of the agitation wrought in him by this forcing open of a new period. His old programme, his old ideal even had to be changed. Say what one would, success was a complication and recognition had to be reciprocal. The monastic life, the pious illumination of the missal in the convent cell were things of the gathered past. It didn't engender despair, but it at least required adjustment. Before I left him on that occasion we had passed a bargain, my part of which was that I should make it my business to take care of him.

Let whoever would represent the interest in his presence (I had a mystical prevision of Mrs. Weeks Wimbush) I should represent the interest in his work—in other words in his absence. These two interests were in their essence opposed; and I doubt, as youth is fleeting, if I shall ever again know the intensity of joy with which I felt that in so good a cause I was willing to make myself odious.

One day, in Sloane Street, I found myself questioning Paraday's landlord, who had come to the door in answer to my knock. Two vehicles, a barouche and a smart hansom, were drawn up before the house.

"In the drawing-room, sir? Mrs. Weeks Wimbush."

"And in the dining-room?"

"A young lady, sir—waiting: I think a foreigner."

It was three o'clock, and on days when Paraday didn't lunch out he attached a value to these subjugated hours. On which days, however, didn't the dear man lunch out? Mrs. Wimbush, at such a crisis, would have rushed round immediately after her own repast. I went into the dining-room first, postponing the pleasure of seeing how, upstairs, the lady of the barouche would, on my arrival, point the moral of my sweet solicitude. No one took such an interest as herself in his doing only what was good for him, and she was always on the spot to see that he did it. She made appointments with him to discuss the best means of economizing his time and protecting his privacy. She further made his health her special business, and had so much sympathy with my own zeal for it that she was the author of pleasing fictions on the subject of what my devotion had led me to give up. I gave up nothing (I don't count Mr. Pinhorn) because I had nothing, and all I had as yet achieved was to find myself also in the menagerie. I had dashed in to save my friend, but I had only got domesticated and wedged; so that I could do nothing for him but exchange with him over people's heads looks of intense but futile intelligence.

VII

THE young lady in the dining-room had a brave face, black hair, blue eyes, and in her

lap a big volume. "I've come for his autograph," she said when I had explained to her that I was under bonds to see people for him when he was occupied. "I've been waiting half an hour, but I'm prepared to wait all day." I don't know whether it was this that told me she was American, for the propensity to wait all day is not in general characteristic of her race. I was enlightened probably not so much by the spirit of the utterance as by some quality of its sound. At any rate I saw she had an individual patience and a lovely frock, together with an expression that played among her pretty features like a breeze among flowers. Putting her book upon the table, she showed me a massive album, showily bound and full of autographs of price. The collection of faded notes, of still more faded "thoughts," of quotations, platitudes, signatures, represented a formidable purpose.

"Most people apply to Mr. Paraday by letter, you know," I said.

"Yes, but he doesn't answer. I've written three times."

"Very true," I reflected; "the sort of letter you mean goes straight into the fire."

"How do you know the sort I mean?" My interlocutress had blushed and smiled, and in a moment she added: "I don't believe he gets many like them!"

"I'm sure they're beautiful, but he burns without reading." I didn't add that I had told him he ought to.

"Isn't he then in danger of burning things of importance?"

"He would be, if distinguished men hadn't an infallible nose for nonsense."

She looked at me a moment—her face was sweet and gay. "Do *you* burn without reading, too?" she asked; in answer to which I assured her that if she would trust me with her repository I would see that Mr. Paraday should write his name in it.

She considered a little. "That's very well, but it wouldn't make me see him."

"Do you want very much to see him?" It seemed ungracious to catechize so charming a creature, but somehow I had never yet taken my duty to the great author so seriously.

"Enough to have come from America for the purpose."

I stared. "All alone?"

"I don't see that that's exactly your business; but if it will make me more appealing I'll confess that I'm quite by myself. I had to come alone or not come at all."

She was interesting; I could imagine that she had lost parents, natural protectors—could conceive even that she had inherited money. I was in a phase of my own fortune when keeping hansoms at doors seemed to me pure swagger. As a trick of this bold and sensitive girl, however, it became romantic—a part of the general romance of her freedom, her errand, her innocence. The confidence of young Americans was notorious, and I speedily arrived at a conviction that no impulse could have been more generous than the impulse that had operated here. I foresaw at that moment that it would make her my peculiar charge, just as circumstances had made Neil Paraday. She would be another person to look after, and one's honor would be concerned in guiding her straight. These things became clearer to me later; at the instant I had skepticism enough to observe to her, as I turned the pages of her volume, that her net had, all the same, caught many a big fish. She appeared to have had fruitful access to the great ones of the earth; there were people moreover whose signatures she had presumably secured without a personal interview. She couldn't have worried George Washington and Friedrich Schiller and Hannah More. She met this argument, to my surprise, by throwing up the album without a pang. It wasn't even her own; she was responsible for none of its treasures. It belonged to a girl-friend in America, a young lady in a western city. This young lady had insisted on her bringing it, to pick up more autographs: she thought they might like to see, in Europe, in what company they would be. The "girl-friend," the western city, the immortal names, the curious errand, the idyllic faith, all made a story as strange to me, and as beguiling, as some tale in the *Arabian Nights*. Thus it was that my informant had encumbered herself with the ponderous tome; but she hastened to assure me that this was the first time she had brought it out. For her visit to Mr. Paraday it had simply been a pretext. She didn't really care a straw that

he should write his name; what she did want was to look straight into his face.

I demurred a little. "And why do you require to do that?"

"Because I just love him!" Before I could recover from the agitating effect of this crystal ring my companion had continued: "Hasn't there ever been any face that you've wanted to look into?"

How could I tell her so soon how much I appreciated the opportunity of looking into hers? I could only assent in general to the proposition that there were certainly for every one such hankerings, and even such faces; and I felt that the crisis demanded all my lucidity, all my wisdom. "Oh, yes, I'm a student of physiognomy. Do you mean," I pursued, "that you've a passion for Mr. Paraday's books?"

"They've been everything to me and a little more beside—I know them by heart. They've completely taken hold of me. There's no author about whom I feel as I do about Neil Paraday."

"Permit me to remark then," I presently rejoined, "that you're one of the right sort."

"One of the enthusiasts? Of course I am!"

"Oh, there are enthusiasts who are quite of the wrong. I mean you're one of those to whom an appeal can be made."

"An appeal?" Her face lighted as if with the chance of some great sacrifice.

If she was ready for one it was only waiting for her, and in a moment I mentioned it. "Give up this crude purpose of seeing him. Go away without it. That will be far better."

She looked mystified; then she turned visibly pale. "Why, hasn't he any personal charm?" The girl was terrible and laughable in her bright directness.

"Ah, that dreadful word 'personal'!" I exclaimed; "we're dying of it, and you women bring it out with murderous effect. When you encounter a genius as fine as this idol of ours, let him off the dreary duty of being a personality as well. Know him only by what's best in him, and spare him for the same sweet sake."

My young lady continued to look at me in confusion and mistrust, and the result of her reflection on what I had just said was to

make her suddenly break out: "Look here, sir—what's the matter with him?"

"The matter with him is that, if he doesn't look out, people will eat a great hole in his life."

She considered a moment. "He hasn't any disfigurement?"

"Nothing to speak of!"

"Do you mean that social engagements interfere with his occupations?"

"That but feebly expresses it."

"So that he can't give himself up to his beautiful imagination?"

"He's badgered, bothered, overwhelmed, on the pretext of being applauded. People expect him to give them his time, his golden time, who wouldn't themselves give five shillings for one of his books."

"Five? I'd give five thousand!"

"Give your sympathy—give your forbearance. Two-thirds of those who approach him only do it to advertise themselves."

"Why, it's too bad!" the girl exclaimed with the face of an angel. "It's the first time I was ever called crude!" she laughed.

I followed up my advantage. "There's a lady with him now who's a terrible complication, and who yet hasn't read, I am sure, ten pages that he ever wrote."

My visitor's wide eyes grew tenderer. "Then how does she talk——?"

"Without ceasing. I only mention her as a single case. Do you want to know how to show a superlative consideration? Simply avoid him."

"Avoid him?" she softly wailed.

"Don't force him to have to take account of you; admire him in silence, cultivate him at a distance and secretly appropriate his message. Do you want to know," I continued, warming to my idea, "how to perform an act of homage really sublime?" Then as she hung on my words: "Succeed in never seeing him at all!"

"Never at all?" she pathetically gasped.

"The more you get into his writings the less you'll want to; and you'll be immensely sustained by the thought of the good you're doing him."

She looked at me without resentment or spite, and at the truth I had put before her with candor, credulity, pity. I was afterwards happy to remember that she must

have recognized in my face the liveliness of my interest in herself. "I think I see what you mean."

"Oh, I express it badly; but I should be delighted if you would let me come to see you—to explain it better."

She made no response to this, and her thoughtful eyes fell on the big album, on which she presently laid her hands as if to take it away. "I did use to say out West that they might write a little less for autographs (to all the great poets, you know) and study the thoughts and style a little more."

"What do they care for the thoughts and style? They didn't even understand you. I'm not sure," I added, "that I do myself, and I daresay that you by no means make me out." She had got up to go, and though I wanted her to succeed in not seeing Neil Paraday I wanted her also, inconsequently, to remain in the house. I was at any rate far from desiring to hustle her off. As Mrs. Weeks Wimbush, upstairs, was still saving our friend in her own way, I asked my young lady to let me briefly relate, in illustration of my point, the little incident of my having gone down into the country for a profane purpose and been converted on the spot to holiness. Sinking again into her chair to listen, she showed a deep interest in the anecdote. Then thinking it over gravely, she exclaimed with her odd intonation:

"Yes, but you do see him!" I had to admit that this was the case; and I was not so prepared with an effective attenuation as I could have wished. She eased the situation off, however, by the charming quaintness with which she finally said: "Well, I wouldn't want him to be lonely!" This time she rose in earnest, but I persuaded her to let me keep the album to show to Mr. Paraday. I assured her I would bring it back to her myself. "Well, you'll find my address somewhere in it, on a paper!" she sighed resignedly, at the door.

VIII

I BLUSH to confess it, but I invited Mr. Paraday that very day to transcribe into the album one of his most characteristic passages. I told him how I had got rid of

the strange girl who had brought it—her ominous name was Miss Hurter, and she lived at an hotel; quite agreeing with him moreover as to the wisdom of getting rid with equal promptitude of the book itself. This was why I carried it to Albemarle Street no later than on the morrow. I failed to find her at home, but she wrote to me and I went again: she wanted so much to hear more about Neil Paraday. I returned repeatedly, I may briefly declare, to supply her with this information. She had been immensely taken, the more she thought of it, with that idea of mine about the act of homage: it had ended by filling her with a generous rapture. She positively desired to do something sublime for him, though indeed I could see that, as this particular flight was difficult, she appreciated the fact that my visits kept her up. I had it on my conscience to keep her up; I neglected nothing that would contribute to it, and her conception of our cherished author's independence became at last as fine as his own conception. "Read him, read him," I constantly repeated; while, seeking him in his works, she represented herself as convinced that, according to my assurance, this was the system that had, as she expressed it, weaned her. We read him together when I could find time, and the generous creature's sacrifice was fed by our conversation. There were twenty selfish women, about whom I told her, who stirred her with a beautiful rage. Immediately after my first visit her sister, Mrs. Milsom, came over from Paris, and the two ladies began to present, as they called it, their letters. I thanked our stars that none had been presented to Mr. Paraday. They received invitations and dined out, and some of these occasions enabled Fanny Hurter to perform, for consistency's sake, touching feats of submission. Nothing indeed would now have induced her even to look at the object of her admiration. Once, hearing his name announced at a party, she instantly left the room by another door and then straightway quitted the house. At another time, when I was at the opera with them (Mrs. Milsom had invited me to their box) I attempted to point Mr. Paraday out to her in the stalls. On this she asked her sister to change places with her, and while that lady devoured the great man through a

powerful glass, presented, all the rest of the evening, her inspired back to the house. To torment her tenderly I pressed the glass upon her, telling her how wonderfully near it brought our friend's handsome head. By way of answer she simply looked at me in charged silence, letting me see that tears had gathered in her eyes. These tears, I may remark, produced an effect on me of which the end is not yet. There was a moment when I felt it my duty to mention them to Neil Paraday; but I was deterred by the reflection that there were questions more relevant to his happiness.

These questions indeed, by the end of the season, were reduced to a single one—the question of reconstituting, so far as might be possible, the conditions under which he had produced his best work. Such conditions could never all come back, for there was a new one that took up too much place; but some perhaps were not beyond recall. I wanted above all things to see him sit down to the subject of which, on my making his acquaintance, he had read me that admirable sketch. Something told me there was no security but in his doing so before the new factor, as we used to say at Mr. Pinhorn's, should render the problem incalculable. It only half reassured me that the sketch itself was so copious and so eloquent that even at the worst there would be the making of a small but complete book, a tiny volume which, for the faithful, might well become an object of adoration. There would even not be wanting critics to declare, I foresaw, that the plan was a thing to be more thankful for than the structure to have been reared on it. My impatience for the structure, none the less, grew and grew with the interruptions. He had, on coming up to town, begun to sit for his portrait to a young painter, Mr. Rumble, whose little game, as we also used to say at Mr. Pinhorn's, was to be the first to perch on the shoulders of renown. Mr. Rumble's studio was a circus in which the man of the hour, and still more the woman, leaped through the hoops of his showy frames almost as electrically as they burst into telegrams and "specials." He pranced into the exhibitions on their back; he was the reporter on canvas, the Vandyke up to date, and there was one roaring year in which Mrs. Bounder and

Miss Braby, Guy Walsingham and Dora Forbes proclaimed in chorus from the same pictured walls that no one had yet got ahead of him.

Paraday had been promptly caught and saddled, accepting with characteristic good-humor his confidential hint that to figure in his show was not so much a consequence as a cause of immortality. From Mrs. Wimbush to the last "representative" who called to ascertain his twelve favorite dishes, it was the same ingenuous assumption that he would rejoice in the repercussion. There were moments when I fancied I might have had more patience with them if they had not been so fatally benevolent. I hated, at all events, Mr. Rumble's picture, and had my bottled resentment ready when, later on, I found my distracted friend had been stuffed by Mrs. Wimbush into the mouth of another cannon. A young artist in whom she was intensely interested, and who had no connection with Mr. Rumble, was to show how far he could make him go. Poor Paraday, in return, was naturally to write something somewhere about the young artist. She played her victims against each other with admirable ingenuity, and her establishment was a huge machine in which the tiniest and the biggest wheels went round to the same treadle. I had a scene with her in which I tried to express that the function of such a man was to exercise his genius—not to serve as a hoarding for pictorial posters. The people I was perhaps angriest with were the editors of magazines who had introduced what they called new features, so aware were they that the newest feature of all would be to make him grind their axes by contributing his views on vital topics and taking part in the periodical prattle about the future of fiction. I made sure that before I should have done with him there would scarcely be a current form of words left me to be sick of; but meanwhile I could make surer still of my animosity to bustling ladies for whom he drew the water that irrigated their social flowerbeds.

I had a battle with Mrs. Wimbush over the artist she protected, and another over the question of a certain week, at the end of July, that Mr. Paraday appeared to have contracted to spend with her in the country. I protested against this visit; I intimated

that he was too unwell for hospitality without a *nuance*, for caresses without imagination; I begged he might rather take the time in some restorative way. A sultry air of promises, of ponderous parties, hung over his August, and he would greatly profit by the interval of rest. He had not told me he was ill again—that he had had a warning; but I had not needed this, and I found his reticence his worst symptom. The only thing he said to me was that he believed a comfortable attack of something or other would set him up: it would put out of the question everything but the exemptions he prized. I am afraid I shall have presented him as a martyr in a very small cause if I fail to explain that he surrendered himself much more liberally than I surrendered him. He filled his lungs, for the most part, with the comedy of his queer fate: the tragedy was in the spectacles through which I chose to look. He was conscious of inconvenience, and above all of a great renouncement; but how could he have heard a mere dirge in the bells of his accession? The sagacity and the jealousy were mine, and his the impressions and the anecdotes. Of course, as regards Mrs. Wimbush, I was worsted in my encounters, for was not the state of his health the very reason for his coming to her at Prestidge? Wasn't it precisely at Prestidge that he was to be coddled, and wasn't the dear Princess coming to help her to coddle him? The dear Princess, now on a visit to England, was of a famous foreign house, and, in her gilded cage, with her retinue of keepers and feeders, was the most expensive specimen in the good lady's collection. I don't think her august presence had had to do with Paraday's consenting to go, but it is not impossible that he had operated as a bait to the illustrious stranger. The party had been made up for him, Mrs. Wimbush averred, and every one was counting on it, the dear Princess most of all. If he was well enough he was to read them something absolutely fresh, and it was on that particular prospect the Princess had set her heart. She was so fond of genius, in *any* walk of life, and she was so used to it, and understood it so well; she was the greatest of Mr. Paraday's admirers, she devoured everything he wrote. And then he read like an angel. Mrs. Wimbush reminded me that he had

again and again given her, Mrs. Wimbush, the privilege of listening to him.

I looked at her a moment. "What has he read to you?" I crudely inquired.

For a moment too she met my eyes, and for the fraction of a moment she hesitated and colored. "Oh, all sorts of things!"

I wondered whether this were an imperfect recollection or only a perfect fib, and she quite understood my unuttered comment on her perception of such things. But if she could forget Neil Paraday's beauties she could of course forget my rudeness, and three days later she invited me, by telegraph, to join the party at Prestidge. This time she might indeed have had a story about what I had given up to be near the master. I addressed from that fine residence several communications to a young lady in London, a young lady whom, I confess, I quitted with reluctance and whom the reminder of what she herself could give up was required to make me quit at all. It adds to the gratitude I owe her on other grounds that she kindly allows me to transcribe from my letters a few of the passages in which that hateful sojourn is candidly commemorated.

IX

"I SUPPOSE I ought to enjoy the joke of what's going on here," I wrote, "but somehow it doesn't amuse me. Pessimism on the contrary possesses me and cynicism solicits. I positively feel my own flesh sore from the brass nails in Neil Paraday's social harness. The house is full of people who like him, as they mention, awfully, and with whom his talent for talking nonsense has prodigious success. I delight in his nonsense myself; why is it therefore that I grudge these happy folk their artless satisfaction? Mystery of the human heart—abyss of the critical spirit! Mrs. Wimbush thinks she can answer that question, and as my want of gayety has at last worn out her patience she has given me a glimpse of her shrewd guess. I am made restless by the selfishness of the insincere friend—I want to monopolize Paraday in order that he may push me on. To be intimate with him is a feather in my cap; it gives me an importance that I couldn't naturally pretend to, and I seek to

deprive him of social refreshment because I fear that meeting more disinterested people may enlighten him as to my real motive. All the disinterested people here are his particular admirers and have been carefully selected as such. There is supposed to be a copy of his last book in the house, and in the hall I come upon ladies, in attitudes, bending gracefully over the first volume. I discreetly avert my eyes, and when I next look round the precarious joy has been superseded by the book of life. There is a sociable circle or a confidential couple, and the relinquished volume lies open on its face, as if it had been dropped under extreme coercion. Somebody else presently finds it and transfers it, with its air of momentary desolation, to another piece of furniture. Every one is asking every one about it all day, and every one is telling every one where they put it last. I'm sure it's rather smudgy about the twentieth page. I have a strong impression too that the second volume is lost—has been packed in the bag of some departing guest; and yet everybody has the impression that somebody else has read to the end. You see therefore that the beautiful book plays a great part in our conversation. Why should I take the occasion of such distinguished honors to say that I begin to see deeper into Gustave Flaubert's doleful refrain about the hatred of literature? I refer you again to the perverse constitution of man.

"The Princess is a massive lady with the organization of an athlete and the confusion of tongues of a *valet de place*. She contrives to commit herself extraordinarily little in a great many languages, and is entertained and conversed with in detachments and relays, like an institution which goes on from generation to generation or a big building contracted for under a forfeit. She can't have a personal taste any more than, when her husband succeeds, she can have a personal crown, and her opinion on any matter is rusty and heavy and plain—made, in the night of ages, to last and be transmitted. I feel as if I ought to pay some one a fee for my glimpse of it. She has been told everything in the world and has never perceived anything, and the echoes of her education respond awfully to the rash footfall—I mean the casual remark—in the cold

Valhalla of her memory. Mrs. Wimbush delights in her wit and says there is nothing so charming as to hear Mr. Paraday draw it out. He is perpetually detailed for this job, and he tells me it has a peculiarly exhausting effect. Every one is beginning—at the end of two days—to sidle obsequiously away from her, and Mrs. Wimbush pushes him again and again into the breach. None of the uses I have yet seen him put to irritate me quite so much. He looks very fagged, and has at last confessed to me that his condition makes him uneasy—has even promised me that he will go straight home instead of returning to his final engagements in town. Last night I had some talk with him about going to-day, cutting his visit short; so sure am I that he will be better as soon as he is shut up in his lighthouse. He told me that this is what he would like to do; reminding me, however, that the first lesson of his greatness has been precisely that he can't do what he likes. Mrs. Wimbush would never forgive him if he should leave her before the Princess has received the last hand. When I say that a violent rupture with our hostess would be the best thing in the world for him he gives me to understand that if his reason assents to the proposition his courage hangs woefully back. He makes no secret of being mortally afraid of her, and when I ask what harm she can do him that she hasn't already done he simply repeats: 'I'm afraid, I'm afraid! Don't inquire too closely,' he said last night; 'only believe that I feel a sort of terror. It's strange, when she's so kind! At any rate, I would as soon overturn that piece of priceless Sèvres as tell her that I must go before my date.' It sounds dreadfully weak, but he has some reason, and he pays for his imagination, which puts him (I should hate it) in the place of others and makes him feel, even against himself, their feelings, their appetites, their motives. It's indeed inveterately against himself that he makes his imagination act. What a pity he has such a lot of it! He's too beastly intelligent. Besides, the famous reading is still to come off, and it has been postponed a day, to allow Guy Walsingham to arrive. It appears that this eminent lady is staying at a house a few miles off, which means of course that Mrs. Wimbush has forcibly

annexed her. She's to come over in a day or two—Mrs. Wimbush wants her to hear Mr. Paraday.

"To-day's wet and cold, and several of the company, at the invitation of the Duke, have driven over to luncheon at Bigwood. I saw poor Paraday wedge himself, by command, into the little supplementary seat of a brougham in which the Princess and our hostess were already ensconced. If the front glass isn't open on his dear old back perhaps he'll survive. Bigwood, I believe, is very grand and frigid, all marble and precedence, and I wish him well out of the adventure. I can't tell you how much more and more *your* attitude to him, in the midst of all this, shines out by contrast. I never willingly talk to these people about him, but see what a comfort I find it to scribble to you! I appreciate it—it keeps me warm; there are no fires in the house. Mrs. Wimbush goes by the calendar, the temperature goes by the weather, the weather goes by God knows what, and the Princess is easily heated. I have nothing but my acrimony to warm me, and have been out under an umbrella to restore my circulation. Coming in an hour ago, I found Lady Augusta Minch rummaging about the hall. When I asked her what she was looking for she said she had mislaid something that Mr. Paraday had lent her. I ascertained in a moment that the article in question is a manuscript, and I have a foreboding that it's the noble morsel he read me six weeks ago. When I expressed my surprise that he should have bandied about anything so precious (I happen to know it's his only copy—in the most beautiful hand in all the world) Lady Augusta confessed to me that she had not had it from himself, but from Mrs. Wimbush, who had wished to give her a glimpse of it as a salve for her not being able to stay and hear it read.

"Is that the piece he's to read,' I asked, 'when Guy Walsingham arrives?'

"It's not for Guy Walsingham they're waiting now, it's for Dora Forbes,' Lady Augusta said. 'She's coming, I believe, early to-morrow. Meanwhile Mrs. Wimbush has found out about *him*, and is actively wiring to him. She says he also must hear him.'

"You bewilder me a little,' I replied;

'in the age we live in one gets lost among the genders and the pronouns. The clear thing is that Mrs. Wimbush doesn't guard such a treasure as jealously as she might.'

"Poor dear, she has the Princess to guard! Mr. Paraday lent her the manuscript to look over.'

"Did she speak as if it were the morning paper?'

"Lady Augusta stared—my irony was lost upon her. 'She didn't have time, so she gave me a chance first; because unfortunately I go to-morrow to Bigwood.'

"And your chance has only proved a chance to lose it?'

"I haven't lost it. I remember now—it was very stupid of me to have forgotten. I told my maid to give it to Lord Dorimont—or at least to his man.'

"And Lord Dorimont went away directly after luncheon.'

"Of course he gave it back to my maid—or else his man did,' said Lady Augusta. 'I daresay it's all right.'

"The conscience of these people is like a summer sea. They haven't time to 'look over' a priceless composition; they've only time to kick it about the house. I suggested that the 'man,' fired with a noble emulation, had perhaps kept the work for his own perusal; and her ladyship wanted to know whether, if the thing didn't turn up again in time for the session appointed by our hostess, the author wouldn't have something else to read that would do just as well. Their questions are too delightful! I declared to Lady Augusta briefly that nothing in the world can ever do so well as the thing that does best; and at this she looked a little confused and scared. But I added that if the manuscript had gone astray our little circle would have the less of an effort of attention to make. The piece in question was very long—it would keep them three hours.

"Three hours! Oh, the Princess will get up!' said Lady Augusta.

"I thought she was Mr. Paraday's greatest admirer.'

"I daresay she is—she's so awfully clever. But what's the use of being a Princess—'

"If you can't dissemble your love?' I asked, as Lady Augusta was vague. She

said, at any rate, that she would question her maid; and I am hoping that when I go down to dinner I shall find the manuscript has been recovered."

X

"It has not been recovered," I wrote early the next day, "and I am moreover much troubled about our friend. He came back from Bigwood with a chill and, being allowed to have a fire in his room, lay down awhile before dinner. I tried to send him to bed, and indeed thought I had put him in the way of it; but after I had gone to dress Mrs. Wimbush came up to see him, with the inevitable result that when I returned I found him under arms and flushed and feverish, though decorated with the rare flower she had brought him for his button-hole. He came down to dinner, but Lady Augusta Minch was very shy of him. To-day he's in great pain, and the advent of *ces dames*—I mean of Guy Walsingham and Dora Forbes—doesn't at all console me. It does Mrs. Wimbush, however, for she has consented to his remaining in bed, so that he may be all right to-morrow for the listening circle. Guy Walsingham is already on the scene, and the doctor, for Paraday, also arrived early. I haven't yet seen the author of *Obsessions*, but of course I've had a moment by myself with the doctor. I tried to get him to say that our invalid must go straight home—I mean to-morrow or next day; but he quite refuses to talk about the future. Absolute quiet and warmth and the regular administration of an important remedy are the points he mainly insists on. He returns this afternoon, and I'm to go back to see the patient at one o'clock, when he next takes his medicine. It consoles me a little that he certainly won't be able to read—an exertion he was already more than unfit for. Lady Augusta went off after breakfast, assuring me that her first care would be to follow up the lost manuscript. I can see she thinks me a shocking busybody and doesn't understand my alarm, but she will do what she can, for she's a good-natured woman. 'So are they all honorable men.' That was precisely what made her give the thing to Lord Dorimont and made Lord Dorimont bag it.

What use *he* has for it God only knows. I have the worst forebodings, but somehow I'm strangely without passion—desperately calm. As I consider the unconscious, the well-meaning ravages of our appreciative circle I bow my head in submission to some great natural, some universal accident; I'm rendered almost indifferent, in fact quite gay (ha-ha!) by the sense of immitigable fate. Lady Augusta promises me to trace the precious object and let me have it, through the post, by the time Paraday is well enough to play his part with it. The last evidence is that her maid did give it to his lordship's valet. One would think it was some thrilling number of *The Family Budget*. Mrs. Wimbush, who is aware of the accident, is much less agitated by it than she would doubtless be were she not for the hour inevitably engrossed with Guy Walsingham."

Later in the day I informed my correspondent, for whom indeed I kept a sort of diary of the situation, that I had made the acquaintance of this celebrity and that she was a pretty little girl who wore her hair in what used to be called a crop. She looked so juvenile and so innocent that if, as Mr. Morrow had announced, she was resigned to the larger latitude, her superiority to prejudice must have come to her early. I spent most of the day hovering about Neil Paraday's room, but it was communicated to me from below that Guy Walsingham, at Prestidge, was a success. Towards evening I became conscious somehow that her superiority was contagious, and by the time the company separated for the night I was sure that the larger latitude had been generally accepted. I thought of Dora Forbes and felt that he had no time to lose. Before dinner I received a telegram from Lady Augusta Minch. "Lord Dorimont thinks he must have left bundle in train—inquire." How could I inquire—if I was to take the word as command? I was too worried and now too alarmed about Neil Paraday. The doctor came back, and it was an immense satisfaction to me to feel that he was wise and interested. He was proud of being called to so distinguished a patient, but he admitted to me that night that my friend was gravely ill. It was really a relapse, a recrudescence of his old malady. There

could be no question of moving him: we must at any rate see first, on the spot, what turn his condition would take. Meanwhile, on the morrow, he was to have a nurse. On the morrow the dear man was easier, and my spirits rose to such cheerfulness that I could almost laugh over Lady Augusta's second telegram: "Lord Dorimont's servant been to station—nothing found. Push inquiries." I did laugh, I am sure, as I remembered this to be the mystic scroll I had scarcely allowed poor Mr. Morrow to point his umbrella at. Fool that I had been: the thirty-seven influential journals wouldn't have destroyed it, they would only have printed it. Of course I said nothing to Paraday.

When the nurse arrived she turned me out of the room, on which I went downstairs. I should premise that at breakfast the news that our brilliant friend was doing well excited universal complacency, and the Princess graciously remarked that he was only to be commiserated for missing the society of Miss Collop. Mrs. Wimbush, whose social gift never shone brighter than in the dry decorum with which she accepted this fizzle in her fireworks, mentioned to me that Guy Walsingham had made a very favorable impression on her Imperial Highness. Indeed I think every one did so, and that, like the money-market or the national honor, her Imperial Highness was constitutionally sensitive. There was a certain gladness, a perceptible bustle in the air, however, which I thought slightly anomalous in a house where a great author lay critically ill. "*Le roy est mort—vive le roy*": I was reminded that another great author had already stepped into his shoes. When I came down again after the nurse had taken possession I found a strange gentleman hanging about the hall and pacing to and fro by the closed door of the drawing-room. This personage was florid and bald; he had a big red mustache and wore showy knickerbockers—characteristics all that fitted into my conception of the identity of Dora Forbes. In a moment I saw what had happened: the author of *The Other Way Round* had just alighted at the portals of Prestidge, but had suffered a scruple to restrain him from penetrating further. I recognized his scruple when, pausing to listen at his gesture of caution, I heard a

shrill voice lifted in a sort of rhythmic, uncanny chant. The famous reading had begun, only it was the author of *Obsessions* who now furnished the sacrifice. The new visitor whispered to me that he judged something was going on that he oughtn't to interrupt.

"Miss Collop arrived last night," I smiled, "and the Princess has a thirst for the *inédit*."

Dora Forbes lifted his bushy brows. "Miss Collop?"

"Guy Walsingham, your distinguished *confrère*—or shall I say your formidable rival?"

"Oh!" growled Dora Forbes. Then he added: "Shall I spoil it if I go in?"

"I should think nothing could spoil it!" I ambiguously laughed.

Dora Forbes evidently felt the dilemma; he gave an irritated crook to his mustache. "Shall I go in?" he presently asked.

We looked at each other hard a moment; then I expressed something bitter that was in me, expressed it in an infernal "Do!" After this I got out into the air, but not so fast as not to hear, when the door of the drawing-room opened, the disconcerted drop of Miss Collop's public manner: she must have been in the midst of the larger latitude. Producing with extreme rapidity, Guy Walsingham has just published a work in which amiable people who are not initiated have been pained to see the genius of a sister-novelist held up to unmistakable ridicule; so fresh an exhibition does it seem to them of the dreadful way men have always treated women. Dora Forbes, it is true, at the present hour, is immensely pushed by Mrs. Wimbush, and has sat for his portrait to the young artists she protects, sat for it not only in oils but in monumental alabaster.

What happened at Prestidge later in the day is of course contemporary history. If the interruption I had whimsically sanctioned was almost a scandal, what is to be said of that general dispersal of the company which, under the doctor's rule, began to take place in the evening? His rule was soothing to behold, small comfort as I was to have at the end. He decreed in the interest of his patient an absolutely soundless house and a consequent break-up of the party. Little

country practitioner as he was, he literally packed off the Princess. She departed as promptly as if a revolution had broken out, and Guy Walsingham emigrated with her. I was kindly permitted to remain, and this was not denied even to Mrs. Wimbush. The privilege was withheld indeed from Dora Forbes; so Mrs. Wimbush kept her latest capture temporarily concealed. This was so little, however, her usual way of dealing with her eminent friends that a couple of days of it exhausted her patience, and she went up to town with him in great publicity. The sudden turn for the worse her afflicted guest had, after a brief improvement, taken on the third night raised an obstacle to her seeing him before her retreat; a fortunate circumstance doubtless, for she was fundamentally disappointed in him. This was not the kind of performance for which she had invited him to Prestidge, or invited the Princess. Let me hasten to add that none of the generous acts which have characterized her patronage of intellectual and other merit have done so much for her reputation as her lending Neil Paraday the most beautiful of her numerous homes to die in. He took advantage to the utmost of the singular favor. Day by day I saw him sink, and I roamed alone about the empty terraces and gardens. His wife never came near him, but I scarcely noticed it: as I paced there with rage in my heart I was too full of another wrong. In the event of his death it would fall to me perhaps to bring out in some charming form, with notes, with the tenderest editorial care, that precious heritage of his written project. But where *was* that precious heritage, and were both the author and the book to have been snatched from us? Lady Augusta wrote me that she had done all she could and that poor Lord Dorimont, who had really been worried to death, was extremely sorry. I couldn't have the matter out with Mrs. Wimbush, for I didn't want to be taunted by her with desiring to aggrandize myself by a public connection with Mr. Paraday's sweepings. She had signified her willingness to meet the expense of all advertising, as indeed she was always ready to do. The last night of the horrible series, the night before he died, I put my ear closer to his pillow.

"That thing I read you that morning, you know."

"In your garden that dreadful day? Yes!"

"Won't it do as it is?"

"It would have been a glorious book."

"It is a glorious book," Neil Paraday murmured. "Print it as it stands—beautifully."

"Beautifully!" I passionately promised.

It may be imagined whether, now that he is gone, the promise seems to me less sacred. I am convinced that if such pages had appeared in his lifetime the Abbey would hold him to-day. I have kept the advertising in my own hands, but the manuscript has not been recovered. It's impossible, and at any rate intolerable, to suppose it can have been wantonly destroyed. Perhaps some hazard of a blind hand, some brutal ignorance has lighted kitchen-fires with it. Every stupid and hideous accident haunts my meditations. My undiscourageable search for the lost treasure would make a long chapter. Fortunately I have a devoted associate in the person of a young lady who has every day a fresh indignation and a fresh idea, and who maintains with intensity that the prize will still turn up. Sometimes I believe her, but I have quite ceased to believe myself. The only thing for us, at all events, is to go on seeking and hoping together; and we should be closely united by this firm tie even were we not at present by another.

THE SPECIAL TYPE ¹

I NOTE it as a wonderful case of its kind—the finest of all perhaps, in fact, that I have ever chanced to encounter. The kind, moreover, is the greatest kind, the roll recruited, for our high esteem and emulation, from history and fiction, legend and song. In the way of service and sacrifice for love I've really known nothing go beyond it. However, you can judge. My own sense of it happens just now to be remarkably rounded off by the sequel—more or less looked for on her part—of the legal step taken by Mrs. Brivet. I hear from America that, a decent

interval being held to have elapsed since her gain of her divorce, she is about to marry again—an event that will, it would seem, put an end to any question of the disclosure of the real story. It's this that's the real story, or will be, with nothing wanting, as soon as I shall have heard that her husband (who, on his side, has only been waiting for her to move first) has sanctified his union with Mrs. Cavenham.

I

SHE was, of course, often in and out, Mrs. Cavenham, three years ago, when I was painting her portrait; and the more so that I found her, I remember, one of those comparatively rare sitters who present themselves at odd hours, turn up without an appointment. The thing is to get most women to keep those they do make; but she used to pop in, as she called it, on the chance, letting me know that if I had a moment free she was quite at my service. When I hadn't the moment free she liked to stay to chatter, and she more than once expressed to me, I recollect, her theory that an artist really, for the time, could never see too much of his model. I must have shown her rather frankly that I understood her as meaning that a model could never see too much of her artist. I understood in fact everything, and especially that she was, in Brivet's absence, so unoccupied and restless that she didn't know what to do with herself. I was conscious in short that it was he who would pay for the picture, and that gives, I think, the measure of my enlightenment. If I took such pains and bore so with her folly, it was fundamentally for Brivet.

I was often at that time, as I had often been before, occupied—for various "subjects"—with Mrs. Dundene, in connection with which a certain occasion comes back to me as the first slide in the lantern. If I had invented my story I couldn't have made it begin better than with Mrs. Cavenham's irruption during the presence one morning of that lady. My door, by some chance, had been unguarded, and she was upon us without a warning. This was the sort of thing my model hated—the one, I mean, who, after all, sat mainly to oblige; but I remem-

¹ Reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons from the volume of James's tales entitled *The Better Sort*, first published in 1903.

ber how well she behaved. She was not dressed for company, though indeed a dress was never strictly necessary to her best effect. I recall that I had a moment of uncertainty, but I must have dropped the name of each for the other, as it was Mrs. Cavenham's line always, later on, that I had made them acquainted; and inevitably, though I wished her not to stay and got rid of her as soon as possible, the two women, of such different places in the scale, but of such almost equal beauty, were face to face for some minutes, of which I was not even at the moment unaware that they made an extraordinary use for mutual inspection. It was sufficient; they from that instant knew each other.

"Isn't she lovely?" I remember asking—and quite without the spirit of mischief—when I came back from restoring my visitor to her cab.

"Yes, awfully pretty. But I hate her."

"Oh," I laughed, "she's not so bad as that."

"Not so handsome as I, you mean?" And my sitter protested. "It isn't fair of you to speak as if I were one of those who can't bear even at the worst—or the best—another woman's looks. I should hate her even if she were ugly."

"But what have you to do with her?"

She hesitated; then with characteristic looseness: "What have I to do with anyone?"

"Well, there's no one else I know of that you do hate."

"That shows," she replied, "how good a reason there must be, even if I don't know it yet."

She knew it in the course of time, but I have never seen a reason, I must say, operate so little for relief. As a history of the hatred of Alice Dundene my anecdote becomes wondrous indeed. Meanwhile, at any rate, I had Mrs. Cavenham again with me for her regular sitting, and quite as curious as I had expected her to be about the person of the previous time.

"Do you mean she isn't, so to speak, a lady?" she asked after I had, for reasons of my own, fenced a little. "Then if she's not 'professional' either, what is she?"

"Well," I returned as I got at work, "she escapes, to my mind, any classification save

as one of the most beautiful and good-natured of women."

"I see her beauty," Mrs. Cavenham said. "It's immense. Do you mean that her good-nature's as great?"

I had to think a little. "On the whole, yes."

"Then I understand. That represents a greater quantity than I, I think, should ever have occasion for."

"Oh, the great thing's to be sure to have enough," I growled.

But she laughed it off. "Enough, certainly, is as good as a feast!"

It was—I forget how long, some months—after this that Frank Brivet, whom I had not seen for two years, knocked again at my door. I didn't at all object to him at my other work as I did to Mrs. Cavenham, but it was not till he had been in and out several times that Alice—which is what most people still really call her—chanced to see him and received in such an extraordinary way the impression that was to be of such advantage to him. She had been obliged to leave me that day before he went—though he stayed but a few minutes later; and it was not till the next time we were alone together that I was struck with her sudden interest, which became frankly pressing. I had met her, to begin with, expansively enough.

"An American? But what *sort*—don't you know? There are so many."

I didn't mean it as an offense, but in the matter of men, and though her acquaintance with them is so large, I always simplify with her. "*The sort*. He's rich."

"And how rich?"

"Why, *as* an American. Disgustingly."

I told her on this occasion more about him, but it was on that fact, I remember, that, after a short silence, she brought out with a sigh: "Well, I'm sorry. I should have liked to love him for himself."

II

QUITE apart from having been at school with him, I'm conscious—though at times he so puts me out—that I've a taste for Frank Brivet. I'm quite aware, by the same token—and even if when a man's so rich it's difficult to tell—that he's not everyone's affinity. I was struck, at all events, from

the first of the affair, with the way he clung to me and seemed inclined to haunt my studio. He's fond of art, though he has some awful pictures, and more or less understands mine; but it wasn't this that brought him. Accustomed as I was to notice what his wealth everywhere does for him, I was rather struck with his being so much thrown upon me and not giving London—the big fish that rises so to the hook baited with gold—more of a chance to perform to him. I very soon, however, understood. He had his reasons for wishing not to be seen much with Mrs. Cavenham, and, as he was in love with her, felt the want of some machinery for keeping temporarily away from her. I was his machinery, and, when once I perceived this, was willing enough to turn his wheel. His situation, moreover, became interesting from the moment I fairly grasped it, which he soon enabled me to do. His old reserve on the subject of Mrs. Brivet went to the winds, and it's not my fault if I let him see how little I was shocked by his confidence. His marriage had originally seemed to me to require much more explanation than anyone could give, and indeed in the matter of women in general, I confess, I've never seized his point of view. His inclinations are strange, and strange, too, perhaps, his indifferences. Still, I can enter into some of his aversions, and I agreed with him that his wife was odious.

"She has hitherto, since we began practically to live apart," he said, "mortally hated the idea of doing anything so pleasant for me as to divorce me. But I've reason to believe she has now changed her mind. She'd like to get clear."

I waited a moment. "For a man?"

"Oh, such a jolly good one! Remson Sturch."

I wondered. "Do you call *him* good?"

"Good for *her*. If she only can be got to be—which it oughtn't to be difficult to make her—fool enough to marry him, he'll give her the real size of his foot, and I shall be avenged in a manner positively ideal."

"Then will she institute proceedings?"

"She can't, as things stand. She has nothing to go upon. I've been," said poor Brivet, "I positively have, so blameless." I thought of Mrs. Cavenham, and, though I said nothing, he went on after an instant

as if he knew it. "They can't put a finger. I've been so damned particular."

I hesitated. "And your idea is now not to be particular any more?"

"Oh, about *her*," he eagerly replied, "always!" On which I laughed out and he colored. "But my idea is nevertheless, at present," he went on, "to pave the way; that is, I mean, if I can keep the person you're thinking of so totally out of it that not a breath in the whole business can possibly touch her."

"I see," I reflected. "She isn't willing?"

He stared. "To be compromised? Why the devil *should* she be?"

"Why shouldn't she—for *you*? Doesn't she love you?"

"Yes, and it's because she does, dearly, that I don't feel the right way to repay her is by spattering her over."

"Yet if she stands," I argued, "straight in the splash——!"

"She doesn't!" he interrupted me, with some curtness. "She stands a thousand miles out of it; she stands on a pinnacle; she stands as she stands in your charming portrait—lovely, lonely, untouched. And so she must remain."

"It's beautiful, it's doubtless inevitable," I returned after a little, "that you should feel so. Only, if your wife doesn't divorce you for a woman you love, I don't quite see how she can do it for the woman you don't."

"Nothing is more simple," he declared; on which I saw he had figured it out rather more than I thought. "It will be quite enough if she *believes* I love her."

"If the lady in question does—or Mrs. Brivet?"

"Mrs. Brivet—confound her! If she believes I love somebody else. I must have the appearance, and the appearance must of course be complete. All I've got to do is to take up——"

"To take up——?" I asked, as he paused.

"Well, publicly, with someone or other; someone who could easily be squared. One would undertake, after all, to produce the impression."

"On your wife naturally, you mean?"

"On my wife, and on the person concerned."

I turned it over and did justice to his

ingenuity. "But what impression would you undertake to produce on——?"

"Well?" he inquired as I just faltered.

"On the person *not* concerned. How would the lady you just accused me of having in mind be affected toward such a proceeding?"

He had to think a little, but he thought with success. "Oh, I'd answer for her."

"To the other lady?" I laughed.

He remained quite grave. "To myself. She'd leave us alone. As it would be for her good, she'd understand."

I was sorry for him, but he struck me as artless. "Understand, in that interest, the 'spattering' of another person?"

He colored again, but he was sturdy. "It must of course be exactly the right person—a special type. Someone who, in the first place," he explained, "wouldn't mind, and of whom, in the second, she wouldn't be jealous."

I followed perfectly, but it struck me as important all round that we should be clear. "But wouldn't the danger be great that any woman who shouldn't have that effect—the effect of jealousy—upon her wouldn't have it either on your wife?"

"Ah," he acutely returned, "my wife wouldn't be warned. She wouldn't be 'in the know.'"

"I see." I quite caught up. "The two other ladies distinctly would."

But he seemed for an instant at a loss. "Wouldn't it be indispensable only as regards one?"

"Then the other would be simply sacrificed?"

"She would be," Brivet splendidly put it, "remunerated." I was pleased even with the sense of financial power betrayed by the way he said it, and I at any rate so took the measure of his intention of generosity and his characteristically big view of the matter that this quickly suggested to me what at least might be his exposure. "But suppose that, in spite of 'remuneration,' this secondary personage should perversely like you? She would have to be indeed, as you say, a special type, but even special types may have general feelings. Suppose she should like you too much."

It had pulled him up a little. "What do you mean by 'too much'?"

"Well, more than enough to leave the case quite as simple as you'd require it."

"Oh, money always simplifies. Besides, I should make a point of being a brute." And on my laughing at this: "I should pay her enough to keep her down, to make her easy. But the thing," he went on with a drop back to the less mitigated real—"the thing, hang it! is first to find her."

"Surely," I concurred; "for she should have to lack, you see, no requirement whatever for plausibility. She must be, for instance, not only 'squareable,' but—before anything else even—awfully handsome."

"Oh, 'awfully'!" He could make light of *that*, which was what Mrs. Cavenham was.

"It wouldn't do for her, at all events," I maintained, "to be a bit less attractive than——"

"Well, than who?" he broke in, not only with a comic effect of disputing my point, but also as if he knew whom I was thinking of.

Before I could answer him, however, the door opened, and we were interrupted by a visitor—a visitor who, on the spot, in a flash, primed me with a reply. But I had of course for the moment to keep it to myself. "Than Mrs. Dundene!"

III

I HAD nothing more than that to do with it, but before I could turn round it was done; by which I mean that Brivet, whose previous impression of her had, for some sufficient reason, failed of sharpness, now jumped straight to the perception that here to his hand for the solution of his problem was the missing quantity and the appointed aid. They were in presence on this occasion, for the first time, half an hour, during which he sufficiently showed me that he felt himself to have found the special type. He was certainly to that extent right that nobody could—in those days in particular—without a rapid sense that she was indeed "special," spend any such time in the company of our extraordinary friend. I couldn't quarrel with his recognizing so quickly what I had myself instantly recognized, yet if it did in truth appear almost at a glance that she would, through the particular facts of situation, history, aspect, tone, temper, beauti-

fully "do," I felt from the first so affected by the business that I desired to wash my hands of it. There was something I wished to say to him before it went further, but after that I cared only to be out of it. I may as well say at once, however, that I never *was* out of it; for a man habitually ridden by the twin demons of imagination and observation is never—enough for his peace—out of anything. But I wanted to be able to apply to either, should anything happen, "'Thou canst not say *I* did it!'" What might in particular happen was represented by what I said to Brivet the first time he gave me a chance. It was what I had wished before the affair went further, but it had then already gone so far that he had been twice—as he immediately let me know—to see her at home. He clearly desired me to keep up with him, which I was eager to declare impossible; but he came again to see me only after he had called. Then I instantly made my point, which was that she was really, hang it! too good for his fell purpose.

"But, my dear man, my purpose is a sacred one. And if, moreover, she herself doesn't think she's too good——"

"Ah," said I, "she's in love with you, and so it isn't fair."

He wondered. "Fair to *me*?"

"Oh, I don't care a button for you! What I'm thinking of is her risk."

"And what do you mean by her risk?"

"Why, her finding, of course, before you've done with her, that she can't do without you."

He met me as if he had quite thought of that. "Isn't it much more *my* risk?"

"Ah, but you take it deliberately, walk into it with your eyes open. What I want to be sure of, liking her as I do, is that she fully understands."

He had been moving about my place with his hands in his pockets, and at this he stopped short. "How much do you like her?"

"Oh, ten times more than she likes me; so *that* needn't trouble you. Does she understand that it can be only to help somebody else?"

"Why, my dear chap, she's as sharp as a steam whistle."

"So that she also already knows who the other person is?"

He took a turn again, then brought out,

"There's no other person for her but me. Of course, as yet, there are things one doesn't say; I haven't set straight to work to dot all my i's, and the beauty of her, as she's really charming—and would be charming in *any* relation—is just exactly that I don't expect to have to. We'll work it out all right, I think, so that what I most wanted just to make sure of from you was what you've been good enough to tell me. I mean that you don't object—for yourself."

I could with philosophic mirth allay that scruple, but what I couldn't do was to let him see what really most worried me. It stuck, as they say, in my crop that a woman like—yes, when all was said and done—Alice Dundene should simply minister to the convenience of a woman like Rose Cavenham. "But there's one thing more." This was as far as I could go. "I may take from you then that she not only knows it's for your divorce and remarriage, but can fit the shoe on the very person?"

He waited a moment. "Well, you may take from me that I find her no more of a fool than, as I seem to see, many other fellows have found her."

I too was silent a little, but with a superior sense of being able to think it all out further than he. "She's magnificent!"

"Well, so am I!" said Brivet. And for months afterward there was much—in fact everything—in the whole picture to justify his claim. I remember how it struck me as a lively sign of this that Mrs. Cavenham, at an early day, gave up her pretty house in Wilton Street and withdrew for a time to America. That was palpable design and diplomacy, but I'm afraid that I quite as much, and doubtless very vulgarly, read into it that she had had money from Brivet to go. I even promised myself, I confess, the entertainment of finally making out that, whether or no the marriage should come off, she would not have been the person to find the episode least lucrative.

She left the others, at all events, completely together, and so, as the plot, with this, might be said definitely to thicken, it came to me in all sorts of ways that the curtain had gone up on the drama. It came to me, I hasten to add, much less from the two actors themselves than from other quarters—the usual sources, which never

fail, of chatter; for after my friends' direction was fairly taken they had the good taste on either side to handle it, in talk, with gloves, not to expose it to what I should have called the danger of definition. I even seemed to divine that, allowing for needful preliminaries, they dealt even with each other on this same unformulated plane, and that it well might be that no relation in London at that moment, between a remarkable man and a beautiful woman, had more of the general air of good manners. I saw for a long time, directly, but little of them, for they were naturally much taken up, and Mrs. Dundene in particular intermitted, as she had never yet done in any complication of her checkered career, her calls at my studio. As the months went by I couldn't but feel—partly, perhaps, for this very reason—that their undertaking announced itself as likely not to fall short of its aim. I gathered from the voices of the air that nothing whatever was neglected that could make it a success, and just this vision it was that made me privately project wonders into it, caused anxiety and curiosity often again to revisit me, and led me in fine to say to myself that so rich an effect could be arrived at on either side only by a great deal of heroism. As the omens markedly developed I supposed the heroism had likewise done so, and that the march of the matter was logical I inferred from the fact that even though the ordeal, all round, was more protracted than might have been feared, Mrs. Cavenham made no fresh appearance. This I took as a sign that she knew she was safe—took indeed as the feature not the least striking of the situation constituted in her interest. I held my tongue, naturally, about her interest, but I watched it from a distance with an attention that, had I been caught in the act, might have led to a mistake about the direction of my sympathy. I had to make it my proper secret that, while I lost as little as possible of what was being done for her, I felt more and more that I myself could never have begun to do it.

IV

SHE came back at last, however, and one of the first things she did on her arrival was to knock at my door and let me know im-

mediately, to smooth the way, that she was there on particular business. I was not to be surprised—though even if I were she shouldn't mind—to hear that she wished to bespeak from me, on the smallest possible delay, a portrait, full-length for preference, of our delightful friend Mr. Brivet. She brought this out with a light perfection of assurance of which the first effect—I couldn't help it—was to make me show myself almost too much amused for good manners. She first stared at my laughter, then wonderfully joined in it, looking meanwhile extraordinarily pretty and elegant—more completely handsome in fact, as well as more completely happy, than I had ever yet seen her. She was distinctly the better, I quickly saw, for what was being done for her, and it was an odd spectacle indeed that while, out of her sight and to the exclusion of her very name, the good work went on, it put roses in her cheeks and rings on her fingers and the sense of success in her heart. What had made me laugh, at all events, was the number of other ideas suddenly evoked by her request, two of which, the next moment, had disengaged themselves with particular brightness. She wanted, for all her confidence, to omit no precaution, to close up every issue, and she had acutely conceived that the possession of Brivet's picture—full-length, above all!—would constitute for her the strongest possible appearance of holding his supreme pledge. If that had been her foremost thought her second then had been that if I should paint him he would have to sit, and that in order to sit he would have to return. He had been at this time, as I knew, for many weeks in foreign cities—which helped moreover to explain to me that Mrs. Cavenham had thought it compatible with her safety to reopen her London house. Everything accordingly seemed to make for a victory, but there *was* such a thing, her proceeding implied, as one's—at least as *her*—susceptibility and her nerves. This question of his return I of course immediately put to her; on which she immediately answered that it was expressed in her very proposal, inasmuch as this proposal was nothing but the offer that Brivet had himself made her. The thing was to be his gift; she had only, he had assured her, to choose her artist and arrange

the time; and she had amiably chosen me—chosen me for the dates, as she called them, immediately before us. I doubtless—but I don't care—give the measure of my native cynicism in confessing that I didn't the least avoid showing her that I saw through her game. "Well, I'll do him," I said, "if he'll come himself and ask me."

She wanted to know, at this, of course, if I impugned her veracity. "You don't believe what I tell you? You're afraid for your money?"

I took it in high good-humor. "For my money not a bit."

"For what then?"

I had to think first how much I could say, which seemed to me, naturally, as yet but little. "I know perfectly that whatever happens Brivet always pays. But let him come; then we'll talk."

"Ah, well," she returned, "you'll see if he doesn't come." And come he did in fact—though without a word from myself directly—at the end of ten days; on which we immediately got to work, an idea highly favorable to it having meanwhile shaped itself in my own breast. Meanwhile too, however, before his arrival, Mrs. Cavenham had been again to see me, and this it was precisely, I think, that determined my idea. My present explanation of what afresh passed between us is that she really felt the need to build up her security a little higher by borrowing from my own vision of what had been happening. I had not, she saw, been very near to that, but I had been at least, during her time in America, nearer than she. And I had doubtless somehow "aggravated" her by appearing to disbelieve in the guarantee she had come in such pride to parade to me. It had in any case befallen that, on the occasion of her second visit, what I least expected or desired—her avowal of being "in the know"—suddenly went too far to stop. When she did speak she spoke with elation. "Mrs. Brivet has filed her petition."

"For getting rid of him?"

"Yes, in order to marry again; which is exactly what he wants her to do. It's wonderful—and, in a manner, I think, quite splendid—the way he has made it easy for her. He has met her wishes handsomely—obliged her in every particular."

As she preferred, subtly enough, to put it all as if it were for the sole benefit of his wife, I was quite ready for this tone; but I privately defied her to keep it up. "Well, then, he hasn't labored in vain."

"Oh, it *couldn't* have been in vain. What has happened has been the sort of thing that she couldn't possibly fail to act upon."

"Too great a scandal, eh?"

She but just paused at it. "Nothing neglected, certainly, or omitted. He was not the man to undertake it——"

"And not put it through? No, I should say he wasn't the man. In any case he apparently hasn't been. But he must have found the job——"

"Rather a bore?" she asked as I had hesitated.

"Well, not so much a bore as a delicate matter."

She seemed to demur. "Delicate?"

"Why, your sex likes him so."

"But isn't just that what has made it easy?"

"Easy for *him*—yes," I after a moment admitted.

But it wasn't what she meant. "And not difficult, also, for *them*."

This was the nearest approach I was to have heard her make, since the day of the meeting of the two women at my studio, to naming Mrs. Dundene. She never, to the end of the affair, came any closer to her in speech than by the collective and promiscuous plural pronoun. There might have been a dozen of them, and she took cognizance, in respect to them, only of quantity. It was as if it had been a way of showing how little of anything else she imputed. Quality, as distinguished from quantity, was what *she* had. "Oh, I think," I said, "that we can scarcely speak for them."

"Why not? They must certainly have had the most beautiful time. Operas, theaters, suppers, dinners, diamonds, carriages, journeys hither and yon with him, poor dear, telegrams sent by each from everywhere to everywhere and always lying about, elaborate arrivals and departures at stations for everyone to see, and, in fact, quite a crowd usually collected—as many witnesses as you like. Then," she wound up, "his brougham standing always—half the day and half the night—at their doors."

He has had to keep a brougham, and the proper sort of man, just for that alone. In other words unlimited publicity."

"I see. What more can they have wanted? Yes," I pondered, "they like, for the most part, we suppose, a studied, outrageous *affichage*, and they must have thoroughly enjoyed it."

"Ah, but it was only that."

I wondered. "Only what?"

"Only *affiché*. Only outrageous. Only the *form* of—well, of what would definitely serve. He never saw them alone."

I wondered—or at least appeared to—still more. "Never?"

"Never. Never once." She had a wonderful air of answering for it. "I know."

I saw that, after all, she really believed she knew, and I had indeed, for that matter, to recognize that I myself believed her knowledge to be sound. Only there went with it a complacency, an enjoyment of having really made me see what could be done for her, so little to my taste that for a minute or two I could scarce trust myself to speak: she looked somehow, as she sat there, so lovely, and yet, in spite of her loveliness—or perhaps even just because of it—so smugly selfish; she put it to me with so small a consciousness of anything but her personal triumph that, while she had kept her skirts clear, her name unuttered and her reputation untouched, "they" had been in it even more than her success required. It was their skirts, their name and their reputation that, in the proceedings at hand, would bear the brunt. It was only after waiting a while that I could at last say: "You're perfectly sure then of Mrs. Brivet's intention?"

"Oh, we've had formal notice."

"And he's himself satisfied of the sufficiency——?"

"Of the sufficiency——?"

"Of what he has done."

She rectified. "Of what he has *appeared* to do."

"That *is* then enough?"

"Enough," she laughed, "to send him to the gallows!" To which I could only reply that all was well that ended well.

V

ALL for me, however, as it proved, had not ended yet. Brivet, as I have mentioned,

duly reappeared to sit for me, and Mrs. Cavenham, on his arrival, as consistently went abroad. He confirmed to me that lady's news of how he had "fetched," as he called it, his wife—let me know, as decently owing to me after what had passed, on the subject, between us, that the forces set in motion had logically operated; but he made no other allusion to his late accomplice—for I now took for granted the close of the connection—than was conveyed in this intimation. He spoke—and the effect was almost droll—as if he had had, since our previous meeting, a busy and responsible year and wound up an affair (as he was accustomed to wind up affairs) involving a mass of detail; he even dropped into occasional reminiscence of what he had seen and enjoyed and disliked during a recent period of rather far-reaching adventure; but he stopped just as short as Mrs. Cavenham had done—and, indeed, much shorter than she—of introducing Mrs. Dundene by name into our talk. And what was singular in this, I soon saw, was—apart from a general discretion—that he abstained not at all because his mind was troubled, but just because, on the contrary, it was so much at ease. It was perhaps even more singular still, meanwhile, that, though I had scarce been able to bear Mrs. Cavenham's manner in this particular, I found I could put up perfectly with that of her friend. She had annoyed me, but he didn't—I give the inconsistency for what it is worth. The obvious state of his conscience had always been a strong point in him and one that exactly irritated some people as much as it charmed others; so that if, in general, it was positively, and in fact quite aggressively approving, this monitor, it had never held its head so high as at the juncture of which I speak. I took all this in with eagerness, for I saw how it would play into my work. Seeking as I always do, instinctively, to represent sitters in the light of the thing, whatever it may be, that facially, least wittingly or responsibly, gives the pitch of their aspect, I felt immediately that I should have the clue for making a capital thing of Brivet were I to succeed in showing him in just this freshness of his cheer. His cheer was that of his being able to say to himself that he had got all he wanted precisely *as* he wanted: without having harmed a fly.

He had arrived so neatly where most men arrive besmirched, and what he seemed to cry out as he stood before my canvas—wishing everyone well all round—was: “See how clever and pleasant and practicable, how jolly and lucky and rich I’ve been!” I determined, at all events, that I would make some such characteristic words as these cross, at any cost, the footlights, as it were, of my frame.

Well, I can’t but feel to this hour that I really hit my nail—that the man *is* fairly painted in the light and that the work remains as yet my high-water mark. He himself was delighted with it—and all the more, I think, that before it was finished he received from America the news of his liberation. He had not defended the suit—as to which judgment, therefore, had been expeditiously rendered; and he was accordingly free as air and with the added sweetness of every augmented appearance that his wife was herself blindly preparing to seek chastisement at the hands of destiny. There being at last no obstacle to his open association with Mrs. Cavenham, he called her directly back to London to admire my achievement, over which, from the very first glance, she as amiably let herself go. It was the very view of him she had desired to possess; it was the dear man in his intimate essence for those who knew him; and for any one who should ever be deprived of him it would be the next best thing to the sound of his voice. We of course by no means lingered, however, on the contingency of privation, which was promptly swept away in the rush of Mrs. Cavenham’s vision of how straight also, above and beyond, I had, as she called it, attacked. I couldn’t quite myself, I fear, tell how straight, but Mrs. Cavenham perfectly could, and did, for everybody: she had at her fingers’ ends all the reasons why the thing would be a treasure even for those who had never seen “Frank.”

I had finished the picture, but was, according to my practice, keeping it near me a little, for afterthoughts, when I received from Mrs. Dundene the first visit she had paid me for many a month. “I’ve come,” she immediately said, “to ask you a favor”; and she turned her eyes, for a minute, as if contentedly full of her thought, round the large workroom she already knew so well and

in which her beauty had really rendered more services than could ever be repaid. There were studies of her yet on the walls; there were others thrust away in corners; others still had gone forth from where she stood and carried to far-away places the reach of her lingering look. I had greatly, almost inconveniently missed her, and I don’t know why it was that she struck me now as more beautiful than ever. She had always, for that matter, had a way of seeming each time a little different and a little better. Dressed very simply in black materials, feathers and lace, that gave the impression of being light and fine, she had indeed the air of a special type, but quite as some great lady might have had it. She looked like a princess in Court mourning. Oh, she had been a case for the petitioner—was everything the other side wanted! “Mr. Brivet,” she went on to say, “has kindly offered me a present. I’m to ask of him whatever in the world I most desire.”

I knew in an instant, on this, what was coming, but I was at first wholly taken up with the simplicity of her allusion to her late connection. Had I supposed that, like Brivet, she wouldn’t allude to it at all? or had I stupidly assumed that if she did it would be with ribaldry and rancor? I hardly know; I only know that I suddenly found myself charmed to receive from her thus the key of my own freedom. There was something I wanted to say to her, and she had thus given me leave. But for the moment I only repeated as with amused interest: “Whatever in the world—?”

“Whatever in all the world.”

“But that’s immense, and in what way can poor *I* help—?”

“By painting him for me. I want a portrait of him.”

I looked at her a moment in silence. She was lovely. “That’s what—‘in all the world’—you’ve chosen?”

“Yes—thinking it over: full-length. I want it for remembrance, and I want it as you will do it. It’s the only thing I do want.”

“Nothing else?”

“Oh, it’s enough.” I turned about—she was wonderful. I had whisked out of sight for a month the picture I had produced for Mrs. Cavenham, and it was now completely

covered with a large piece of stuff. I stood there a little, thinking of it, and she went on as if she feared I might be unwilling. "Can't you do it?"

It showed me that she had not heard from him of my having painted him, and this, further, was an indication that, his purpose effected, he had ceased to see her. "I suppose you know," I presently said, "what you've done for him?"

"Oh yes; it was what I wanted."

"It was what *he* wanted!" I laughed.

"Well, I want what he wants."

"Even to his marrying Mrs. Cavenham?"

She hesitated. "As well her as anyone, from the moment he couldn't marry *me*."

"It was beautiful of you to be so sure of that," I returned.

"How could I be anything else but sure? He doesn't so much as *know* me!" said Alice Dundene.

"No," I declared, "I verily believe he doesn't. There's your picture," I added, unveiling my work.

She was amazed and delighted. "I may have *that*?"

"So far as I'm concerned—absolutely."

"Then he had himself the beautiful thought of sitting for me?"

I faltered but an instant. "Yes."

Her pleasure in what I had done was a joy to me. "Why, it's of a truth——! It's perfection."

"I think it is."

"It's the whole story. It's life."

"That's what I tried for," I said; and I added to myself: "Why the deuce *do* we?"

"It will be *him* for me," she meanwhile went on. "I shall *live* with it, keep it all to myself, and—do you know what it will do?—it will seem to make up."

"To make up?"

"I never saw him alone," said Mrs. Dundene.

I am still keeping the thing to send to her, punctually, on the day he's married; but I had of course, on my understanding with her, a tremendous bout with Mrs. Cavenham, who protested with indignation against my "base treachery" and made to Brivet an appeal for redress which, enlightened, face to face with the magnificent humility of his other friend's selection, he couldn't, for shame, entertain. All he was able to do was to suggest to me that I might for one or other of the ladies, at my choice, do him again; but I had no difficulty in replying that my best was my best and that what was done was done. He assented with the awkwardness of a man in dispute between women, and Mrs. Cavenham remained furious. "Can't 'they'—of *all* possible things, think!—take something else?"

"Oh, they want *him*!"

"Him?" It was monstrous.

"To live with," I explained—"to make up."

"To make up for what?"

"Why, you know, they never saw him alone."

HENRY ADAMS (1838-1918)

Henry Brooks Adams was the son of Charles Francis Adams, the grandson of John Quincy Adams, and the great-grandson of John Adams. He was born in Boston on 16 February, 1838. He was graduated from Harvard College twenty years later, and was chosen Class Orator by his classmates. In the fall of 1858 he went to Germany with the intention of studying civil law at Berlin. He attended only one lecture, but he did study to some effect the German language. The winter of 1859-1860 he spent in Italy and then, after a few months in France, returned to Boston—only to be taken down to Washington by his father, a member of the House of Representatives, as his private secretary. In the spring of 1861 his father was appointed Ambassador to England, and Henry went with him, still acting as his private secretary. He lived in England, with several intervals of travel on the Continent, until 1868, and during the latter part of this period contributed several essays to the *North American Review*. He had abandoned all intention of ever studying the law when he had gone to England, and now, upon his return, he hoped to become known as a political writer, and to win, if not office, at least leadership and influence as a reformer in the Democratic party. He began well enough. One of his essays was reprinted by the Democratic National Committee and thousands of copies were circulated through the country. But his observation of the press and of conditions in Washington in 1869 and 1870 convinced him that his aim was mistaken, for he felt forced to conclude that the Republicans were so firmly intrenched as to make any hope of reform chimerical for at least a generation, and he had no taste for leadership which, in such circumstances, was bound to be without practical result. Accordingly he was tempted when, in 1870, he was asked to become an assistant professor of history at Harvard and, at the same time, editor of the *North American Review*. He protested that he knew no history, but he finally accepted the double appointment, and taught medieval history at Harvard until 1877. He then resigned his post, tiring of it because he felt that his hard work had to be done unintelligently and that it brought no commensurate returns either to himself or to his students.

Adams now threw himself into the study of American history in the early years of the nineteenth century, going to live in Washington for the purpose (he had married, and in 1884 he began to build himself a home in Washington). In 1879 he published a biography of Albert Gallatin and an edition of his writings. In the following year he published (anonymously) a satirical novel, *Democracy*, in 1882 a life of John Randolph, and in 1884 another satirical novel (over a pseudonym) entitled *Esther*. These three books all have interest and value, and the two novels deserve to be read much more widely than hitherto they have been, but the great work of this period was his *History of the United States of America during the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison* (9 vols., 1889-1891), over which he spent years of labor in Washington and in Europe. This may justly be called a masterpiece, and indeed it is the best piece of historical literature concerning America which has yet been written. It is finely conceived, exact in scholarship, written from a full background, and excellent in literary form. Adams also published in 1891 a collection of his essays, entitled *Historical Essays*. He had intended to continue his *History*, and had collected materials for so doing, but several circumstances conspired to prevent this. The death of his wife induced in him a profound reaction, similar in character to that which he had earlier experienced at the sudden and accidental death of his sister, and there swept over him a conviction of the futility of life itself and of his own work which never afterwards quite left him. This was reinforced by the quiet reception of his great *History*. The only tangible result he had seen of his political efforts, in 1869 and 1870, had been that a Republican senator had likened him to a begonia, showy but not useful. Now his *History* elicited an honorary degree (1892) from Western Reserve University and the presidency (for 1894) of the American Historical Association, but he could not discover that the work itself had more than three serious readers, and he felt that his expenditure of time and money had been excessive for this result. Furthermore, he had long felt the influence of modern science and of its pretensions to exactness and finality, and he had begun to think that such work as he and other historians were engaged upon was no better than mere antiquarian research, showy but not useful. The historian, if he was to be more than a dilettante or smatterer, must become a scientist, and this meant that his work must remain without foundation or value until he could discover the law of social development.

Such was the tenor of a provocative letter which Adams sent (in lieu of a presidential address) to the American Historical Association in December, 1894. And, though he did not say so, he had already been definitely stimulated to attack this problem by an hypothesis concerning social development propounded by his younger brother, Brooks Adams. He had read his brother's manuscript (entitled, when later published, *The Law of Civilization and Decay*) in the summer of 1893, and had complained that, though the hypothesis seemed to him correct, it was not adequately supported. The theory was, briefly, that human societies develop in an inevitably repeated cycle from a state of relative simplicity and high integration to a state of high complexity producing rapid disintegration, or that history is a repeated tale of developments from unity to chaos or anarchy. Adams resolved to test this theory and to try to demonstrate it. The effort led him into a long course of historical and scientific research, which finally convinced him of the theory's truth, though he modified it by concluding that the evolution of organic life may be defined as the progressive degradation of vital energy, which means simply that the more complex and highly specialized an organism is, the lower it is in the scale of being, so that if man and the social organism are the last words in evolution they are also merely the heralds of their own approaching extinction in a chaotic flux of matter incapable of producing or sustaining life.

It was Adams's effort, if not to demonstrate—for he came to recognize that demonstration was practically or perhaps finally impossible—at least to make impressive to men's imaginations this conclusion, which led him to write the three books which in recent years have made him famous. These are: *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres* (1904), *The Education of Henry Adams* (1907), and *A Letter to American Teachers of History* (1910). The first is a study of the spirit of the Middle Ages which is a work of consummate art, and which has been universally recognized as the best study of its subject to be found in the English language. The second is in form an ironical autobiography, too long, but packed with matter of absorbing interest. The third is a direct exposition of the theory which the first two are intended to illustrate. Without an understanding both of that theory and of Adams's purpose in these books the first two mentioned above cannot be fully understood, and this applies with especial force to the *Education*, which is profoundly misleading if read simply as an autobiography. The last book which Adams wrote was a short biography of George Cabot Lodge (1911). He died on 27 March, 1918.

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DURING THE ADMINISTRATIONS OF JEFFERSON AND MADISON¹

VOLUME I

CHAPTER II

POPULAR CHARACTERISTICS

THE growth of character, social and national,—the formation of men's minds,—more interesting than any territorial or industrial growth,² defied the tests of censuses and surveys. No people could be expected, least of all when in infancy, to understand the intricacies of its own character, and rarely has a foreigner been gifted with insight to explain what natives did not comprehend. Only with diffidence could the best-informed Americans venture, in

1800, to generalize on the subject of their own national habits of life and thought. Of all American travelers President Dwight³ was the most experienced; yet his four volumes of travels were remarkable for no trait more uniform than their reticence in regard to the United States. Clear and emphatic wherever New England was in discussion, Dwight claimed no knowledge of other regions. Where so good a judge professed ignorance, other observers were likely to mislead; and Frenchmen like Liancourt, Englishmen like Weld, or Germans like Bülow, were almost equally worthless authorities on a subject which none understood. The newspapers of the time were little more trustworthy than the books of travel, and hardly so well written. The literature of a higher kind was chiefly limited to New England, New York, and Pennsylvania. From materials so poor no precision of result could be expected. A few customs, more or less local; a few prejudices, more or less popular; a few traits of thought, suggesting habits of

¹ The two chapters here reprinted are used with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

² The preceding chapter deals with physical and economical conditions in the United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

³ Of Yale College.

mind,—must form the entire material for a study more important than that of politics or economics.

The standard of comfort had much to do with the standard of character; and in the United States, except among the slaves, the laboring class enjoyed an ample supply of the necessities of life. In this respect, as in some others, they claimed superiority over the laboring class in Europe, and the claim would have been still stronger had they shown more skill in using the abundance that surrounded them. The Duc de Liancourt, among foreigners the best and kindest observer, made this remark on the mode of life he saw in Pennsylvania:

There is a contrast of cleanliness with its opposite which to a stranger is very remarkable. The people of the country are as astonished that one should object to sleeping two or three in the same bed and in dirty sheets, or to drink from the same dirty glass after half a score of others, as to see one neglect to wash one's hands and face of a morning. Whiskey diluted with water is the ordinary country drink. There is no settler, however poor, whose family does not take coffee or chocolate for breakfast, and always a little salt meat; at dinner, salt meat, or salt fish, and eggs; at supper again salt meat and coffee. This is also the common régime of the taverns.

An amusing, though quite untrustworthy Englishman named Ashe, who invented an American journey in 1806, described the fare of a Kentucky cabin:

The dinner consisted of a large piece of salt bacon, a dish of hominy, and a tureen of squirrel broth. I dined entirely on the last dish, which I found incomparably good, and the meat equal to the most delicate chicken. The Kentuckian ate nothing but bacon, which indeed is the favorite diet of all the inhabitants of the State, and drank nothing but whiskey, which soon made him more than two-thirds drunk. In this last practice he is also supported by the public habit. In a country, then, where bacon and spirits form the favorite summer repast, it cannot be just to attribute entirely the causes of infirmity to the climate. No people on earth live with less regard to regimen. They eat salt meat three times a day, seldom or never have any vegetables, and drink ardent spirits from morning till night. They have not only an aversion to fresh meat, but a vulgar prejudice that it is unwholesome. The truth is, their stomachs are depraved by burning liquors, and they have no appetite for anything but what is high-flavored and strongly impregnated by salt.

Salt pork three times a day was regarded as an essential part of American diet. In the *Chainbearer*, Cooper described what he called American poverty as it existed in 1784. "As for bread," said the mother, "I count that for nothing. We always have bread and potatoes enough; but I hold a family to be in a desperate way when the mother can see the bottom of the pork-barrel. Give me the children that's raised on good sound pork afore all the game in the country. Game's good as a relish, and so's bread; but pork is the staff of life. . . . My children I calkerlate to bring up on pork."

Many years before the time to which Cooper referred, Poor Richard asked: "Maids of America, who gave you bad teeth?" and supplied the answer: "Hot soupings and frozen apples." Franklin's question and answer were repeated in a wider sense by many writers, but none was so emphatic as Volney:

I will venture to say [declared Volney] that if a prize were proposed for the scheme of a regimen most calculated to injure the stomach, the teeth, and the health in general, no better could be invented than that of the Americans. In the morning at breakfast they deluge their stomach with a quart of hot water, impregnated with tea, or so slightly with coffee that it is mere colored water; and they swallow, almost without chewing, hot bread, half baked, toast soaked in butter, cheese of the fattest kind, slices of salt or hung beef, ham, etc., all which are nearly insoluble. At dinner they have boiled pastes under the name of puddings, and the fattest are esteemed the most delicious; all their sauces, even for roast beef, are melted butter; their turnips and potatoes swim in hog's lard, butter, or fat; under the name of pie or pumpkin, their pastry is nothing but a greasy paste, never sufficiently baked. To digest these viscous substances they take tea almost instantly after dinner, making it so strong that it is absolutely bitter to the taste, in which state it affects the nerves so powerfully that even the English find it brings on a more obstinate restlessness than coffee. Supper again introduces salt meats or oysters. As Chastellux says, the whole day passes in heaping indigestions on one another; and to give tone to the poor, relaxed, and wearied stomach, they drink Madeira, rum, French brandy, gin, or malt spirits, which complete the ruin of the nervous system.

An American breakfast never failed to interest foreigners, on account of the variety

and abundance of its dishes. On the main lines of travel, fresh meat and vegetables were invariably served at all meals; but Indian corn was the national crop, and Indian corn was eaten three times a day in another form as salt pork. The rich alone could afford fresh meat. Ice-chests were hardly known. In the country fresh meat could not regularly be got, except in the shape of poultry or game; but the hog cost nothing to keep, and very little to kill and preserve. Thus the ordinary rural American was brought up on salt pork and Indian corn, or rye; and the effect of this diet showed itself in dyspepsia.

One of the traits to which Liancourt alluded marked more distinctly the stage of social development. By day or by night, privacy was out of the question. Not only must all men travel in the same coach, dine at the same table, at the same time, on the same fare, but even their beds were in common, without distinction of persons. Innkeepers would not understand that a different arrangement was possible. When the English traveler Weld reached Elkton, on the main road from Philadelphia to Baltimore, he asked the landlord what accommodation he had. "Don't trouble yourself about that," was the reply; "I have no less than eleven beds in one room alone." This primitive habit extended over the whole country from Massachusetts to Georgia, and no American seemed to revolt against the tyranny of innkeepers.

"At New York I was lodged with two others, in a back room on the ground floor," wrote, in 1796, the Philadelphian whose complaints have already been mentioned. "What can be the reason for that vulgar, hoggish custom, common in America, of squeezing three, six, or eight beds into one room?"

Nevertheless, the Americans were on the whole more neat than their critics allowed. "You have not seen the Americans," was Cobbett's reply, in 1819, to such charges; "you have not seen the nice, clean, neat houses of the farmers of Long Island, in New England, in the Quaker counties of Pennsylvania; you have seen nothing but the smoke-dried ultra-montanians." Yet Cobbett drew a sharp contrast between the laborer's neat cottage familiar to him in

Surrey and Hampshire, and the "shell of boards" which the American occupied, "all around him as barren as a sea-beach." He added, too, that "the example of neatness was wanting"; no one taught it by showing its charm. Felix de Beaujour, otherwise not an enthusiastic American, paid a warm compliment to the country in this single respect, although he seemed to have the cities chiefly in mind:

American neatness must possess some very attractive quality, since it seduces every traveler; and there is no one of them who, in returning to his own country, does not wish to meet again there that air of ease and neatness which rejoiced his sight during his stay in the United States.

Almost every traveler discussed the question whether the Americans were a temperate people, or whether they drank more than the English. Temperate they certainly were not, when judged by a modern standard. Every one acknowledged that in the South and West drinking was occasionally excessive; but even in Pennsylvania and New England the universal taste for drams proved habits by no means strict. Every grown man took his noon toddy as a matter of course; and although few were seen publicly drunk, many were habitually affected by liquor. The earliest temperance movement, ten or twelve years later, was said to have had its source in the scandal caused by the occasional intoxication of ministers at their regular meetings. Cobbett thought drinking the national disease; at all hours of the day, he said, young men, "even little boys, at or under twelve years of age, go into stores and tip off their drams." The mere comparison with England proved that the evil was great, for the English and Scotch were among the largest consumers of beer and alcohol on the globe.

In other respects besides sobriety American manners and morals were subjects of much dispute, and if judged by the diatribes of travelers like Thomas Moore and H. W. Bülow, were below the level of Europe. Of all classes of statistics, moral statistics were least apt to be preserved. Even in England, social vices could be gauged only by the records of criminal and divorce courts; in America, police was

wanting and a divorce suit almost, if not quite, unknown. Apart from some coarseness, society must have been pure; and the coarseness was mostly an English inheritance. Among New Englanders, Chief-Justice Parsons was the model of judicial, social, and religious propriety; yet Parsons, in 1808, presented to a lady a copy of *Tom Jones*, with a letter calling attention to the adventures of Molly Seagrim and the usefulness of describing vice. Among the social sketches in the *Portfolio* were many allusions to the coarseness of Philadelphia society, and the manners common to tea-parties. "I heard from married ladies," said a writer in February, 1803, "whose station as mothers demanded from them a guarded conduct,—from young ladies, whose age forbids the audience of such conversation, and who using it modesty must disclaim,—indecent allusions, indelicate expressions, and even at times immoral innuendoes. A loud laugh or a coarse exclamation followed each of these, and the young ladies generally went through the form of raising their fans to their faces."

Yet public and private records might be searched long, before they revealed evidence of misconduct such as filled the press and formed one of the commonest topics of conversation in the society of England and France. Almost every American family, however respectable, could show some victim to intemperance among its men, but few were mortified by a public scandal due to its women.

If the absence of positive evidence did not prove American society to be as pure as its simple and primitive condition implied, the same conclusion would be reached by observing the earnestness with which critics collected every charge that could be brought against it, and by noting the substance of the whole. Tried by this test, the society of 1800 was often coarse and sometimes brutal, but, except for intemperance, was moral. Indeed, its chief offense, in the eyes of Europeans, was dullness. The amusements of a people were commonly a fair sign of social development, and the Americans were only beginning to amuse themselves. The cities were small and few in number, and the diversions were such as cost little and required but elementary knowledge. In

New England, although the theater had gained a firm foothold in Boston, Puritan feelings still forbade the running of horses.

The principal amusements of the inhabitants [said Dwight] are visiting, dancing, music, conversation, walking, riding, sailing, shooting at a mark, draughts, chess, and unhappily, in some of the larger towns, cards and dramatic exhibitions. A considerable amusement is also furnished in many places by the examination and exhibitions of the superior schools; and a more considerable one by the public exhibitions of colleges. Our countrymen also fish and hunt. Journeys taken for pleasure are very numerous, and are a very favorite object. Boys and young men play at foot-ball, cricket, quoits, and at many other sports of an athletic cast, and in the winter are peculiarly fond of skating. Riding in a sleigh, or sledge, is also a favorite diversion in New England.

President Dwight was sincere in his belief that college commencements and sleigh-riding satisfied the wants of his people; he looked upon whist as an unhappy dissipation, and upon the theater as immoral. He had no occasion to condemn horse-racing, for no race-course was to be found in New England. The horse and the dog existed only in varieties little suited for sport. In colonial days New England produced one breed of horses worth preserving and developing,—the Narragansett pacer; but, to the regret even of the clergy, this animal almost disappeared, and in 1800 New England could show nothing to take its place. The germ of the trotter and the trotting-match, the first general popular amusement, could be seen in almost any country village, where the owners of horses were in the habit of trotting what were called scratch-races, for a quarter or half a mile from the door of the tavern, along the public road. Perhaps this amusement had already a right to be called a New England habit, showing defined tastes; but the force of the popular instinct was not fully felt in Massachusetts, or even in New York, although there it was given full play. New York possessed a race-course, and made in 1792 a great stride toward popularity by importing the famous stallion "Messenger" to become the source of endless interest for future generations; but Virginia was the region where the American showed his true character as a

lover of sport. Long before the Revolution the race-course was commonly established in Virginia and Maryland; English running-horses of pure blood—descendants of the Darley Arabian and the Godolphin Arabian—were imported, and racing became the chief popular entertainment. The long Revolutionary War, and the general ruin it caused, checked the habit and deteriorated the breed; but with returning prosperity Virginia showed that the instinct was stronger than ever. In 1798 "Diomed," famous as the sire of racers, was imported into the State, and future rivalry between Virginia and New York could be foreseen. In 1800 the Virginia race-course still remained at the head of American popular amusements.

In an age when the Prince of Wales and crowds of English gentlemen attended every prize-fight, and patronized Tom Crib, Dutch Sam, the Jew Mendoza, and the negro Molyneux, an Englishman could hardly have expected that a Virginia race-course should be free from vice; and perhaps travelers showed best the general morality of the people by their practice of dwelling on Virginia vices. They charged the Virginians with fondness for horse-racing, cock-fighting, betting, and drinking; but the popular habit which most shocked them, and with which books of travel filled pages of description, was the so-called rough-and-tumble fight. The practice was not one on which authors seemed likely to dwell; yet foreigners like Weld, and Americans like Judge Longstreet in *Georgia Scenes*, united to give it a sort of grotesque dignity like that of a bull-fight, and under their treatment it became interesting as a popular habit. The rough-and-tumble fight differed from the ordinary prize-fight, or boxing-match, by the absence of rules. Neither kicking, tearing, biting, nor gouging was forbidden by the law of the ring. Brutal as the practice was, it was neither new nor exclusively Virginian. The English travelers who described it as American barbarism, might have seen the same sight in Yorkshire at the same date. The rough-and-tumble fight was English in origin, and was brought to Virginia and the Carolinas in early days, whence it spread to the Ohio and Mississippi. The habit attracted general

notice because of its brutality in a society that showed few brutal instincts. Friendly foreigners like Liancourt were honestly shocked by it; others showed somewhat too plainly their pleasure at finding a vicious habit which they could consider a natural product of democratic society. Perhaps the description written by Thomas Ashe showed best not only the ferocity of the fight, but also the antipathies of the writer, for Ashe had something of the artist in his touch, and he felt no love for Americans. The scene was at Wheeling. A Kentuckian and a Virginian were the combatants.

Bulk and bone were in favor of the Kentuckian; science and craft in that of the Virginian. The former promised himself victory from his power; the latter from his science. Very few rounds had taken place or fatal blows given, before the Virginian contracted his whole form, drew up his arms to his face, with his hands nearly closed in a concave by the fingers being bent to the full extension of the flexors, and summoning up all his energy for one act of desperation, pitched himself into the bosom of his opponent. Before the effects of this could be ascertained, the sky was rent by the shouts of the multitude; and I could learn that the Virginian had expressed as much beauty and skill in his retraction and bound, as if he had been bred in a menagerie and practiced action and attitude among panthers and wolves. The shock received by the Kentuckian, and the want of breath, brought him instantly to the ground. The Virginian never lost his hold. Like those bats of the South who never quit the subject on which they fasten till they taste blood, he kept his knees in his enemy's body; fixing his claws in his hair and his thumbs on his eyes, gave them an instantaneous start from their sockets. The sufferer roared aloud, but uttered no complaint. The citizens again shouted with joy.

Ashe asked his landlord whether this habit spread down the Ohio.

I understood that it did, on the left-hand side, and that I would do well to land there as little as possible. . . . I again demanded how a stranger was to distinguish a good from a vicious house of entertainment. "By previous inquiry, or, if that was impracticable, a tolerable judgment could be formed from observing in the landlord a possession or an absence of ears."

The temper of the writer was at least as remarkable in this description as the scene he pretended to describe, for Ashe's Travels were believed to have been chiefly imaginary;

but no one denied the roughness of the lower classes in the South and Southwest, nor was roughness wholly confined to them. No prominent man in Western society bore himself with more courtesy and dignity than Andrew Jackson of Tennessee, who in 1800 was candidate for the post of major-general of State militia, and had previously served as Judge on the Supreme Bench of his State; yet the fights in which he had been engaged exceeded belief.

Border society was not refined, but among its vices, as its virtues, few were permanent, and little idea could be drawn of the character that would at last emerge. The Mississippi boatman and the squatter on Indian lands were perhaps the most distinctly American type then existing, as far removed from the Old World as though Europe were a dream. Their language and imagination showed contact with Indians. A traveler on the levee at Natchez, in 1808, overheard a quarrel in a flatboat near by:

"I am a man; I am a horse; I am a team," cried one voice; "I can whip any man in all Kentucky, by God!" "I am an alligator," cried the other; "half man, half horse; can whip any man on the Mississippi, by God!" "I am a man," shouted the first; "have the best horse, best dog, best gun, and handsomest wife in all Kentucky, by God!" "I am a Mississippi snapping turtle," rejoined the second; "have bear's claws, alligator's teeth, and the devil's tail; can whip *any* man, by God!"¹

And on this usual formula of defiance the two fire-eaters began their fight, biting, gouging, and tearing. Foreigners were deeply impressed by barbarism such as this, and orderly emigrants from New England and Pennsylvania avoided contact with Southern drinkers and fighters; but even then they knew that with a new generation such traits must disappear, and that little could be judged of popular character from the habits of frontiersmen. Perhaps such vices deserved more attention when found in the older communities, but even there they were rather survivals of English low-life than products of a new soil, and they were given too much consequence in the tales of foreign travelers.

¹ A rough-and-tumble fight preceded by speeches of this kind is described by Mark Twain in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

This was not the only instance where foreigners were struck by what they considered popular traits, which natives rarely noticed. Idle curiosity was commonly represented as universal, especially in the Southern settler who knew no other form of conversation:

Frequently have I been stopped by one of them [said Weld], and without further preface asked where I was from, if I was acquainted with any news, where bound to, and finally my name. "Stop, Mister! why, I guess now you be coming from the new State?" "No, sir." "Why, then, I guess as how you be coming from Kentuck?" "No, sir." "Oh, why, then, pray now where might you be coming from?" "From the low country." "Why, you must have heard all the news, then; pray now, Mister, what might the price of bacon be in those parts?" "Upon my word, my friend, I can't inform you." "Ay, ay; I see, Mister, you be'ent one of us. Pray now, Mister, what might your name be?"

Almost every writer spoke with annoyance of the inquisitorial habits of New England and the impertinence of American curiosity. Complaints so common could hardly have lacked foundation, yet the Americans as a people were never loquacious, but inclined to be somewhat reserved, and they could not recognize the accuracy of the description. President Dwight repeatedly expressed astonishment at the charge, and asserted that in his large experience it had no foundation. Forty years later, Charles Dickens found complaint with Americans for taciturnity. Equally strange to modern experience were the continual complaints in books of travel that loungers and loafers, idlers of every description, infested the taverns, and annoyed respectable travelers both native and foreign. Idling seemed to be considered a popular vice, and was commonly associated with tippling. So completely did the practice disappear in the course of another generation that it could scarcely be recalled as offensive; but in truth less work was done by the average man in 1800 than in aftertimes, for there was actually less work to do. "Good country this for lazy fellows," wrote Wilson from Kentucky; "they plant corn, turn their pigs into the woods, and in the autumn feed upon corn and pork. They lounge about the rest of the year." The roar of the steam-engine had

never been heard in the land, and the carrier's wagon was three weeks between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. What need for haste when days counted for so little? Why not lounge about the tavern when life had no better amusement to offer? Why mind one's own business when one's business would take care of itself?

Yet however idle the American sometimes appeared, and however large the class of tavern loafers may have actually been, the true American was active and industrious. No immigrant came to America for ease or idleness. If an English farmer bought land near New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore, and made the most of his small capital, he found that while he could earn more money than in Surrey or Devonshire, he worked harder and suffered greater discomforts. The climate was trying; fever was common; the crops ran new risks from strange insects, drought, and violent weather; the weeds were annoying; the flies and mosquitoes tormented him and his cattle; laborers were scarce and indifferent; the slow and magisterial ways of England, where everything was made easy, must be exchanged for quick and energetic action; the farmer's own eye must see to every detail, his own hand must hold the plough and the scythe. Life was more exacting, and every such man in America was required to do, and actually did, the work of two such men in Europe. Few English farmers of the conventional class took kindly to American ways, or succeeded in adapting themselves to the changed conditions. Germans were more successful and became rich; but the poorer and more adventurous class, who had no capital, and cared nothing for the comforts of civilization, went West, to find a harder lot. When, after toiling for weeks, they reached the neighborhood of Genessee or the banks of some stream in southern Ohio or Indiana, they put up a rough cabin of logs with an earthen floor, cleared an acre or two of land, and planted Indian corn between the tree-stumps,—lucky if, like the Kentuckian, they had a pig to turn into the woods. Between April and October, Albert Gallatin used to say, Indian corn made the penniless immigrant a capitalist. New settlers suffered many of the ills that would have afflicted an army marching

and fighting in a country of dense forest and swamp, with one sore misery besides,—that whatever trials the men endured, the burden bore most heavily upon the women and children. The chance of being shot or scalped by Indians was hardly worth considering when compared with the certainty of malarial fever, or the strange disease called milk-sickness, or the still more depressing homesickness, or the misery of nervous prostration, which wore out generation after generation of women and children on the frontiers, and left a tragedy in every log-cabin. Not for love of ease did men plunge into the wilderness. Few laborers of the Old World endured a harder lot, coarser fare, or anxieties and responsibilities greater than those of the Western emigrant. Not merely because he enjoyed the luxury of salt pork, whiskey, or even coffee three times a day did the American laborer claim superiority over the European.

A standard far higher than the average was common to the cities; but the city population was so small as to be trifling. Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore together contained one hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants; and these were the only towns containing a white population of more than ten thousand persons. In a total population of more than five millions, this number of city people, as Jefferson and his friends rightly thought, was hardly American, for the true American was supposed to be essentially rural. Their comparative luxury was outweighed by the squalor of nine hundred thousand slaves alone.

From these slight notices of national habits no other safe inference could be drawn than that the people were still simple. The path their development might take was one of the many problems with which their future was perplexed. Such few habits as might prove to be fixed, offered little clew to the habits that might be adopted in the process of growth, and speculation was useless where change alone could be considered certain.

If any prediction could be risked, an observer might have been warranted in suspecting that the popular character was likely to be conservative, for as yet this trait was most marked, at least in the older societies of New England, Pennsylvania,

and Virginia. Great as were the material obstacles in the path of the United States, the greatest obstacle of all was in the human mind. Down to the close of the eighteenth century no change had occurred in the world which warranted practical men in assuming that great changes were to come. Afterward, as time passed, and as science developed man's capacity to control Nature's forces, old-fashioned conservatism vanished from society, reappearing occasionally, like the stripes on a mule, only to prove its former existence; but during the eighteenth century the progress of America, except in political paths, had been less rapid than ardent reformers wished, and the reaction which followed the French Revolution made it seem even slower than it was. In 1723 Benjamin Franklin landed at Philadelphia, and with his loaf of bread under his arm walked along Market Street toward an immortality such as no American had then conceived. He died in 1790, after witnessing great political revolutions; but the intellectual revolution was hardly as rapid as he must, in his youth, have hoped.

In 1732 Franklin induced some fifty persons to found a subscription library, and his example and energy set a fashion which was generally followed. In 1800 the library he founded was still in existence; numerous small subscription libraries on the same model, containing fifty or a hundred volumes, were scattered in country towns; but all the public libraries in the United States—collegiate, scientific, or popular, endowed or unendowed—could hardly show fifty thousand volumes, including duplicates, fully one third being still theological.

Half a century had passed since Franklin's active mind drew the lightning from heaven, and decided the nature of electricity. No one in America had yet carried further his experiments in the field which he had made American. This inactivity was commonly explained as a result of the long Revolutionary War; yet the war had not prevented population and wealth from increasing, until Philadelphia in 1800 was far in advance of the Philadelphia which had seen Franklin's kite flying among the clouds.

In the year 1753 Franklin organized the postal system of the American colonies, making it self-supporting. No record was

preserved of the number of letters then carried in proportion to the population, but in 1800 the gross receipts for postage were \$320,000, toward which Pennsylvania contributed most largely,—the sum of \$55,000. From letters the Government received in gross \$290,000. The lowest rate of letter-postage was then eight cents. The smallest charge for letters carried more than a hundred miles was twelve and a half cents. If on an average ten letters were carried for a dollar, the whole number of letters was 2,900,000,—about one a year for every grown inhabitant.

Such a rate of progress could not be called rapid even by conservatives, and more than one stanch conservative thought it unreasonably slow. Even in New York, where foreign influence was active and the rewards of scientific skill were comparatively liberal, science hardly kept pace with wealth and population.

Noah Webster, who before beginning his famous dictionary edited the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, and wrote on all subjects with characteristic confidence, complained of the ignorance of his countrymen. He claimed for the New Englanders an acquaintance with theology, law, politics, and light English literature; "but as to classical learning, history (civil and ecclesiastical), mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, botany, and natural history, excepting here and there a rare instance of a man who is eminent in some one of these branches, we may be said to have no learning at all, or a mere smattering." Although defending his countrymen from the criticisms of Dr. Priestley, he admitted that "our learning is superficial in a shameful degree, . . . our colleges are disgracefully destitute of books and philosophical apparatus, . . . and I am ashamed to own that scarcely a branch of science can be fully investigated in America for want of books, especially original works. This defect of our libraries I have experienced myself in searching for materials for the *History of Epidemic Diseases*. . . . As to libraries, we have no such things. There are not more than three or four tolerable libraries in America, and these are extremely imperfect. Great numbers of the most valuable authors have not found their way across the Atlantic."

This complaint was made in the year 1800, and was the more significant because it showed that Webster, a man equally at home in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, thought his country's deficiencies greater than could be excused or explained by its circumstances. George Ticknor felt at least equal difficulty in explaining the reason why, as late as 1814, even good schoolbooks were rare in Boston, and a copy of Euripides in the original could not be bought at any bookseller's shop in New England. For some reason, the American mind, except in politics, seemed to these students of literature in a condition of unnatural sluggishness; and such complaints were not confined to literature or science. If Americans agreed in any opinion, they were united in wishing for roads; but even on that point whole communities showed an indifference, or hostility, that annoyed their contemporaries. President Dwight was a somewhat extreme conservative in politics and religion, while the State of Rhode Island was radical in both respects; but Dwight complained with bitterness unusual in his mouth that Rhode Island showed no spirit of progress. The subject of his criticism was an unfinished turnpike-road across the State.

The people of Providence expended upon this road, as we are informed, the whole sum permitted by the Legislature. This was sufficient to make only those parts which I have mentioned. The turnpike company then applied to the Legislature for leave to expend such an additional sum as would complete the work. The Legislature refused. The principal reason for the refusal, as alleged by one of the members, it is said, was the following: that turnpikes and the establishment of religious worship had their origin in Great Britain, the government of which was a monarchy and the inhabitants slaves; that the people of Massachusetts and Connecticut were obliged by law to support ministers and pay the fare of turnpikes, and were therefore slaves also; that if they chose to be slaves they undoubtedly had a right to their choice, but that free-born Rhode Islanders ought never to submit to be priest-ridden, nor to pay for the privilege of traveling on the highway. This demonstrative reasoning prevailed, and the road continued in the state which I have mentioned until the year 1805. It was then completed, and free-born Rhode Islanders bowed their necks to the slavery of traveling on a good road.

President Dwight seldom indulged in sarcasm or exaggeration such as he showed in

this instance; but he repeated only matters of notoriety in charging some of the most democratic communities with unwillingness to pay for good roads. If roads were to exist, they must be the result of public or private enterprise; and if the public in certain States would neither construct roads nor permit corporations to construct them, the entire Union must suffer for want of communication. So strong was the popular prejudice against paying for the privilege of traveling on a highway that in certain States, like Rhode Island and Georgia, turnpikes were long unknown, while in Virginia and North Carolina the roads were little better than where the prejudice was universal.

In this instance the economy of a simple and somewhat rude society accounted in part for indifference; in other cases, popular prejudice took a form less easily understood. So general was the hostility to Banks as to offer a serious obstacle to enterprise. The popularity of President Washington and the usefulness of his administration were impaired by his support of a national bank and a funding system. Jefferson's hostility to all the machinery of capital was shared by a great majority of the Southern people and a large minority in the North. For seven years the New York legislature refused to charter the first banking company in the State; and when in 1791 the charter was obtained, and the Bank fell into Federalist hands, Aaron Burr succeeded in obtaining banking privileges for the Manhattan Company only by concealing them under the pretense of furnishing a supply of fresh water to the city of New York.

This conservative habit of mind was more harmful in America than in other communities, because Americans needed more than older societies the activity which could alone partly compensate for the relative feebleness of their means compared with the magnitude of their task. Some instances of sluggishness, common to Europe and America, were hardly credible. For more than ten years in England the steam-engines of Watt had been working, in common and successful use, causing a revolution in industry that threatened to drain the world for England's advantage; yet Europe during a generation left England undisturbed to enjoy the monopoly of steam. France and Germany were England's rivals in commerce and manufac-

tures, and required steam for self-defense; while the United States were commercial allies of England, and needed steam neither for mines nor manufactures, but their need was still extreme. Every American knew that if steam could be successfully applied to navigation, it must produce an immediate increase of wealth, besides an ultimate settlement of the most serious material and political difficulties of the Union. Had both the national and State Governments devoted millions of money to this object, and had the citizens wasted, if necessary, every dollar in their slowly filling pockets to attain it, they would have done no more than the occasion warranted, even had they failed; but failure was not to be feared, for they had with their own eyes seen the experiment tried, and they did not dispute its success. For America this question had been settled as early as 1789, when John Fitch—a mechanic, without education or wealth, but with the energy of genius—invented engine and paddles of his own, with so much success that during a whole summer Philadelphians watched his ferry-boat plying daily against the river current. No one denied that his boat was rapidly, steadily, and regularly moved against wind and tide, with as much certainty and convenience as could be expected in a first experiment; yet Fitch's company failed. He could raise no more money; the public refused to use his boat or to help him build a better; they did not want it, would not believe in it, and broke his heart by their contempt. Fitch struggled against failure, and invented another boat moved by a screw. The Eastern public still proving indifferent, he wandered to Kentucky, to try his fortune on the Western waters. Disappointed there, as in Philadelphia and New York, he made a deliberate attempt to end his life by drink; but the process proving too slow, he saved twelve opium pills from the physician's prescription, and was found one morning dead.

Fitch's death took place in an obscure Kentucky inn, three years before Jefferson, the philosopher president, entered the White House. Had Fitch been the only inventor thus neglected, his peculiarities and the defects of his steamboat might account for his failure; but he did not stand alone. At the same moment Philadelphia contained another inventor, Oliver Evans, a man so in-

genious as to be often called the American Watt. He, too, invented a locomotive steam-engine which he longed to bring into common use. The great services actually rendered by this extraordinary man were not a tithe of those he would gladly have performed, had he found support and encouragement; but his success was not even so great as that of Fitch, and he stood aside while Livingston and Fulton, by their greater resources and influence, forced the steamboat on a skeptical public.

While the inventors were thus ready, and while State legislatures were offering mischievous monopolies for this invention, which required only some few thousand dollars of ready money, the Philosophical Society of Rotterdam wrote to the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia, requesting to know what improvements had been made in the United States in the construction of steam-engines. The subject was referred to Benjamin H. Latrobe, the most eminent engineer in America, and his Report, presented to the Society in May, 1803, published in the Transactions, and transmitted abroad, showed the reasoning on which conservatism rested.

During the general lassitude of mechanical exertion which succeeded the American Revolution [said Latrobe], the utility of steam-engines appears to have been forgotten; but the subject afterward started into very general notice in a form in which it could not possibly be attended with much success. A sort of mania began to prevail, which indeed has not yet entirely subsided, for impelling boats by steam-engines. . . . For a short time a passage-boat, rowed by a steam-engine, was established between Bordentown and Philadelphia, but it was soon laid aside. . . . There are indeed general objections to the use of the steam-engine for impelling boats, from which no particular mode of application can be free. These are, first, the weight of the engine and of the fuel; second, the large space it occupies; third, the tendency of its action to rack the vessel and render it leaky; fourth, the expense of maintenance; fifth, the irregularity of its motion and the motion of the water in the boiler and cistern, and of the fuel-vessel in rough water; sixth, the difficulty arising from the liability of the paddles or oars to break if light, and from the weight, if made strong. Nor have I ever heard of an instance, verified by other testimony than that of the inventor, of a speedy and agreeable voyage having been performed in a steamboat of any construc-

tion. I am well aware that there are still many very respectable and ingenious men who consider the application of the steam-engine to the purpose of navigation as highly important and as very practicable, especially on the rapid waters of the Mississippi, and who would feel themselves almost offended at the expression of an opposite opinion. And perhaps some of the objections against it may be obviated. That founded on the expense and weight of the fuel may not for some years exist in the Mississippi, where there is a redundancy of wood on the banks; but the cutting and loading will be almost as great an evil.

Within four years the steamboat was running, and Latrobe was its warmest friend. The dispute was a contest of temperaments, a divergence between minds, rather than a question of science; and a few visionaries such as those to whom Latrobe alluded—men like Chancellor Livingston, Joel Barlow, John Stevens, Samuel L. Mitchill, and Robert Fulton—dragged society forward. What but skepticism could be expected among a people thus asked to adopt the steamboat, when as yet the ordinary atmospheric steam-engine, such as had been in use in Europe for a hundred years, was practically unknown to them, and the engines of Watt were a fable? Latrobe's Report further said that in the spring of 1803, when he wrote, five steam-engines were at work in the United States,—one lately set up by the Manhattan Water Company in New York to supply the city with water; another in New York for sawing timber; two in Philadelphia, belonging to the city, for supplying water and running a rolling and slitting mill; and one at Boston employed in some manufacture. All but one of these were probably constructed after 1800, and Latrobe neglected to say whether they belonged to the old Newcomen type, or to Watt's manufacture, or to American invention; but he added that the chief American improvement on the steam-engine had been the construction of a wooden boiler, which developed sufficient power to work the Philadelphia pump at the rate of twelve strokes, of six feet, per minute. Twelve strokes a minute, or one stroke every five seconds, though not a surprising power, might have answered its purpose, had not the wooden boiler, as Latrobe admitted, quickly decomposed, and steam-leaks appeared at every bolt-hole.

If so eminent and so intelligent a man as Latrobe, who had but recently emigrated in the prime of life from England, knew little about Watt, and nothing about Oliver Evans, whose experience would have been well worth communicating to any philosophical society in Europe, the more ignorant and unscientific public could not feel faith in a force of which they knew nothing at all. For nearly two centuries the Americans had struggled on foot or horseback over roads not much better than trails, or had floated down rushing streams in open boats momentarily in danger of sinking or upsetting. They had at length, in the Eastern and Middle States, reached the point of constructing turnpikes and canals. Into these undertakings they put sums of money relatively large, for the investment seemed safe and the profits certain. Steam as a locomotive power was still a visionary idea, beyond their experience, contrary to European precedent, and exposed to a thousand risks. They regarded it as a delusion.

About three years after Latrobe wrote his Report on the steam-engine, Robert Fulton began to build the boat which settled forever the value of steam as a locomotive power. According to Fulton's well-known account of his own experience, he suffered almost as keenly as Fitch, twenty years before, under the want of popular sympathy:

When I was building my first steamboat at New York [he said, according to Judge Story's report], the project was viewed by the public either with indifference or with contempt as a visionary scheme. My friends indeed were civil, but they were shy. They listened with patience to my explanations, but with a settled cast of incredulity upon their countenances. I felt the full force of the lamentation of the poet,—

"Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land,
All fear, none aid you, and few understand."

As I had occasion to pass daily to and from the building-yard while my boat was in progress, I have often loitered unknown near the idle groups of strangers gathering in little circles, and heard various inquiries as to the object of this new vehicle. The language was uniformly that of scorn, or sneer, or ridicule. The loud laugh often rose at my expense; the dry jest; the wise calculation of losses and expenditures; the dull but endless repetition of the Fulton Folly. Never did a single encouraging remark, a bright hope, or a warm wish cross my path.

Possibly Fulton and Fitch, like other inventors, may have exaggerated the public apathy and contempt; but whatever was the precise force of the innovating spirit, conservatism possessed the world by right. Experience forced on men's minds the conviction that what had ever been must ever be. At the close of the eighteenth century nothing had occurred which warranted the belief that even the material difficulties of America could be removed. Radicals as extreme as Thomas Jefferson and Albert Gallatin were contented with avowing no higher aim than that America should reproduce the simpler forms of European republican society without European vices; and even this their opponents thought visionary. The United States had thus far made a single great step in advance of the Old World,—they had agreed to try the experiment of embracing half a continent in one republican system; but so little were they disposed to feel confidence in their success, that Jefferson himself did not look on this American idea as vital; he would not stake the future on so new an invention. "Whether we remain in one confederacy," he wrote in 1804, "or form into Atlantic and Mississippi confederations, I believe not very important to the happiness of either part." Even over his liberal mind history cast a spell so strong, that he thought the solitary American experiment of political confederation "not very important" beyond the Alleghanies.

The task of overcoming popular inertia in a democratic society was new, and seemed to offer peculiar difficulties. Without a scientific class to lead the way, and without a wealthy class to provide the means of experiment, the people of the United States were still required, by the nature of their problems, to become a speculating and scientific nation. They could do little without changing their old habit of mind, and without learning to love novelty for novelty's sake. Hitherto their timidity in using money had been proportioned to the scantiness of their means. Henceforward they were under every inducement to risk great stakes and frequent losses in order to win occasionally a thousand fold. In the colonial state they had naturally accepted old processes as the best, and European experience as final authority. As an independent people, with half a continent

to civilize, they could not afford to waste time in following European examples, but must devise new processes of their own. A world which assumed that what had been must be, could not be scientific; yet in order to make the Americans a successful people, they must be roused to feel the necessity of scientific training. Until they were satisfied that knowledge was money, they would not insist upon high education; nor until they saw with their own eyes stones turned into gold, and vapor into cattle and corn, would they learn the meaning of science.

CHAPTER VI AMERICAN IDEALS

NEARLY every foreign traveler who visited the United States during these early years, carried away an impression sober if not sad. A thousand miles of desolate and dreary forest, broken here and there by settlements; along the sea-coast a few flourishing towns devoted to commerce; no arts, a provincial literature, a cancerous disease of negro slavery, and differences of political theory fortified within geographical lines,—what could be hoped for such a country except to repeat the story of violence and brutality which the world already knew by heart, until repetition for thousands of years had wearied and sickened mankind? Ages must probably pass before the interior could be thoroughly settled; even Jefferson, usually a sanguine man, talked of a thousand years with acquiescence, and in his first Inaugural Address, at a time when the Mississippi River formed the Western boundary, spoke of the country as having "room enough for our descendants to the hundredth and thousandth generation." No prudent person dared to act on the certainty that when settled, one government could comprehend the whole; and when the day of separation should arrive, and America should have her Prussia, Austria, and Italy, as she already had her England, France, and Spain, what else could follow but a return to the old conditions of local jealousies, wars, and corruption which had made a slaughter-house of Europe?

The mass of Americans were sanguine and self-confident, partly by temperament, but partly also by reason of ignorance; for they

knew little of the difficulties which surrounded a complex society. The Duc de Liancourt, like many critics, was struck by this trait. Among other instances, he met with one in the person of a Pennsylvania miller, Thomas Lea, "a sound American patriot, persuading himself that nothing good is done, and that no one has any brains, except in America; that the wit, the imagination, the genius of Europe are already in decrepitude"; and the duke added: "This error is to be found in almost all Americans,—legislators, administrators, as well as millers, and is less innocent there." In the year 1796 the House of Representatives debated whether to insert in the Reply to the President's Speech a passing remark that the nation was "the freest and most enlightened in the world,"—a nation as yet in swaddling-clothes, which had neither literature, arts, sciences, nor history; nor even enough nationality to be sure that it was a nation. The moment was peculiarly ill-chosen for such a claim, because Europe was on the verge of an outburst of genius. Goethe and Schiller, Mozart and Haydn, Kant and Fichte, Cavendish and Herschel were making way for Walter Scott, Wordsworth, and Shelley, Heine and Balzac, Beethoven and Hegel, Oersted and Cuvier, great physicists, biologists, geologists, chemists, mathematicians, metaphysicians, and historians by the score. Turner was painting his earliest landscapes, and Watt completing his latest steam-engine; Napoleon was taking command of the French armies, and Nelson of the English fleet; investigators, reformers, scholars, and philosophers swarmed, and the influence of enlightenment, even amid universal war, was working with an energy such as the world had never before conceived. The idea that Europe was in her decrepitude proved only ignorance and want of enlightenment, if not of freedom, on the part of Americans, who could only excuse their error by pleading that notwithstanding these objections, in matters which for the moment most concerned themselves Europe was a full century behind America. If they were right in thinking that the next necessity of human progress was to lift the average man upon an intellectual and social level with the most favored, they stood at least three generations nearer than Europe to their common

goal. The destinies of the United States were certainly staked, without reserve or escape, on the soundness of this doubtful and even improbable principle, ignoring or overthrowing the institutions of church, aristocracy, family, army, and political intervention, which long experience had shown to be needed for the safety of society. Europe might be right in thinking that without such safeguards society must come to an end; but even Europeans must concede that there was a chance, if no greater than one in a thousand, that America might, at least for a time, succeed. If this stake of temporal and eternal welfare stood on the winning card; if man actually should become more virtuous and enlightened, by mere process of growth, without church or paternal authority; if the average human being could accustom himself to reason with the logical processes of Descartes and Newton!—what then?

Then, no one could deny that the United States would win a stake such as defied mathematics. With all the advantages of science and capital, Europe must be slower than America to reach the common goal. American society might be both sober and sad, but except for negro slavery it was sound and healthy in every part. Stripped for the hardest work, every muscle firm and elastic, every ounce of brain ready for use, and not a trace of superfluous flesh on his nervous and supple body, the American stood in the world a new order of man. From Maine to Florida, society was in this respect the same, and was so organized as to use its human forces with more economy than could be approached by any society of the world elsewhere. Not only were artificial barriers carefully removed, but every influence that could appeal to ordinary ambition was applied. No brain or appetite active enough to be conscious of stimulants could fail to answer the intense incentive. Few human beings, however sluggish, could long resist the temptation to acquire power; and the elements of power were to be had in America almost for the asking. Reversing the old-world system, the American stimulant increased in energy as it reached the lowest and most ignorant class, dragging and whirling them upward as in the blast of a furnace. The penniless and homeless Scotch or Irish

immigrant was caught and consumed by it; for every stroke of the ax and the hoe made him a capitalist, and made gentlemen of his children. Wealth was the strongest agent for moving the mass of mankind; but political power was hardly less tempting to the more intelligent and better-educated swarms of American-born citizens, and the instinct of activity, once created, seemed heritable and permanent in the race.

Compared with this lithe young figure, Europe was actually in decrepitude. Mere class distinctions, the *patois* or dialect of the peasantry, the fixity of residence, the local costumes and habits marking a history that lost itself in the renewal of identical generations, raised from birth barriers which paralyzed half the population. Upon this mass of inert matter rested the Church and the State, holding down activity of thought. Endless wars withdrew many hundred thousand men from production, and changed them into agents of waste; huge debts, the evidence of past wars and bad government, created interests to support the system and fix its burdens on the laboring class; courts, with habits of extravagance that shamed common-sense, helped to consume private economies. All this might have been borne; but behind this stood aristocracies, sucking their nourishment from industry, producing nothing themselves, employing little or no active capital or intelligent labor, but pressing on the energies and ambition of society with the weight of an incubus. Picturesque and entertaining as these social anomalies were, they were better fitted for the theater or for a museum of historical costumes than for an active workshop preparing to compete with such machinery as America would soon command. From an economical point of view, they were as incongruous as would have been the appearance of a medieval knight in helmet and armor, with battle-ax and shield, to run the machinery of Arkwright's cotton-mill; but besides their bad economy they also tended to prevent the rest of society from gaining a knowledge of its own capacities. In Europe, the conservative habit of mind was fortified behind power. During nearly a century Voltaire himself—the friend of kings, the wit and poet, historian and philosopher of his age—had carried on, in daily terror, in exile and excommuni-

cation, a protest against an intellectual despotism contemptible even to its own supporters. Hardly was Voltaire dead, when Priestley, as great a man if not so great a wit, trying to do for England what Voltaire tried to do for France, was mobbed by the people of Birmingham and driven to America. Where Voltaire and Priestley failed, common men could not struggle; the weight of society stifled their thought. In America the balance between conservative and liberal forces was close; but in Europe conservatism held the physical power of government. In Boston a young Buckminster might be checked for a time by his father's prayers or commands in entering the path that led toward freer thought; but youth beckoned him on, and every reward that society could offer was dangled before his eyes. In London or Paris, Rome, Madrid, or Vienna, he must have sacrificed the worldly prospects of his life.

Granting that the American people were about to risk their future on a new experiment, they naturally wished to throw aside all burdens of which they could rid themselves. Believing that in the long run interest, not violence, would rule the world, and that the United States must depend for safety and success on the interests they could create, they were tempted to look upon war and preparations for war as the worst of blunders; for they were sure that every dollar capitalized in industry was a means of overthrowing their enemies more effective than a thousand dollars spent on frigates or standing armies. The success of the American system was, from this point of view, a question of economy. If they could relieve themselves from debts, taxes, armies, and government interference with industry, they must succeed in outstripping Europe in economy of production; and Americans were even then partly aware that if their machine were not so weakened by these economies as to break down in the working, it must of necessity break down every rival. If their theory was sound, when the day of competition should arrive, Europe might choose between American and Chinese institutions, but there would be no middle path; she might become a confederated democracy, or a wreck.

Whether these ideas were sound or weak,

they seemed self-evident to those Northern democrats who, like Albert Gallatin, were comparatively free from slave-owning theories, and understood the practical forces of society. If Gallatin wished to reduce the interference of government to a minimum, and cut down expenditures to nothing, he aimed not so much at saving money as at using it with the most certain effect. The revolution of 1800¹ was in his eyes chiefly political, because it was social; but as a revolution of society, he and his friends hoped to make it the most radical that had occurred since the downfall of the Roman empire. Their ideas were not yet cleared by experience, and were confused by many contradictory prejudices, but wanted neither breadth nor shrewdness.

Many apparent inconsistencies grew from this undeveloped form of American thought, and gave rise to great confusion in the different estimates of American character that were made both at home and abroad.

That Americans should not be liked was natural; but that they should not be understood was more significant by far. After the downfall of the French republic they had no right to expect a kind word from Europe, and during the next twenty years they rarely received one. The liberal movement of Europe was cowed, and no one dared express democratic sympathies until the Napoleonic tempest had passed. With this attitude Americans had no right to find fault, for Europe cared less to injure them than to protect herself. Nevertheless, observant readers could not but feel surprised that none of the numerous Europeans who then wrote or spoke about America seemed to study the subject seriously. The ordinary traveler was apt to be little more reflective than a bee or an ant, but some of these critics possessed powers far from ordinary; yet Talleyrand alone showed that had he but seen America a few years later than he did, he might have suggested some sufficient reason for apparent contradictions that perplexed him in the national character. The other travelers—great and small, from the Duc de Liancourt to Basil Hall, a long and suggestive list—were equally perplexed. They agreed in observing the contradictions,

but all, including Talleyrand, saw only sordid motives. Talleyrand expressed extreme astonishment at the apathy of Americans in the face of religious sectarians; but he explained it by assuming that the American ardor of the moment was absorbed in money-making. The explanation was evidently insufficient, for the Americans were capable of feeling and showing excitement, even to their great pecuniary injury, as they frequently proved; but in the foreigner's range of observation, love of money was the most conspicuous and most common trait of American character. "There is, perhaps, no civilized country in the world," wrote Félix de Beaujour, soon after 1800, "where there is less generosity in the souls, and in the heads fewer of those illusions which make the charm or the consolation of life. Man here weighs everything, calculates everything, and sacrifices everything to his interest." An Englishman named Fearon, in 1818, expressed the same idea with more distinctness: "In going to America, I would say generally, the emigrant must expect to find, not an economical or cleanly people; not a social or generous people; not a people of enlarged ideas; not a people of liberal opinions, or toward whom you can express your thoughts free as air; not a people friendly to the advocates of liberty in Europe; not a people who understand liberty from investigation and principle; not a people who comprehend the meaning of the words 'honor' and 'generosity.'" Such quotations might be multiplied almost without limit. Rapacity was the accepted explanation of American peculiarities; yet every traveler was troubled by inconsistencies that required explanations of a different kind. "It is not in order to hoard that the Americans are rapacious," observed Liancourt as early as 1796. The extravagance, or what economical Europeans thought extravagance, with which American women were allowed and encouraged to spend money, was as notorious in 1790 as a century later; the recklessness with which Americans often risked their money, and the liberality with which they used it, were marked even then, in comparison with the ordinary European habit. Europeans saw such contradictions, but made no attempt to reconcile them. No foreigner of that day—neither poet, painter,

¹ *I.e.*, the election of Jefferson to the Presidency.

nor philosopher—could detect in American life anything higher than vulgarity; for it was something beyond the range of their experience, which education and culture had not framed a formula to express. Moore came to Washington, and found there no loftier inspiration than any Federalist rhymester of Dennie's school.

Take Christians, Mohawks, democrats and all,
From the rude wigwam to the Congress hall,—
From man the savage, whether slaved or free,
To man the civilized, less tame than he:
'Tis one dull chaos, one unfertile strife
Betwixt half-polished and half-barbarous life;
Where every ill the ancient world can brew
Is mixed with every grossness of the new;
Where all corrupts, though little can entice,
And nothing's known of luxury but vice.

Moore's two small volumes of *Epistles*, printed in 1807, contained much more so-called poetry of the same tone,—poetry more polished and less respectable than that of Barlow and Dwight; while, as though to prove that the Old World knew what grossness was, he embalmed in his lines the slanders which the Scotch libeler Callender invented against Jefferson:

The weary statesman for repose hath fled
From halls of council to his negro's shed;
Where, blest, he woos some black Aspasia's grace,
And dreams of freedom in his slave's embrace.

To leave no doubt of his meaning, he explained in a footnote that his allusion was to the President of the United States; and yet even Moore, trifler and butterfly as he was, must have seen, if he would, that between the morals of politics and society in America and those then prevailing in Europe, there was no room for comparison,—there was room only for contrast.

Moore was but an echo of fashionable England in his day. He seldom affected moral sublimity; and had he in his wanderings met a race of embodied angels, he would have sung of them or to them in the slightly erotic notes which were so well received in the society he loved to frequent and flatter. His remarks upon American character betrayed more temper than truth; but even in this respect he expressed only the common feeling of Europeans, which was echoed by the Federalist society of the United States. Englishmen especially indulged in

unbounded invective against the sordid character of American society, and in shaping their national policy on this contempt they carried their theory into practice with so much energy as to produce its own refutation. To their astonishment and anger, a day came when the Americans, in defiance of self-interest and in contradiction of all the qualities ascribed to them, insisted on declaring war; and readers of this narrative will be surprised at the cry of incredulity, not unmixed with terror, with which Englishmen started to their feet when they woke from their delusion on seeing what they had been taught to call the meteor flag of England, which had burned terrific at Copenhagen and Trafalgar, suddenly waver and fall on the bloody deck of the *Guerrière*. Fearon and Beaujour, with a score of other contemporary critics, could see neither generosity, economy, honor, nor ideas of any kind in the American breast; yet the obstinate repetition of these denials itself betrayed a lurking fear of the social forces whose strength they were candid enough to record. What was it that, as they complained, turned the European peasant into a new man within half an hour after landing at New York? Englishmen were never at a loss to understand the poetry of more prosaic emotions. Neither they nor any of their kindred failed in later times to feel the "large excitement" of the country boy, whose "spirit leaped within him to be gone before him," when the lights of London first flared in the distance; yet none seemed ever to feel the larger excitement of the American immigrant. Among the Englishmen who criticized the United States was one greater than Moore,—one who thought himself at home only in the stern beauty of a moral presence. Of all poets, living or dead, Wordsworth felt most keenly what he called the still, sad music of humanity; yet the highest conception he could create of America was not more poetical than that of any Cumberland beggar he might have met in his morning walk:

Long-wished-for sight, the Western World appeared;

And when the ship was moored, I leaped ashore
Indignantly,—resolved to be a man,
Who, having o'er the past no power, would live
No longer in subjection to the past,

With abject mind—from a tyrannic lord
 Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured.
 So, like a fugitive whose feet have cleared
 Some boundary which his followers may not cross
 In prosecution of their deadly chase,
 Respiring, I looked round. How bright the sun,
 The breeze how soft! Can anything produced
 In the Old World compare, thought I, for power
 And majesty, with this tremendous stream
 Sprung from the desert? And behold a city
 Fresh, youthful, and aspiring! . . .

Sooth to say,
 On nearer view, a motley spectacle
 Appeared, of high pretensions—unreproved
 But by the obstreperous voice of higher still;
 Big passions strutting on a petty stage,
 Which a detached spectator may regard
 Not unamused. But ridicule demands
 Quick change of objects; and to laugh alone,
 . . . in the very center of the crowd
 To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,
 . . . is least fit
 For the gross spirit of mankind.¹

Thus Wordsworth, although then at his prime, indulging in what sounded like a boast that he alone had felt the sense sublime of something interfused, whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, and the round ocean, and the living air, and the blue sky, and in the mind of man,—even he, to whose moods the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world was lightened by his deeper sympathies with nature and the soul, could do no better, when he stood in the face of American democracy, than “keep the secret of a poignant scorn.”

Possibly the view of Wordsworth and Moore, of Weld, Dennie, and Dickens was right. The American democrat possessed little art of expression, and did not watch his own emotions with a view of uttering them either in prose or verse; he never told more of himself than the world might have assumed without listening to him. Only with diffidence could history attribute to such a class of men a wider range of thought or feeling than they themselves cared to proclaim. Yet the difficulty of denying or even ignoring the wider range was still greater, for no one questioned the force or the scope of an emotion which caused the poorest peasant in Europe to see what was invisible to poet and philosopher,—the dim outline of a mountain-summit across the ocean, rising

high above the mist and mud of American democracy. As though to call attention to some such difficulty, European and American critics, while affirming that Americans were a race without illusions or enlarged ideas, declared in the same breath that Jefferson was a visionary whose theories would cause the heavens to fall upon them. Year after year, with endless iteration, in every accent of contempt, rage, and despair, they repeated this charge against Jefferson. Every foreigner and Federalist agreed that he was a man of illusions, dangerous to society and unbounded in power of evil; but if this view of his character was right, the same visionary qualities seemed also to be a national trait, for every one admitted that Jefferson's opinions, in one form or another, were shared by a majority of the American people.

Illustrations might be carried much further, and might be drawn from every social class and from every period in national history. Of all presidents, Abraham Lincoln has been considered the most typical representative of American society, chiefly because his mind, with all its practical qualities, also inclined, in certain directions, to idealism. Lincoln was born in 1809, the moment when American character stood in lowest esteem. Ralph Waldo Emerson, a more distinct idealist, was born in 1803. William Ellery Channing, another idealist, was born in 1780. Men like John Fitch, Oliver Evans, Robert Fulton, Joel Barlow, John Stevens, and Eli Whitney were all classed among visionaries. The whole society of Quakers belonged in the same category. The records of the popular religious sects abounded in examples of idealism and illusion to such an extent that the masses seemed hardly to find comfort or hope in any authority, however old or well established. In religion as in politics, Americans seemed to require a system which gave play to their imagination and their hopes.

Some misunderstanding must always take place when the observer is at cross-purposes with the society he describes. Wordsworth might have convinced himself by a moment's thought that no country could act on the imagination as America acted upon the instincts of the ignorant and poor, without some quality that deserved better treatment

¹ *The Excursion*, Bk. III, ll. 870-911.

than poignant scorn; but perhaps this was only one among innumerable cases in which the unconscious poet breathed an atmosphere which the self-conscious poet could not penetrate. With equal reason he might have taken the opposite view,—that the hard, practical, money-getting American democrat, who had neither generosity nor honor nor imagination, and who inhabited cold shades where fancy sickened and where genius died, was in truth living in a world of dream, and acting a drama more instinct with poetry than all the avatars of the East, walking in gardens of emerald and rubies, in ambition already ruling the world and guiding Nature with a kinder and wiser hand than had ever yet been felt in human history. From this point his critics never approached him,—they stopped at a stone's throw; and at the moment when they declared that the man's mind had no illusions, they added that he was a knave or a lunatic. Even on his practical and sordid side, the American might easily have been represented as a victim to illusion. If the Englishman had lived as the American speculator did,—in the future,—the hyperbole of enthusiasm would have seemed less monstrous. "Look at my wealth!" cried the American to his foreign visitor. "See these solid mountains of salt and iron, of lead, copper, silver, and gold! See these magnificent cities scattered broadcast to the Pacific! See my cornfields rustling and waving in the summer breeze from ocean to ocean, so far that the sun itself is not high enough to mark where the distant mountains bound my golden seas! Look at this continent of mine, fairest of created worlds, as she lies turning up to the sun's never-failing caress her broad and exuberant breasts, overflowing with milk for her hundred million children! See how she glows with youth, health, and love!" Perhaps it was not altogether unnatural that the foreigner, on being asked to see what needed centuries to produce, should have looked about him with bewilderment and indignation. "Gold! cities! cornfields! continents! Nothing of the sort! I see nothing but tremendous wastes, where sickly men and women are dying of home-sickness or are scalped by savages! mountain-ranges a thousand miles long, with no means of get-

ting to them, and nothing in them when you get there! swamps and forests choked with their own rotten ruins! nor hope of better for a thousand years! Your story is a fraud, and you are a liar and swindler!"

Met in this spirit, the American, half perplexed and half defiant, retaliated by calling his antagonist a fool, and by mimicking his heavy tricks of manner. For himself he cared little, but his dream was his whole existence. The men who denounced him admitted that they left him in his forest-swamp quaking with fever, but clinging in the delirium of death to the illusions of his dazzled brain. No class of men could be required to support their convictions with a steadier faith, or pay more devotedly with their persons for the mistakes of their judgment. Whether imagination or greed led them to describe more than actually existed, they still saw no more than any inventor or discoverer must have seen in order to give him the energy of success. They said to the rich as to the poor, "Come and share our limitless riches! Come and help us bring to light these unimaginable stores of wealth and power!" The poor came, and from them were seldom heard complaints of deception or delusion. Within a moment, by the mere contact of a moral atmosphere, they saw the gold and jewels, the summer cornfields and the glowing continent. The rich for a long time stood aloof,—they were timid and narrow-minded; but this was not all,—between them and the American democrat was a gulf.

The charge that Americans were too fond of money to win the confidence of Europeans was a curious inconsistency; yet this was a common belief. If the American deluded himself and led others to their death by baseless speculations; if he buried those he loved in a gloomy forest where they quaked and died while he persisted in seeing there a splendid, healthy, and well-built city,—no one could deny that he sacrificed wife and child to his greed for gain, that the dollar was his god, and a sordid avarice his demon. Yet had this been the whole truth, no European capitalist would have hesitated to make money out of his grave; for, avarice against avarice, no more sordid or meaner type existed in America than could be shown on every 'Change in Europe. With much

more reason Americans might have suspected that in America Englishmen found everywhere a silent influence, which they found nowhere in Europe, and which had nothing to do with avarice or with the dollar, but, on the contrary, seemed likely at any moment to sacrifice the dollar in a cause and for an object so illusory that most Englishmen could not endure to hear it discussed. European travelers who passed through America noticed that everywhere, in the White House at Washington and in log-cabins beyond the Alleghanies, except for a few Federalists, every American, from Jefferson and Gallatin down to the poorest squatter, seemed to nourish an idea that he was doing what he could to overthrow the tyranny which the past had fastened on the human mind. Nothing was easier than to laugh at the ludicrous expressions of this simple-minded conviction, or to cry out against its coarseness, or grow angry with its prejudices; to see its nobler side, to feel the beatings of a heart underneath the sordid surface of a gross humanity, was not so easy. Europeans seemed seldom or never conscious that the sentiment could possess a noble side, but found only matter for complaint in the remark that every American democrat believed himself to be working for the overthrow of tyranny, aristocracy, hereditary privilege, and priesthood, wherever they existed. Even where the American did not openly proclaim this conviction in words, he carried so dense an atmosphere of the sentiment with him in his daily life as to give respectable Europeans an uneasy sense of remoteness.

Of all historical problems, the nature of a national character is the most difficult and the most important. Readers will be troubled, at almost every chapter of the coming narrative, by the want of some formula to explain what share the popular imagination bore in the system pursued by government. The acts of the American people during the administrations of Jefferson and Madison were judged at the time by no other test. According as bystanders believed American character to be hard, sordid, and free from illusion, they were severe and even harsh in judgment. This rule guided the governments of England and France. Federalists in the United States, knowing

more of the circumstances, often attributed to the democratic instinct a visionary quality which they regarded as sentimentality, and charged with many bad consequences. If their view was correct, history could occupy itself to no better purpose than in ascertaining the nature and force of the quality which was charged with results so serious; but nothing was more elusive than the spirit of American democracy. Jefferson, the literary representative of the class, spoke chiefly for Virginians, and dreaded so greatly his own reputation as a visionary that he seldom or never uttered his whole thought. Gallatin and Madison were still more cautious. The press in no country could give shape to a mental condition so shadowy. The people themselves, although millions in number, could not have expressed their finer instincts had they tried, and might not have recognized them if expressed by others.

In the early days of colonization, every new settlement represented an idea and proclaimed a mission. Virginia was founded by a great, liberal movement aiming at the spread of English liberty and empire. The Pilgrims of Plymouth, the Puritans of Boston, the Quakers of Pennsylvania, all avowed a moral purpose, and began by making institutions that consciously reflected a moral idea. No such character belonged to the colonization of 1800. From Lake Erie to Florida, in long, unbroken line, pioneers were at work, cutting into the forests with the energy of so many beavers, and with no more express moral purpose than the beavers they drove away. The civilization they carried with them was rarely illumined by an idea; they sought room for no new truth, and aimed neither at creating, like the Puritans, a government of saints, nor, like the Quakers, one of love and peace; they left such experiments behind them, and wrestled only with the hardest problems of frontier life. No wonder that foreign observers, and even the educated, well-to-do Americans of the seacoast, could seldom see anything to admire in the ignorance and brutality of frontiersmen, and should declare that virtue and wisdom no longer guided the United States! What they saw was not encouraging. To a new society, ignorant and semi-barbarous, a mass of demagogues insisted on apply-

ing every stimulant that could inflame its worst appetites, while at the same instant taking away every influence that had hitherto helped to restrain its passions. Greed for wealth, lust for power, yearning for the blank void of savage freedom such as Indians and wolves delighted in,—these were the fires that flamed under the caldron of American society, in which, as conservatives believed, the old, well-proven, conservative crust of religion, government, family, and even common respect for age, education, and experience was rapidly melting away, and was indeed already broken into fragments, swept about by the seething mass of scum ever rising in greater quantities to the surface.

Against this Federalist and conservative view of democratic tendencies, democrats protested in a thousand forms, but never in any mode of expression which satisfied them all, or explained their whole character. Probably Jefferson came nearest to the mark, for he represented the hopes of science as well as the prejudices of Virginia; but Jefferson's writings may be searched from beginning to end without revealing the whole measure of the man, far less of the movement. Here and there in his letters a suggestion was thrown out, as though by chance, revealing larger hopes,—as in 1815, at a moment of despondency, he wrote: "I fear from the experience of the last twenty-five years that morals do not of necessity advance hand in hand with the sciences."¹ In 1800, in the flush of triumph, he believed that his task in the world was to establish a democratic republic, with the sciences for an intellectual field, and physical and moral advancement keeping pace with their advance. Without an excessive introduction of more recent ideas, he might be imagined to define democratic progress, in the somewhat affected precision of his French philosophy: "Progress is either physical or intellectual. If we can bring it about that men are on the average an inch taller in the next generation than in this; if they are an inch larger round the chest; if their brain is an ounce or two heavier, and their life a

year or two longer,—that is progress. If fifty years hence the average man shall invariably argue from two ascertained premises where he now jumps to a conclusion from a single supposed revelation,—that is progress! I expect it to be made here, under our democratic stimulants, on a great scale, until every man is potentially an athlete in body and an Aristotle in mind." To this doctrine the New Englander replied, "What will you do for moral progress?" Every possible answer to this question opened a chasm. No doubt Jefferson held the faith that men would improve morally with their physical and intellectual growth; but he had no idea of any moral improvement other than that which came by nature. He could not tolerate a priesthood, a state church, or revealed religion. Conservatives, who could tolerate no society without such pillars of order, were, from their point of view, right in answering, "Give us rather the worst despotism of Europe,—there our souls at least may have a chance of salvation!" To their minds vice and virtue were not relative, but fixed terms. The Church was a divine institution. How could a ship hope to reach port when the crew threw overboard sails, spars, and compass, unshipped their rudder, and all the long day thought only of eating and drinking. Nay, even should the new experiment succeed in a worldly sense, what was a man profited if he gained the whole world, and lost his own soul? The Lord God was a jealous God, and visited the sins of the parents upon the children; but what worse sin could be conceived than for a whole nation to join their chief in chanting the strange hymn with which Jefferson, a new false prophet, was deceiving and betraying his people: "It does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty Gods or no God!"

On this ground conservatism took its stand, as it had hitherto done with success in every similar emergency in the world's history, and fixing its eyes on moral standards of its own, refused to deal with the subject as further open to argument. The two parties stood facing opposite ways, and could see no common ground of contact.

Yet even then one part of the American social system was proving itself to be rich

¹ Franklin, a believer with Jefferson in the progress of the race, likewise doubted its extension to the sphere of morals. See his letter to Priestley, quoted by W. C. Bruce, *Benjamin Franklin Self-Revealed*, I, 109.

in results. The average American was more intelligent than the average European, and was becoming every year still more active-minded as the new movement of society caught him up and swept him through a life of more varied experiences. On all sides the national mind responded to its stimulants. Deficient as the American was in the machinery of higher instruction; remote, poor; unable by any exertion to acquire the training, the capital, or even the elementary textbooks he needed for a fair development of his natural powers,—his native energy and ambition already responded to the spur applied to them. Some of his triumphs were famous throughout the world; for Benjamin Franklin had raised high the reputation of American printers, and the actual President of the United States, who signed with Franklin the treaty of peace with Great Britain, was the son of a small farmer, and had himself kept a school in his youth. In both these cases social recognition followed success; but the later triumphs of the American mind were becoming more and more popular. John Fitch was not only one of the poorest, but one of the least-educated Yankees who ever made a name; he could never spell with tolerable correctness, and his life ended as it began,—in the lowest social obscurity. Eli Whitney was better educated than Fitch, but had neither wealth, social influence, nor patron to back his ingenuity. In the year 1800 Eli Terry, another Connecticut Yankee of the same class, took into his employ two young men to help him make wooden clocks, and this was the capital on which the greatest clock-manufactory in the world began its operations. In 1797 Asa Whittemore, a Massachusetts Yankee, invented a machine to make cards for carding wool, which “operated as if it had a soul,” and became the foundation for a hundred subsequent patents. In 1790 Jacob Perkins, of Newburyport, invented a machine capable of cutting and turning out two hundred thousand nails a day; and then invented a process for transferring engraving from a very small steel cylinder to copper, which revolutionized cotton-printing. The British traveler Weld, passing through Wilmington, stopped, as Liancourt had done before him, to see the great flour-mills

on the Brandywine. “The improvements,” he said, “which have been made in the machinery of the flour-mills in America are very great. The chief of these consist in a new application of the screw, and the introduction of what are called elevators, the idea of which was evidently borrowed from the chain-pump.” This was the invention of Oliver Evans, a native of Delaware, whose parents were in very humble life, but who was himself, in spite of every disadvantage, an inventive genius of the first order. Robert Fulton, who in 1800 was in Paris with Joel Barlow, sprang from the same source in Pennsylvania. John Stevens, a native of New York, belonged to a more favored class, but followed the same impulses. All these men were the outcome of typical American society, and all their inventions transmuted the democratic instinct into a practical and tangible shape. Who would undertake to say that there was a limit to the fecundity of this teeming source? Who that saw only the narrow, practical, money-getting nature of these devices could venture to assert that as they wrought their end and raised the standard of millions, they would not also raise the creative power of those millions to a higher plane? If the priests and barons who set their names to Magna Charta had been told that in a few centuries every swine-herd and cobbler’s apprentice would write and read with an ease such as few kings could then command, and reason with better logic than any university could then practice, the priest and baron would have been more incredulous than any man who was told in 1800 that within another five centuries the ploughboy would go a-field whistling a sonata of Beethoven, and figure out in quaternions the relation of his furrows. The American democrat knew so little of art that among his popular illusions he could not then nourish artistic ambition; but leaders like Jefferson, Gallatin, and Barlow might without extravagance count upon a coming time when diffused ease and education should bring the masses into familiar contact with higher forms of human achievement, and their vast creative power, turned toward a nobler culture, might rise to the level of that democratic genius which found expression in the Parthenon; might revel in

the delights of a new Buonarotti and a richer Titian; might create for five hundred million people the America of thought and art which alone could satisfy their omnivorous ambition.

Whether the illusions, so often affirmed and so often denied to the American people, took such forms or not, these were in effect the problems that lay before American society: Could it transmute its social power into the higher forms of thought? Could it provide for the moral and intellectual needs

of mankind? Could it take permanent political shape? Could it give new life to religion and art? Could it create and maintain in the mass of mankind those habits of mind which had hitherto belonged to men of science alone? Could it physically develop the convolutions of the human brain? Could it produce, or was it compatible with, the differentiation of a higher variety of the human race? Nothing less than this was necessary for its complete success.

SIDNEY LANIER (1842-1881)

Lanier was born at Macon, Georgia, on 3 February, 1842. His father was a lawyer there, the descendant of an English family one of whose members had come to Virginia in 1716, and several members of which had been musicians in seventeenth-century England. Lanier's passion for music showed itself when he was yet a mere child, and his remarkable ability, likewise, to use a great variety of musical instruments skillfully, even though he had no instruction. When he was fourteen he entered Oglethorpe University. His studies were interrupted for a year (1858-1859) while he held a clerkship in the Macon post-office, but he was graduated from Oglethorpe with high honors in 1860. His decision concerning his life's work was not reached without a struggle. He was appointed a tutor in his college immediately upon his graduation, but that was only a temporary post in his eyes, and he thought anxiously about the future. He wrote in a note-book at this time: "I am more than all perplexed by this fact: that the prime inclination—that is, natural bent (which I have checked, though) of my nature is to music, and for that I have the greatest talent; indeed, not boasting, for God gave it me, I have an extraordinary musical talent, and feel it within me plainly that I could rise as high as any composer. But I cannot bring myself to believe that I was intended for a musician, because it seems so small a business in comparison with other things which, it seems to me, I might do." (E. Mims, *Sidney Lanier*.) He had become an accomplished flute-player, enchanting all who heard him, as he continued to do throughout his life, but his doubt about a musical career was reinforced by practical considerations, and he finally decided that, after a second year at Oglethorpe, he would go for a period of study in Germany in order to qualify himself for a professorship in an American college. Then came the Civil War, which turned all his plans awry and sent him at once into the Confederate army, where he served, taking part in several battles, until he was made a prisoner late in 1864. Upon his release (February, 1865) he made his way back to Georgia, physically weakened and ill. His mother had just died from tuberculosis, and the disease now attacked him.

The remainder of his life was an unending struggle against poverty and tuberculosis. His design of foreign study had to be abandoned, and he soon found that, if poverty was the result of the War in his own family, so was it also throughout the South. He was a hotel clerk in Montgomery, Alabama, for some months, and there, in the spring of 1867, he finished a novel which he had begun in 1863. He took it to New York and succeeded in getting it published (1867); but *Tiger Lilies*, as it was called, while it attracted some favorable attention, did not materially change his situation, and he now turned to school-teaching in Prattville, Alabama. In December, 1867, he was married to Mary Day, of Macon. He found his teaching in Prattville unendurable, he could not obtain a post in a college, and it was impossible for him to earn a living from literary work. Hence in 1868 he returned to Macon, to study and practice the law in his father's office. He remained there five years, but he had not given up—could not give up—his hope of a larger career. He seems to have begun writing poetry in 1865, and he had published some verse in periodicals in following years; and by 1873 poetry had come to stand beside music in his eyes. He now felt that he might not live much longer, and that he must without more delay attempt to accomplish something lasting in art. He proposed to leave Macon and the law and take his chances farther north. His father not unnaturally protested against the hazards of this plan, and received this moving answer: "My dear father, think how, for twenty years, through poverty, through pain, through weariness, through sickness, through the uncongenial atmosphere of a farcical college and of a bare army and then of an exacting business life, through all the discouragement of being wholly unacquainted with literary people and literary ways,—I say, think how, in spite of all these depressing circumstances, and of a thousand more which I could enumerate, these two figures of music and of poetry have steadily kept in my heart so that I could not banish them. Does it not seem to you as to me that I begin to have the right to enroll myself among the devotees of these two sublime arts, after having followed them so long and so humbly, and through so much bitterness?"

Follow them Lanier did, settling, after a brief experience of New York, in Baltimore, where he obtained a position as flutist in the Peabody Symphony Orchestra. In Baltimore he remained until his death, always very poor, but managing by literary hack-work of various kinds, by occasional lectures, and by his flute to make a bare living, and also to secure a little time for the writing of verse.

He began to obtain recognition as a poet in 1875, and published a volume, entitled simply *Poems*, in 1877. In 1879 he was made a lecturer at the Johns Hopkins University. In 1880 he published *The Science of English Verse*. Meanwhile tuberculosis had continued to weaken him, and he died in the North Carolina mountains on 7 September, 1881. Two volumes which grew out of his lectures at Johns Hopkins were posthumously published: *The English Novel and the Principle of Its Development* (1883) and *Shakespeare and His Forerunners* (1902). An acquaintance of Lanier's wrote of him after his death: "Intellectually he seemed . . . not so much to have arrived as to be on the way—with a beautiful fervor and eagerness about things, as if he had never had all that he longed for in books and study and thought." This happily expresses the impression which both his three volumes of prose and many of his poems inevitably make upon the reader. He was a man of talent, perhaps a man of genius, but his life of hardship and illness made his development late and incomplete, so that all save a very few of his poems represent a promise rather than a fulfillment. Those few, however, have a musical quality so rare and full that they have kept his name alive and have gained him a secure place, even though a small one, in American literature.

THE MARSHES OF GLYNN¹

GLOOMS of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided
and woven

With intricate shades of the vines that myr-
iad-cloven

Clamber the forks of the multiform
boughs,—

Emerald twilights,—

Virginal shy lights,

Wrought of the leaves to allure to the
whisper of vows,

When lovers pace timidly down through the
green colonnades

Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark
woods,

Of the heavenly woods and glades,

That run to the radiant marginal sand-
beach within 10

The wide sea-marshes of Glynn;—

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noon-day
fire,—

Wildwood privacies, closets of lone de-
sire,

Chamber from chamber parted with waver-
ing arras of leaves,—

Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to
the soul that grieves,

Pure with a sense of the passing of saints
through the wood,

Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with
good;—

O braided dusks of the oak and woven shades
of the vine,

While the riotous noon-day sun of the June-
day long did shine

Ye held me fast in your heart and I held you
fast in mine; 20

But now when the noon is no more, and riot
is rest,

And the sun is a-wait at the ponderous gate
of the West,

And the slant yellow beam down the wood-
aisle doth seem

Like a lane into heaven that leads from a
dream,—

Ay, now, when my soul all day hath drunken
the soul of the oak,

And my heart is at ease from men, and the
wearisome sound of the stroke

Of the scythe of time and the trowel of
trade is low,

And belief overmasters doubt, and I know
that I know,

And my spirit is grown to a lordly great
compass within,

That the length and the breadth and the
sweep of the marshes of Glynn 30

Will work me no fear like the fear they have
wrought me of yore

When length was fatigue, and when breadth
was but bitterness sore,

And when terror and shrinking and dreary
unnamable pain

Drew over me out of the merciless miles of
the plain,—

Oh, now, unafraid, I am fain to face

The vast sweet visage of space.

To the edge of the wood I am drawn, I am
drawn,

¹ First published in 1879. The marshes referred to are on the coast of Georgia, near Brunswick. As now printed among Lanier's poems this is the fourth of four *Hymns of the Marshes*. This and the following poems by Lanier are here reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, and they have been arranged in the same relative order as in Messrs. Scribner's collective edition.

Where the gray beach glimmering runs, as a
 belt of the dawn,
 For a mete and a mark
 To the forest-dark:— 40
 So:

Affable live-oak, leaning low,—
 Thus—with your favor—soft, with a rever-
 erent hand
 (Not lightly touching your person, Lord of
 the land!),

Bending your beauty aside, with a step I
 stand

On the firm-packed sand,

Free

By a world of marsh that borders a world of
 sea.

Sinuous southward and sinuous northward
 the shimmering band

Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of the
 marsh to the folds of the land. 50

Inward and outward to northward and
 southward the beach-lines linger and
 curl

As a silver-wrought garment that clings to
 and follows the firm sweet limbs of a
 girl.

Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again
 into sight,

Softly the sand-beach wavers away to a dim
 gray looping of light.

And what if behind me to westward the wall
 of the woods stands high?

The world lies east: how ample, the marsh
 and the sea and the sky!

A league and a league of marsh-grass, waist-
 high, broad in the blade,

Green, and all of a height, and unflecked with
 a light or a shade,

Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,
 To the terminal blue of the main. 60

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the
 terminal sea?

Somehow my soul seems suddenly free
 From the weighing of fate and the sad discus-
 sion of sin,

By the length and the breadth and the sweep
 of the marshes of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and no-
 thing-withholding and free

Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer
 yourselves to the sea!

Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the
 rains and the sun,

Ye spread and span like the catholic man who
 hath mightily won

God out of knowledge and good out of infi-
 nite pain

And sight out of blindness and purity out of
 a stain. 70

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the
 watery sod,

Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness
 of God:

I will fly in the greatness of God as the
 marsh-hen flies

In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt
 the marsh and the skies:

By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in
 the sod

I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness
 of God:

Oh, like to the greatness of God is the great-
 ness within

The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes
 of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out
 of his plenty the sea

Pours fast: full soon the time of the flood-
 tide must be: 80

Look how the grace of the sea doth go
 About and about through the intricate chan-
 nels that flow

Here and there,

Everywhere,

Till his waters have flooded the uttermost
 creeks and the low-lying lanes,

And the marsh is meshed with a million
 veins,

That like as with rosy and silvery essences
 flow

In the rose-and-silver evening glow.

Farewell, my lord Sun!

The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets
 run 90

'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the
 marsh-grass stir;

Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that
 westward whirl;

Passeth, and all is still; and the currents
 cease to run;

And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!
 The tide is in his ecstasy.
 The tide is at his highest height:
 And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the
 waters of sleep
 Roll in on the souls of men, 100
 But who will reveal to our waking ken
 The forms that swim and the shapes that
 creep

Under the waters of sleep?
 And I would I could know what swimmeth
 below when the tide comes in
 On the length and the breadth of the mar-
 velous marshes of Glynn.

THE SONG OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE ¹

Out of the hills of Habersham,
 Down the valleys of Hall,
 I hurry amain to reach the plain,
 Run the rapid and leap the fall,
 Split at the rock and together again,
 Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
 And flee from folly on every side
 With a lover's pain to attain the plain
 Far from the hills of Habersham,
 Far from the valleys of Hall. 10

All down the hills of Habersham,
 All through the valleys of Hall,
 The rushes cried *Abide, abide*,
 The willful waterweeds held me thrall,
 The laving laurel turned my tide,
 The ferns and the fondling grass said *Stay*,
 The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
 And the little reeds sighed *Abide, abide*,
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall. 20

High o'er the hills of Habersham,
 Veiling the valleys of Hall,
 The hickory told me manifold
 Fair tales of shade, the poplar tall
 Wrought me her shadowy self to hold,
 The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
 Overleaning, with flickering meaning and
 sign,
 Said, *Pass not, so cold, these manifold*
Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
These glades in the valleys of Hall. 30

And oft in the hills of Habersham,
 And oft in the valleys of Hall,
 The white quartz shone, and the smooth
 brook-stone
 Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl,
 And many a luminous jewel lone
 —Crystals clear or a-cloud with mist,
 Ruby, garnet, and amethyst—
 Made lures with the lights of streaming
 stone
 In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
 In the beds of the valleys of Hall. 40

But oh, not the hills of Habersham,
 And oh, not the valleys of Hall
 Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
 Downward the voices of Duty call—
 Downward, to toil and be mixed with the
 main,
 The dry fields burn, and the mills are to
 turn,
 And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
 And the lordly main from beyond the plain
 Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
 Calls through the valleys of Hall. 50

FROM THE FLATS ¹

WHAT heartache—ne'er a hill!
 Inexorable, vapid, vague and chill
 The drear sand-levels drain my spirit low.
 With one poor word they tell me all they
 know;
 Whereat their stupid tongues, to tease my
 pain,
 Do drawl it o'er again and o'er again.
 They hurt my heart with griefs I cannot
 name:
 Always the same, the same.

Nature hath no surprise, 9
 No ambuscade of beauty 'gainst mine eyes
 From brake or lurking dell or deep defile;
 No humors, frolic forms—this mile, that
 mile;
 No rich reserves or happy-valley hopes
 Beyond the bend of roads, the distant
 slopes.
 Her fancy fails, her wild is all run tame:
 Ever the same, the same.

¹ First published in 1877. Written in the same year
 at Tampa, Florida.

¹ First published in 1877.

Oh might I through these tears
 But glimpse some hill my Georgia high
 uprears,
 Where white the quartz and pink the pebble
 shine,
 The hickory heavenward strives, the musca-
 dine 20
 Swings o'er the slope, the oak's far-falling
 shade
 Darkens the dogwood in the bottom glade,
 And down the hollow from a ferny nook
 Bright leaps a living brook!

THE SYMPHONY ¹

"O TRADE! O Trade! would thou wert dead!
 The Time needs heart—'tis tired of head:
 We're all for love," the violins said.
 "Of what avail the rigorous tale
 Of bill for coin and box for bale?
 Grant thee, O Trade! thine uttermost hope:
 Level red gold with blue sky-slope,
 And base it deep as devils grope:
 When all's done, what hast thou won
 Of the only sweet that's under the sun? 10
 Ay, canst thou buy a single sigh
 Of true love's least, least ecstasy?"
 Then, with a bridegroom's heart-beats
 trembling,
 All the mightier strings assembling
 Ranged them on the violins' side
 As when the bridegroom leads the bride,
 And, heart in voice, together cried:
 "Yea, what avail the endless tale
 Of gain by cunning and plus by sale?
 Look up the land, look down the land, 20
 The poor, the poor, the poor, they stand
 Wedged by the pressing of Trade's hand
 Against an inward-opening door
 That pressure tightens evermore:
 They sigh a monstrous foul-air sigh
 For the outside leagues of liberty,
 Where Art, sweet lark, translates the sky
 Into a heavenly melody.
 'Each day, all day' (these poor folks say),
 'In the same old year-long, drear-long
 way, 30
 We weave in the mills and heave in the
 kilns,
 We sieve mine-meshes under the hills,
 And thief much gold from the Devil's bank
 tills,
 To relieve, O God, what manner of ills?—

The beasts, they hunger, and eat, and die;
 And so do we, and the world's a sty;
 Hush, fellow-swine: why nuzzle and cry?
Swinehood hath no remedy
 Say many men, and hasten by,
 Clamping the nose and blinking the eye. 40
 But who said once, in the lordly tone,
Man shall not live by bread alone
But all that cometh from the Throne?
 Hath God said so?
 But Trade saith *No*:
 And the kilns and the curt-tongued mills say
Go!
There's plenty that can, if you can't: we
know.
Move out, if you think you're underpaid.
The poor are prolific; we're not afraid;
Trade is trade." 50
 Thereat this passionate protesting
 Meekly changed, and softened till
 It sank to sad requesting
 And suggesting sadder still:
 "And oh, if men might some time see
 How piteous-false the poor decree
 That trade no more than trade must be!
 Does business mean, *Die, you—live, I?*
 Then 'Trade is trade' but sings a lie:
 'Tis only war grown miserly. 60
 If business is battle, name it so:
 War-crimes less will shame it so,
 And widows less will blame it so.
 Alas, for the poor to have some part
 In yon sweet living lands of Art,
 Makes problem not for head, but heart.
 Vainly might Plato's brain revolve it:
 Plainly the heart of a child could solve it."

And then, as when from words that seem but
 rude
 We pass to silent pain that sits abroad 70
 Back in our heart's great dark and solitude,
 So sank the strings to gentle throbbing
 Of long chords change-marked with sob-
 bing—
 Motherly sobbing, not distinctlier heard
 Than half wing-openings of the sleeping
 bird,
 Some dream of danger to her young hath
 stirred.
 Then stirring and demurring ceased, and lo!
 Every least ripple of the strings' song-flow
 Died to a level with each level bow
 And made a great chord tranquil-surfaced
 so, 80

¹ First published in 1875.

As a brook beneath his curving bank doth go
To linger in the sacred dark and green
Where many boughs the still pool overlean
And many leaves make shadow with their
sheen.

But presently
A velvet flute-note fell down pleasantly
Upon the bosom of that harmony,
And sailed and sailed incessantly,
As if a petal from a wild-rose blown
Had fluttered down upon that pool of tone
And boatwise dropped o' the convex side 91
And floated down the glassy tide
And clarified and glorified
The solemn spaces where the shadows bide.
From the warm concave of that fluted note
Somewhat, half song, half odor, forth did
float,

As if a rose might somehow be a throat:
"When Nature from her far-off glen
Flutes her soft messages to men,
The flute can say them o'er again; 100
Yea, Nature, singing sweet and lone,
Breathes through life's strident polyphone
The flute-voice in the world of tone.

Sweet friends,
Man's love ascends
To finer and diviner ends
Than man's mere thought e'er comprehends:
For I, e'en I,
As here I lie,
A petal on a harmony, 110
Demand of Science whence and why
Man's tender pain, man's inward cry,
When he doth gaze on earth and sky?
I am not overbold:

I hold
Full powers from Nature manifold.
I speak for each no-tongued tree
That, spring by spring, doth nobler be,
And dumbly and most wistfully
His mighty prayerful arms outspreads 120
Above men's oft-unheeding heads,
And his big blessing downward sheds.
I speak for all-shaped blooms and leaves,
Lichens on stones and moss on eaves,
Grasses and grains in ranks and sheaves;
Broad-fronded ferns and keen-leaved canes,
And briery mazes bounding lanes,
And marsh-plants, thirsty-cupped for rains,
And milky stems and sugary veins;
For every long-armed woman-vine 130
That round a piteous tree doth twine;
For passionate odors, and divine

Pistils, and petals crystalline;
All purities of shady springs,
All shynesses of film-winged things
That fly from tree-trunks and bark-rings;
All modesties of mountain-fawns
That leap to covert from wild lawns,
And tremble if the day but dawns;
All sparklings of small beady eyes 140
Of birds, and sidelong glances wise
Wherewith the jay hints tragedies;
All piquancies of prickly burs,
And smoothnesses of downs and furs
Of eiders and of minevers;
All limpid honeys that do lie
At stamen-bases, nor deny
The humming-birds' fine roguery,
Bee-thighs, nor any butterfly;
All gracious curves of slender wings, 150
Bark-mottlings, fiber-spiralings,
Fern-wavings and leaf-flickerings;
Each dial-marked leaf and flower-bell
Wherewith in every lonesome dell
Time to himself his hours doth tell;
All tree-sounds, rustlings of pine-cones,
Wind-sighings, doves' melodious moans,
And night's unearthly under-tones;
All placid lakes and waveless deeps, 160
All cool reposing mountain-steeps,
Vale-calms and tranquil lotos-sleeps;—
Yea, all fair forms, and sounds, and lights,
And warmths, and mysteries, and mights,
Of Nature's utmost depths and heights,
—These doth my timid tongue present,
Their mouthpiece and leal instrument
And servant, all love-eloquent.
I heard, when '*All for love*' the violins cried:
So, Nature calls through all her system wide,
Give me thy love, O man, so long denied. 170
Much time is run, and man hath changed his
ways,
Since Nature, in the antique fable-days,
Was hid from man's true love by proxy
fays,
False fauns and rascal gods that stole her
praise.
The nymphs, cold creatures of man's colder
brain,
Chilled Nature's streams till man's warm
heart was fain
Never to lave its love in them again.
Later, a sweet Voice *Love thy neighbor* said;
Then first the bounds of neighborhood out-
spread
Beyond all confines of old ethnic dread. 180

Vainly the Jew might wag his covenant
head:

'All men are neighbors,' so the sweet Voice
said.

So, when man's arms had circled all man's
race,

The liberal compass of his warm embrace
Stretched bigger yet in the dark bounds of
space;

With hands a-grope he felt smooth Nature's
grace,

Drew her to breast and kissed her sweet-
heart face:

Yea, man found neighbors in great hills and
trees

And streams and clouds and suns and birds
and bees,

And throbbed with neighbor-loves in loving
these. 190

But oh, the poor! the poor! the poor!

That stand by the inward-opening door

Trade's hand doth tighten ever more,

And sigh their monstrous foul-air sigh

For the outside hills of liberty,

Where Nature spreads her wild blue sky

For Art to make into melody!

'Thou Trade! thou king of the modern days!

Change thy ways,

Change thy ways; 200

Let the sweaty laborers file

A little while,

A little while,

Where Art and Nature sing and smile.

Trade! is thy heart all dead, all dead?

And hast thou nothing but a head?

I'm all for heart," the flute-voice said,

And into sudden silence fled,

Like as a blush that while 'tis red

Dies to a still, still white instead. 210

Thereto a thrilling calm succeeds,

Till presently the silence breeds

A little breeze among the reeds

That seems to blow by sea-marsh weeds:

Then from the gentle stir and fret

Sings out the melting clarionet,

Like as a lady sings while yet

Her eyes with salty tears are wet.

"O Trade! O Trade!" the Lady said,

"I too will wish thee utterly dead 220

If all thy heart is in thy head.

For O my God! and O my God!

What shameful ways have women trod

At beckoning of Trade's golden rod!

Alas when sighs are traders' lies,

And heart's-ease eyes and violet eyes

Are merchandise!

O purchased lips that kiss with pain!

O cheeks coin-spotted with smirch and
stain!

O trafficked hearts that break in twain! 230

—And yet what wonder at my sisters'
crime?

So hath Trade withered up Love's sinewy
prime,

Men love not women as in olden time.

Ah, not in these cold merchantable days

Deem men their life an opal gray, where
plays

The one red Sweet of gracious ladies'-praise.

Now, comes a suitor with sharp prying
eye—

Says, *Here, you Lady, if you'll sell, I'll buy:*

Come, heart for heart—a trade? What!
weeping? why?

Shame on such wooers' dapper mercery!

I would my lover kneeling at my feet 241

In humble manliness should cry, *O sweet!*

I know not if thy heart my heart will greet:

I ask not if thy love my love can meet:

Whate'er thy worshipful soft tongue shall say,

I'll kiss thine answer, be it yea or nay:

I do but know I love thee, and I pray

To be thy knight until my dying day.

Woe him that cunning trades in hearts con-
trives!

Base love good women to base loving
drives. 250

If men loved larger, larger were our lives;

And wooed they nobler, won they nobler
wives."

There thrust the bold straightforward horn
To battle for that lady lorn,

With heartsome voice of mellow scorn,

Like any knight in knighthood's morn.

"Now comfort thee," said he,

"Fair Lady.

For God shall right thy grievous wrong,

And man shall sing thee a true-love song,

Voiced in act his whole life long, 261

Yea, all thy sweet life long,

Fair Lady.

Where's he that craftily hath said,

The day of chivalry is dead?

I'll prove that lie upon his head,

Or I will die instead,

Fair Lady.

Is Honor gone into his grave?
 Hath Faith become a caitiff knave, 270
 And Selfhood turned into a slave
 To work in Mammon's cave,
 Fair Lady?

Will Truth's long blade ne'er gleam again?
 Hath Giant Trade in dungeons slain
 All great contempts of mean-got gain
 And hates of inward stain,
 Fair Lady?

For aye shall name and fame be sold,
 And place be hugged for the sake of gold,
 And smirch-robed Justice feebly scold 281
 At Crime all money-bold,
 Fair Lady?

Shall self-wrapt husbands aye forget
 Kiss-pardons for the daily fret
 Wherewith sweet wifely eyes are wet—
 Blind to lips kiss-wise set—
 Fair Lady?

Shall lovers higgie, heart for heart,
 Till wooing grows a trading mart 290
 Where much for little, and all for part,
 Make love a cheapening art,
 Fair Lady?

Shall woman scorch for a single sin
 That her betrayer may revel in,
 And she be burnt, and he but grin
 When that the flames begin,
 Fair Lady?

Shall ne'er prevail the woman's plea,
We maids would far, far whiter be 300
If that our eyes might sometimes see
Men maids in purity,
 Fair Lady?

Shall Trade aye salve his conscience-aches
 With jibes at Chivalry's old mistakes—
 The wars that o'erhot knighthood makes
 For Christ's and ladies' sakes,
 Fair Lady?

Now by each knight that e'er hath prayed
 To fight like a man and love like a maid, 310
 Since Pembroke's life, as Pembroke's blade,
 I' the scabbard, death, was laid,
 Fair Lady,

I dare avouch my faith is bright
 That God doth right and God hath might.
 Nor time hath changed His hair to white,
 Nor His dear love to spite,
 Fair Lady.

I doubt no doubts: I strive, and shrive my
 clay,
 And fight my fight in the patient modern
 way 320

For true love and for thee! ah me! and pray
 To be thy knight until my dying day,
 Fair Lady."

Made end that knightly horn, and spurred
 away
 Into the thick of the melodious fray.

And then the hautboy played and smiled,
 And sang like any large-eyed child,
 Cool-hearted and all undefiled.

"Huge Trade!" he said,
 "Would thou wouldst lift me on thy head
 And run where'er my finger led! 331
 Once said a Man—and wise was He—
Never shalt thou the heavens see,
Save as a little child thou be."

Then o'er sea-lashings of commingling tunes
 The ancient wise bassoons,

Like weird

Gray-beard

Old harpers sitting on the high sea-dunes,
 Chanted runes: 340

"Bright-waved gain, gray-waved loss,
 The sea of all doth lash and toss,
 One wave forward and one across:
 But now 'twas trough, now 'tis crest,
 And worst doth foam and flash to best,
 And curst to blest.

"Life! Life! thou sea-fugue, writ from east
 to west,

Love, Love alone can pore

On thy dissolving score

Of harsh half-phrasings, 350

Blotted ere writ,

And double erasings

Of chords most fit.

Yea, Love, sole music-master blest,
 May read thy weltering palimpsest.
 To follow Time's dying melodies through,
 And never to lose the old in the new,
 And ever to solve the discords true—

Love alone can do.

And ever Love hears the poor-folks' cry-
 ing, 360

And ever Love hears the women's sighing,
 And ever sweet knighthood's death-defying,
 And ever wise childhood's deep implying,
 But never a trader's glozing and lying.

"And yet shall Love himself be heard,
 Though long deferred, though long deferred:
 O'er the modern waste a dove hath whirred:
 Music is Love in search of a word."

STRUGGLE ¹

My soul is like the oar that momentarily
 Dies in a desperate stress beneath the
 wave,
 Then glitters out again and sweeps the sea:
 Each second I'm new-born from some new
 grave.

SONG FOR *THE JACQUERIE* ²

MAY the maiden,
 Violet-laden
 Out of the violet sea,

¹ Written not long before Lanier's death and published posthumously.

² Composed at Macon, Georgia, in 1868. *The Jacquerie* was a projected narrative poem which Lanier left in a fragmentary state at his death.

Comes and hovers
 Over lovers,
 Over thee, Marie, and me,
 Over me and thee.

Day the stately,
 Sunken lately
 Into the violet sea, 10
 Backward hovers
 Over lovers,
 Over thee, Marie, and me,
 Over me and thee.

Night the holy,
 Sailing slowly
 Over the violet sea,
 Stars uncovers
 Over lovers,
 Stars for thee, Marie, and me, 20
 Stars for me and thee.

JOHN BANISTER TABB (1845-1909)

Tabb was born in Amelia County, Virginia, on 22 March, 1845. His education was obtained through private study. In 1862 he became captain's clerk on the Confederate blockade-runner, *R. E. Lee*, and two years later he was taken prisoner by a Union vessel. He was sent to the same prison (Point Lookout) as was Sidney Lanier, and there the two became firm friends. Tabb's deepest interests were poetry and music, and it was Lanier's flute-playing that drew them together. After his release Tabb studied music in Baltimore, and later became a teacher at Racine College, Wisconsin. Later still he underwent a course of study at St. Charles College, Ellicott City, Maryland, and at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, and in 1884 he was ordained a priest of the Roman Catholic Church. He continued, however, his work as a teacher, returning to St. Charles College and holding a professorship of literature there until his death in 1909. From his early youth he had suffered from a weakness of the eyes which was incurable, and during the last three years of his life he was totally blind.

Tabb's production of poetry was small in its amount, and his poems, besides, are almost invariably short, often quatrains. Moreover, the range of his interests was small. These are the familiar signs of the minor poet, and the classification need not be disputed. But Tabb had the true poet's searching eye for the unseen meanings lying beneath the variegated, ever-changing appearances of the world, and the brevity of his poems is not caused by paucity of matter, but rather by the severe compression of his utterance. It has been claimed, not without reason, that Tabb achieved beauties beyond the reach of his friend Lanier, and certainly he was the finer workman of the two, and had the deeper insight. He was not a great poet, but he was a true one, and he deserves to be read and remembered. He privately printed a few poems in 1883. Later volumes were: *Poems* (1894), *Lyrics* (1897), *Child Verse* (1899), *Later Lyrics* (1902), and *Later Poems* (1910).

COMPENSATION ¹

How many an acorn falls to die
For one that makes a tree!
How many a heart must pass me by
For one that cleaves to me!

How many a suppliant wave of sound
Must still unheeded roll,
For one low utterance that found
An echo in my soul!

TO AN OLD WASSAIL-CUP

WHERE Youth and Laughter lingered long
To quaff delight, with wanton song
And warm caress,
Now Time and Silence strive amain
With lips unsatisfied, to drain
Life's emptiness!

¹ The poems by Tabb here reprinted are used by and with the permission of Messrs. Small, Maynard, and Company, Inc. The first seven are reprinted from *Poems* (1894). The remainder are reprinted from *Lyrics* (1897).

AUTUMN SONG

My life is but a leaf upon the tree—
A growth upon the stem that feedeth all.
A touch of frost—and suddenly I fall,
To follow where my sister-blossoms be.

The selfsame sun, the shadow, and the rain,
That brought the budding verdure to the
bough,
Shall strip the fading foliage as now,
And leave the limb in nakedness again.

My life is but a leaf upon the tree; 9
The winds of birth and death upon it blow;
But whence it came and whither it shall go,
Is mystery of mysteries to me.

ANGELS OF PAIN

AH, should they come revisiting the spot
Whence by our prayers we drove them
utterly,
Shame were it for their saddened eyes to see
How soon their visitations are forgot.

BABY

BABY in her slumber smiling,
Doth a captive take:
Whispers Love, "From dreams beguiling
May she never wake!"

When the lids, like mist retreating,
Flee the azure deep,
Wakes a newborn Joy, repeating,
"May she never sleep!"

A BUNCH OF ROSES

THE rosy mouth and rosy toe
Of little baby brother,
Until about a month ago
Had never met each other;
But nowadays the neighbors sweet,
In every sort of weather,
Half way with rosy fingers meet,
To kiss and play together.

SHADOWS

YE shrink not wholly from us when the
morn
Arises red with slaughter, and the slain
Sweet visages of tender dreams remain
To haunt us through the wakened hours
forlorn,
Nor when the noontide cometh, and the
thorn
Of light is centered in the quivering brain,
And Memory her pilgrimage of pain
Renews, with fainting footsteps, overworn.
Nay, then, what time the satellite of day
Pursues his path victorious, and the
West, IO
Her clouds beleaguered vanishing away,
A desert seems of solitude oppressed,
Around us still your hovering pinions stay,
The pledges of returning night and rest.

AT LAST

How full of phantoms are the days
That shorten as they go!
Along the once frequented ways,
Alas, are none I know!
Lone relic of reality,
I too a phantom fain would be.

THE PILGRIM

WHEN, but a child, I wandered hence,
Another child—sweet Innocence,
My sister—went with me:
But I have lost her, and am fain
To seek her in the home again
Where we were wont to be.

AN INTERVIEW

I SAT with chill December
Beside the evening fire.
"And what do you remember,"
I ventured to inquire,
"Of seasons long forsaken?"
He answered in amaze,
"My age you have mistaken:
I've lived but thirty *days*."

ANTICIPATION

THE master scans the woven score
Of subtle harmonies, before
A note is stirred;
And Nature now is pondering
The tidal symphony of Spring,
As yet unheard.

DEUS ABSCONDITUS

MY God has hid Himself from me
Behind whatever else I see;
Myself—the nearest mystery—
As far beyond my grasp as He.

And yet, in darkest night, I know,
While lives a doubt-discerning glow,
That larger lights above it throw
These shadows in the vale below.

FANCY

A BOAT unmoored, wherein a dreamer lies,
The slumberous waves low-lisping of a
land
Where Love, forever with unclouded eyes,
Goes, wed with wandering Music, hand
in hand.

THE VOYAGER

COLUMBUS-LIKE, I sailed into the night,
The sunset gold to find:
Alas! 'twas but the phantom of the light!
Life's Indies lay behind!

ADRIFT

THE calm horizon circles only me,
The center of its measureless embrace —
A bubble on the bosom of the sea,
Itself a bubble in the bound of space.

MY SECRET

'Tis not what I am fain to hide,
That doth in deepest darkness dwell,
But what my tongue hath often tried,
Alas, in vain, to tell.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CABLE (1844-1925)

Cable was born in New Orleans on 12 October, 1844. His mother was a woman of New England ancestry, a fact not without significance in view of some of Cable's characteristics and of his dominant interests in later life. His father died when he was fourteen, whereupon his period of schooling ceased, as he had at once to earn what he could in order to help with the support of the family. Reading, however, was not impossible, and the youth, studious by inclination, read widely in both English and French literature, while his days were spent, until the Civil War began, in marking boxes at the New Orleans custom house. During the War he became a Confederate soldier. Upon his return to civil life in 1865 he found employment with the New Orleans *Picayune*, but discovered after a short time that newspaper reporting was not his vocation. He then, after an attempt to become a surveyor and a period of illness, entered the office of a firm of cotton factors, and remained an accountant there until 1879. Meanwhile he had continued to read, and had steeped himself in the history and traditions of his city and in the distinctive manners, social customs, habits of thought, language, and even architecture of the creoles of Louisiana. And in 1872 Edward King, then traveling through the South in search of material for papers which he was contributing to *Scribner's Monthly*, had made Cable's acquaintance, had perceived his possibilities, and had secured from him the promise of a contribution to the *Monthly*. In the autumn of 1873 Cable's first story, 'Sieur George, had appeared in *Scribner's Monthly*, to be followed at intervals by the other tales which were republished in 1879 in the volume entitled *Creole Days*. The tales made no pronounced impression upon the public until they were collected in this book. Then, however, they immediately aroused widespread and deep interest, and Cable suddenly found himself a nationally known figure. It was soon recognized, indeed, that, whatever else he might do, Cable had in *Creole Days* achieved so distinctive and remarkable a performance that his fame in America was secure. For in these tales of the vanishing French civilization of Louisiana he had opened up to readers a new world, full of romantic charm, highly picturesque, and, though exotic, at the same time real and living and a portion of the American scene. It was as if Americans had suddenly discovered that the background of their civilization was more rich and varied and, in a word, interesting than they had realized. And in this respect Cable's achievement was similar in character to Bret Harte's in the volume entitled *The Luck of Roaring Camp*—with the important difference, however, that Cable was the master of a finer style, had a more delicate eye, and was by far the sincerer artist of the two.

So eager was the reception of *Creole Days* that Cable at once gave his whole time to literary work. He published *The Grandissimes* in 1880, a novel in which he amplified his picture of creole life, but also showed, despite the very real interest of the book, that his powers were most congenially exercised in the short tale. In *Madame Delphine* (1881), however, he achieved another unquestioned masterpiece, the tale being as charming and as perfect in style and tone and form as any of those in *Creole Days*. But with this slender volume Cable's greatest work, that which is responsible for his secure fame, was done. In 1884 he removed to Northampton, Massachusetts, where he continued to live for the rest of his life, and the changed environment, coupled probably with self-consciousness induced by his fame, made it impossible for him again to capture the style and the charm and interest of his earlier work. He wrote many articles, about the creoles, about the condition of the South, and about the negro question, and he interested himself largely in social work in Northampton, attempting to broaden and enrich the lives of wage-earners. This was useful and praiseworthy work, but it took him far from the atmosphere as well as the scene of his first books, and only one of the many volumes of fiction which he published after 1884—*Lovers of Louisiana* (1918)—shows any genuine return of his earlier powers. He died on 31 January, 1925.

The titles and dates of Cable's volumes, other than those which already have been mentioned, follow: *The Creoles of Louisiana* (1884), *The Silent South* (1885), *Doctor Sevier* (1885), *Bonaventure*, *A Prose Pastoral of Louisiana* (1888), *The Negro Question* (1890), *John March, Southerner* (1894), *Strong Hearts* (1899), *The Cavalier* (1901), *Bylow Hill* (1902), *Kincaid's Battery* (1908), *Posson Jone and Père Raphael* (1909), *The Amateur Garden* (1914), *Gideon's Band* (1914), and *The Flower of the Chapdelaines* (1918).

BELLES DEMOISELLES PLANTATION ¹

THE original grantee was Count —, assume the name to be De Charleu; the old Creoles never forgive a public mention. He was the French king's commissary. One day, called to France to explain the lucky accident of the commissariat having burned down with his account-books inside, he left his wife, a Choctaw Comtesse, behind.

Arrived at court, his excuses were accepted, and that tract granted him where afterwards stood Belles Demoiselles Plantation. A man cannot remember every thing! In a fit of forgetfulness he married a French gentlewoman, rich and beautiful, and "brought her out." However, "All's well that ends well"; a famine had been in the colony, and the Choctaw Comtesse had starved, leaving nought but a half-caste orphan family lurking on the edge of the settlement, bearing our French gentlewoman's own new name, and being mentioned in Monsieur's will.

And the new Comtesse—she tarried but a twelve-month, left Monsieur a lovely son, and departed, led out of this vain world by the swamp-fever.

From this son sprang the proud Creole family of De Charleu. It rose straight up, up, up, generation after generation, tall, branchless, slender, palm-like; and finally, in the time of which I am to tell, flowered with all the rare beauty of a century-plant, in Artemise, Innocente, Felicité, the twins Marie and Martha, Leontine and little Septima; the seven beautiful daughters for whom their home had been fitly named Belles Demoiselles.

The Count's grant had once been a long Pointe, round which the Mississippi used to whirl, and seethe, and foam, that it was horrid to behold. Big whirlpools would open and wheel about in the savage eddies under the low bank, and close up again, and others open, and spin, and disappear. Great circles of muddy surface would boil up from hundreds of feet below, and gloss over, and seem to float away,—sink, come back again under water, and with only a soft hiss surge up again, and again drift off, and vanish.

Every few minutes the loamy bank would tip down a great load of earth upon its besieger, and fall back a foot,—sometimes a yard,—and the writhing river would press after, until at last the Pointe was quite swallowed up, and the great river glided by in a majestic curve, and asked no more; the bank stood fast, the "caving" became a forgotten misfortune, and the diminished grant was a long, sweeping, willowy bend, rustling with miles of sugar-cane.

Coming up the Mississippi in the sailing craft of those early days, about the time one first could descry the white spires of the old St. Louis Cathedral, you would be pretty sure to spy, just over to your right under the levee, Belles Demoiselles Mansion, with its broad veranda and red painted cypress roof, peering over the embankment, like a bird in the nest, half hid by the avenue of willows which one of the departed De Charleus,—he that married a Marot,—had planted on the levee's crown.

The house stood unusually near the river, facing eastward, and standing four-square, with an immense veranda about its sides, and a flight of steps in front spreading broadly downward, as we open arms to a child. From the veranda nine miles of river were seen; and in their compass, near at hand, the shady garden full of rare and beautiful flowers; farther away broad fields of cane and rice, and the distant quarters of the slaves, and on the horizon everywhere a dark belt of cypress forest.

The master was old Colonel De Charleu,—Jean Albert Henri Joseph De Charleu-Marot, and "Colonel" by the grace of the first American governor. Monsieur,—he would not speak to any one who called him "Colonel,"—was a hoary-headed patriarch. His step was firm, his form erect, his intellect strong and clear, his countenance classic, serene, dignified, commanding, his manners courtly, his voice musical,—fascinating. He had had his vices,—all his life; but had borne them, as his race do, with a serenity of conscience and a cleanness of mouth that left no outward blemish on the surface of the gentleman. He had gambled in Royal Street, drunk hard in Orleans Street, run his adversary through in the dueling-ground at Slaughter-house Point, and danced and quareled at the St. Philippe—

¹ Reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons from *Old Creole Days* (1879).

street-theater quadron balls. Even now, with all his courtesy and bounty, and a hospitality which seemed to be entertaining angels, he was bitter-proud and penurious, and deep down in his hard-finished heart loved nothing but himself, his name, and his motherless children. But these!—their ravishing beauty was all but excuse enough for the unbounded idolatry of their father. Against these seven goddesses he never rebelled. Had they even required him to defraud old De Carlos—

I can hardly say.

Old De Carlos was his extremely distant relative on the Choctaw side. With this single exception, the narrow thread-like line of descent from the Indian wife, diminished to a mere strand by injudicious alliances, and deaths in the gutters of old New Orleans, was extinct. The name, by Spanish contact, had become De Carlos; but this one surviving bearer of it was known to all, and known only, as Injin Charlie.

One thing I never knew a Creole to do. He will not utterly go back on the ties of blood, no matter what sort of knots those ties may be. For one reason, he is never ashamed of his or his father's sins; and for another,—he will tell you—he is “all heart”!

So the different heirs of the De Charleu estate had always strictly regarded the rights and interests of the De Carloses, especially their ownership of a block of dilapidated buildings in a part of the city, which had once been very poor property, but was beginning to be valuable. This block had much more than maintained the last De Carlos through a long and lazy lifetime, and, as his household consisted only of himself, and an aged and crippled negress, the inference was irresistible that he “had money.” Old Charlie, though by *alias* an “Injin,” was plainly a dark white man, about as old as Colonel De Charleu, sunk in the bliss of deep ignorance, shrewd, deaf, and, by repute at least, unmerciful.

The Colonel and he always conversed in English. This rare accomplishment, which the former had learned from his Scotch wife, —the latter from up-river traders,—they found an admirable medium of communication, answering, better than French could, a similar purpose to that of the stick which we

fasten to the bit of one horse and breast-gear of another, whereby each keeps his distance. Once in a while, too, by way of jest, English found its way among the ladies of Belles Demoiselles, always signifying that their sire was about to have business with old Charlie.

Now a long-standing wish to buy out Charlie troubled the Colonel. He had no desire to oust him unfairly; he was proud of being always fair; yet he did long to engross the whole estate under one title. Out of his luxurious idleness he had conceived this desire, and thought little of so slight an obstacle as being already somewhat in debt to old Charlie for money borrowed, and for which Belles Demoiselles was, of course, good, ten times over. Lots, buildings, rents, all, might as well be his, he thought, to give, keep, or destroy. “Had he but the old man's heritage. Ah! he might bring that into existence which his *belles demoiselles* had been begging for, ‘since many years’; a home,—and such a home,—in the gay city. Here he should tear down this row of cottages, and make his garden wall; there that long rope-walk should give place to vine-covered arbors; the bakery yonder should make way for a costly conservatory; that wine warehouse should come down, and the mansion go up. It should be the finest in the State. Men should never pass it, but they should say—‘the palace of the De Charleus; a family of grand descent, a people of elegance and bounty, a line as old as France, a fine old man, and seven daughters as beautiful as happy; whoever dare attempt to marry there must leave his own name behind him!’

“The house should be of stones fitly set, brought down in ships from the land of ‘les Yankees,’ and it should have an airy belvedere, with a gilded image tiptoeing and shining on its peak, and from it you should see, far across the gleaming folds of the river, the red roof of Belles Demoiselles, the country-seat. At the big stone gate there should be a porter's lodge, and it should be a privilege even to see the ground.”

Truly they were a family fine enough, and fancy-free enough to have fine wishes, yet happy enough where they were, to have had no wish but to live there always.

To those, who, by whatever fortune,

wandered into the garden of Belles Demoiselles some summer afternoon as the sky was reddening towards evening, it was lovely to see the family gathered out upon the tiled pavement at the foot of the broad front steps, gayly chatting and jesting, with that ripple of laughter that comes so pleasingly from a bevy of girls. The father would be found seated in their midst, the center of attention and compliment, witness, arbiter, umpire, critic, by his beautiful children's unanimous appointment, but the single vassal, too, of seven absolute sovereigns.

Now they would draw their chairs near together in eager discussion of some new step in the dance, or the adjustment of some rich adornment. Now they would start about him with excited comments to see the eldest fix a bunch of violets in his button-hole. Now the twins would move down a walk after some unusual flower, and be greeted on their return with the high pitched notes of delighted feminine surprise.

As evening came on they would draw more quietly about their paternal center. Often their chairs were forsaken, and they grouped themselves on the lower steps, one above another, and surrendered themselves to the tender influences of the approaching night. At such an hour the passer on the river, already attracted by the dark figures of the broad-roofed mansion, and its woody garden standing against the glowing sunset, would hear the voices of the hidden group rise from the spot in the soft harmonies of an evening song; swelling clearer and clearer as the thrill of music warmed them into feeling, and presently joined by the deeper tones of the father's voice; then, as the daylight passed quite away, all would be still, and he would know that the beautiful home had gathered its nestlings under its wings.

And yet, for mere vagary, it pleased them not to be pleased.

"Arti!" called one sister to another in the broad hall, one morning,—mock amazement in her distended eyes,—"something is goin' to took place!"

"Comm-e-n-t?"—long-drawn perplexity.

"Papa is goin' to town!"

The news passed up stairs.

"Inno!"—one to another meeting in a doorway,—"something is goin' to took place!"

"*Qu'est-ce-que c'est!*"—vain attempt at gruffness.

"Papa is goin' to town!"

The unusual tidings were true. It was afternoon of the same day that the Colonel tossed his horse's bridle to his groom, and stepped up to old Charlie, who was sitting on his bench under a China-tree, his head, as was his fashion, bound in a Madras handkerchief. The "old man" was plainly under the effect of spirits and smiled a deferential salutation without trusting himself to his feet.

"Eh, well Charlie!"—the Colonel raised his voice to suit his kinsman's deafness,—*"how is those times with my friend Charlie?"*

"Eh?" said Charlie, distractedly.

"Is that goin' well with my friend Charlie?"

"In de house,—call her,"—making a pretense of rising.

"*Non, non!* I don't want,"—the speaker paused to breathe—"ow is collection?"

"Oh!" said Charlie, "every day he make me more poorer!"

"What do you hask for it?" asked the planter indifferently, designating the house by a wave of his whip.

"Ask for w'at?" said Injin Charlie.

"De house! What you ask for it?"

"I don't believe," said Charlie.

"What you would *take* for it!" cried the planter.

"Wait for w'at?"

"What you would *take* for the whole block?"

"I don't want to sell him!"

"I'll give you *ten thousand dollah* for it."

"Ten t'ousand dollah for dis house? Oh, no, dat is no price. He is blame good old house,—dat old house." (Old Charlie and the Colonel never swore in presence of each other.) "Forty years dat old house didn't had to be paint! I easy can get fifty t'ousand dollah for dat old house."

"Fifty thousand picayunes; yes," said the Colonel.

"She's a good house. Can make plenty money," pursued the deaf man.

"That's what make you so rich, eh, Charlie?"

"*Non*, I don't make nothing. Too blame clever, me, dat's de troub'. She's a good house,—make money fast like a steamboat,

—make a barrel full in a week! Me, I lose money all de days. Too blame clever.”

“Charlie!”

“Eh?”

“Tell me what you’ll take.”

“Make? I don’t make *nothing*. Too blame clever.”

“What will you *take*?”

“Oh! I got enough already,—half drunk now.”

“What will you take for the ’ouse?”

“You want to buy her?”

“I don’t know,”—(shrug),—“*maybe*,—if you sell it cheap.”

“She’s a bully old house.”

There was a long silence. By and by old Charlie commenced—

“Old Injin Charlie is a low-down dog.”

“*C’est vrai, oui!*” retorted the Colonel in an undertone.

“He’s got Injin blood in him.”

The Colonel nodded assent.

“But he’s got some blame good blood, too, ain’t it?”

The Colonel nodded impatiently.

“*Bien!* Old Charlie’s Injin blood says, ‘sell de house, Charlie, you blame old fool!’ *Mais*, old Charlie’s good blood says, ‘Charlie! if you sell dat old house, Charlie, you low-down old dog, Charlie, what de Compte De Charleu make for you grace-gran’-muzzer, de dev’ can eat you, Charlie, I don’t care.’”

“But you’ll sell it anyhow, won’t you, old man?”

“No!” And the *no* rumbled off in muttered oaths like thunder out on the Gulf. The incensed old Colonel wheeled and started off.

“Curl!” (Colonel) said Charlie, standing up unsteadily.

The planter turned with an inquiring frown.

“I’ll trade with you!” said Charlie.

The Colonel was tempted. “‘Ow’ll you trade?” he asked.

“My house for yours!”

The old Colonel turned pale with anger. He walked very quickly back, and came close up to his kinsman.

“Charlie!” he said.

“Injin Charlie,”—with a tipsy nod.

But by this time self-control was returning. “Sell Belles Demoiselles to you?” he

said in a high key, and then laughed “Ho, ho, ho!” and rode away.

A cloud, but not a dark one, overshadowed the spirits of Belles Demoiselles’ plantation. The old master, whose beaming presence had always made him a shining Saturn, spinning and sparkling within the bright circle of his daughters, fell into musing fits, started out of frowning reveries, walked often by himself, and heard business from his overseer fretfully.

No wonder. The daughters knew his closeness in trade, and attributed to it his failure to negotiate for the Old Charlie buildings,—so to call them. They began to depreciate Belles Demoiselles. If a north wind blew, it was too cold to ride. If a shower had fallen, it was too muddy to drive. In the morning the garden was wet. In the evening the grasshopper was a burden. *Ennui* was turned into capital; every headache was interpreted a premonition of ague; and when the native exuberance of a flock of ladies without a want or a care burst out in laughter in the father’s face, they spread their French eyes, rolled up their little hands, and with rigid wrists and mock vehemence vowed and vowed again that they only laughed at their misery, and should pine to death unless they could move to the sweet city. “Oh! the theater! Oh! Orleans Street! Oh! the masquerade! the Place d’Armes! the ball!” and they would call upon Heaven with French irreverence, and fall into each other’s arms, and whirl down the hall singing a waltz, end with a grand collision and fall, and, their eyes streaming merriment, lay the blame on the slippery floor, that would some day be the death of the whole seven.

Three times more the fond father, thus goaded, managed, by accident,—business accident,—to see old Charlie and increase his offer; but in vain. He finally went to him formally.

“Eh?” said the deaf and distant relative. “For what you want him, eh? Why you don’t stay where you halways be ’appy? Dis is a blame old rat-hole,—good for old Injin Charlie,—da’s all. Why you don’t stay where you be halways ’appy? Why you don’t buy somewheres else?”

“That’s none of your business,” snapped

the planter. Truth was, his reasons were unsatisfactory even to himself.

A sullen silence followed. Then Charlie spoke:

"Well, now, look here; I sell you old Charlie's house."

"*Bien!* and the whole block," said the Colonel.

"Hold on," said Charlie. "I sell you de 'ouse and de block. Den I go and git drunk, and go to sleep; de dev' comes along and says, 'Charlie! old Charlie, you blame low-down old dog, wake up! What you doin' here? Where's de 'ouse what Monsieur le Compte give your grace-gran-muzzer? Don't you see dat fine gentyman, De Charleu, done gone and tore him down and make him over new, you blame old fool, Charlie, you low-down old Injin dog!'"

"I'll give you forty thousand dollars," said the Colonel.

"For de 'ouse?"

"For all."

The deaf man shook his head.

"Forty-five!" said the Colonel.

"What a lie? For what you tell me 'What a lie?' I don't tell you no lie."

"*Non, non!* I give you *forty-five!*" shouted the Colonel.

Charlie shook his head again.

"Fifty."

He shook it again.

The figures rose and rose to—

"Seventy-five!"

The answer was an invitation to go away and let the owner alone, as he was, in certain specified respects, the vilest of living creatures, and no company for a fine gentyman.

The "fine gentyman" longed to blaspheme, —but before old Charlie!—in the name of pride, how could he? He mounted and started away.

"Tell you what I'll make wid you," said Charlie.

The other, guessing aright, turned back without dismounting, smiling.

"How much Belles Demoiselles hoes me now?" asked the deaf one.

"One hundred and eighty thousand dollars," said the Colonel, firmly.

"Yass," said Charlie. "I don't want Belles Demoiselles."

The old Colonel's quiet laugh intimated it made no difference either way.

"But me," continued Charlie, "me,—I'm got le Compte De Charleu's blood in me, any'ow,—a litt' bit, any'ow, ain't it?"

The Colonel nodded that it was.

"*Bien!* If I go out of dis place and don't go to Belles Demoiselles, de peoples will say,—dey will say, 'Old Charlie he been all doze time tell a blame *lie!* He ain't no kin to his old grace-gran-muzzer, not a blame bit! He don't got nary drop of De Charleu blood to save his blame low-down old Injin soul!' No, sare! What I want wid money, den? No, sare! My place for yours!"

He turned to go into the house, just too soon to see the Colonel make an ugly whisk at him with his riding-whip. Then the Colonel, too, moved off.

Two or three times over, as he ambled homeward, laughter broke through his annoyance, as he recalled old Charlie's family pride and the presumption of his offer. Yet each time he could but think better of—not the offer to swap, but the preposterous ancestral loyalty. It was so much better than he could have expected from his "low-down" relative, and not unlike his own whim withal—the proposition which went with it was forgiven.

This last defeat bore so harshly on the master of Belles Demoiselles, that the daughters, reading chagrin in his face, began to repent. They loved their father as daughters can, and when they saw their pretended dejection harassing him seriously they restrained their complaints, displayed more than ordinary tenderness, and heroically and ostentatiously concluded there was no place like Belles Demoiselles. But the new mood touched him more than the old, and only refined his discontent. Here was a man, rich without the care of riches, free from any real trouble, happiness as native to his house as perfume to his garden, deliberately, as it were with premeditated malice, taking joy by the shoulder and bidding her be gone to town, whither he might easily have followed, only that the very same ancestral nonsense that kept Injin Charlie from selling the old place for twice its value prevented him from choosing any other spot for a city home.

But by and by the charm of nature and the merry hearts around him prevailed; the fit of exalted sulks passed off, and after a

while the year flared up at Christmas, flickered, and went out.

New Year came and passed; the beautiful garden of Belles Demoiselles put on its spring attire; the seven fair sisters moved from rose to rose; the cloud of discontent had warmed into invisible vapor in the rich sunlight of family affection, and on the common memory the only scar of last year's wound was old Charlie's sheer impertinence in crossing the caprice of the De Charleus. The cup of gladness seemed to fill with the filling of the river.

How high that river was! Its tremendous current rolled and tumbled and spun along, hustling the long funeral flotillas of drift,—and how near shore it came! Men were out day and night, watching the levee. On windy nights even the old Colonel took part, and grew light-hearted with occupation and excitement, as every minute the river threw a white arm over the levee's top, as though it would vault over. But all held fast, and, as the summer drifted in, the water sunk down into its banks and looked quite incapable of harm.

On a summer afternoon of uncommon mildness, old Colonel Jean Albert Henri Joseph De Charleu-Marot, being in a mood for reverie, slipped the custody of his feminine rulers and sought the crown of the levee, where it was his wont to promenade. Presently he sat upon a stone bench,—a favorite seat. Before him lay his broad-spread fields; near by, his lordly mansion; and being still,—perhaps by female contact,—somewhat sentimental, he fell to musing on his past. It was hardly worthy to be proud of. All its morning was reddened with mad frolic, and far toward the meridian it was marred with elegant rioting. Pride had kept him well-nigh useless, and despised the honors won by valor; gaming had dimmed prosperity; death had taken his heavenly wife; voluptuous ease had mortgaged his lands; and yet his house still stood, his sweet-smelling fields were still fruitful, his name was fame enough; and yonder and yonder, among the trees and flowers, like angels walking in Eden, were the seven goddesses of his only worship.

Just then a slight sound behind him brought him to his feet. He cast his eyes anxiously to the outer edge of the little

strip of bank between the levee's base and the river. There was nothing visible. He paused, with his ear toward the water, his face full of frightened expectation. Ha! There came a single splashing sound, like some great beast slipping into the river, and little waves in a wide semi-circle came out from under the bank and spread over the water.

"My God!"

He plunged down the levee and bounded through the low weeds to the edge of the bank. It was sheer, and the water about four feet below. He did not stand quite on the edge, but fell upon his knees a couple of yards away, wringing his hands, moaning and weeping, and staring through his watery eyes at a fine, long crevice just discernible under the matted grass,¹ and curving outward on either hand toward the river.

"My God!" he sobbed aloud; "my God!" and even while he called, his God answered: the tough Bermuda grass stretched and snapped, the crevice slowly became a gape, and softly, gradually, with no sound but the closing of the water at last, a ton or more of earth settled into the boiling eddy and disappeared.

At the same instant a pulse of the breeze brought from the garden behind, the joyous, thoughtless laughter of the fair mistresses of Belles Demoiselles.

The old Colonel sprang up and clambered over the levee. Then forcing himself to a more composed movement he hastened into the house and ordered his horse.

"Tell my children to make merry while I am gone," he left word. "I shall be back to-night," and the horse's hoofs clattered down a by-road leading to the city.

"Charlie," said the planter, riding up to a window, from which the old man's nightcap was thrust out, "what you say, Charlie,—my house for yours, eh, Charlie—what you say?"

"Ello!" said Charlie; "from where you come from dis time of to-night?"

"I come from the Exchange in St. Louis Street." (A small fraction of the truth.)

"What you want?" said matter-of-fact Charlie.

"I come to trade."

The low-down relative drew the worsted

off his ears. "Oh! yass," he said with an uncertain air.

"Well, old man Charlie, what you say: my house for yours,—like you said,—eh, Charlie?"

"I dunno," said Charlie; "it's nearly mine now. Why you don't stay dare you-se'f?"

"*Because I don't want!*" said the Colonel savagely. "Is dat reason enough for you? You better take me in de notion, old man, I tell you,—yes!"

Charlie never winced; but how his answer delighted the Colonel! Quoth Charlie:

"I don't care—I take him!—*mais*, possession give right off."

"Not the whole plantation, Charlie; only"—

"I don't care," said Charlie; "we easy can fix dat. *Mais*, what for you don't want to keep him? I don't want him. You better keep him."

"Don't you try to make no fool of me, old man," cried the planter.

"Oh, no!" said the other. "Oh, no! but you make a fool of yourself, ain't it?"

The dumbfounded Colonel stared; Charlie went on:

"Yass! Belles Demoiselles is more wort' dan tree block like dis one. I pass by dare since two weeks. Oh, pritty Belles Demoiselles! De cane was wave in de wind, de garden smell like a bouquet, de white-cap was jump up and down on de river; seven *belles demoiselles* was ridin' on horses. 'Pritty, pritty, pritty!' says old Charlie. Ah! *Monsieur le père*, 'ow 'appy, 'appy, 'appy!"

"Yass!" he continued—the Colonel still staring—"le Compte De Charleu have two familie. One was low-down Choctaw, one was high up *noblesse*. He gave the low-down Choctaw dis old rat-hole; he give Belles Demoiselles to you gran-fozzer; and now you don't be *satisfait*. What I'll do wid Belles Demoiselles? She'll break me in two years, yass. And what you'll do wid old Charlie's house, eh? You'll tear her down and make you-se'f a blame old fool. I rather wouldn't trade!"

The planter caught a big breathful of anger, but Charlie went straight on:

"I rather wouldn't, *mais* I will do it for you;—just the same, like *Monsieur le*

Compte would say, 'Charlie, you old fool, I want to shange houses wid you.'"

So long as the Colonel suspected irony he was angry, but as Charlie seemed, after all, to be certainly in earnest, he began to feel conscience-stricken. He was by no means a tender man, but his lately-discovered misfortune had unhinged him, and this strange, undeserved, disinterested family fealty on the part of Charlie touched his heart. And should he still try to lead him into the pitfall he had dug? He hesitated;—no, he would show him the place by broad daylight, and if he chose to overlook the "caving bank," it would be his own fault;—a trade's a trade.

"Come," said the planter, "come at my house to-night; to-morrow we look at the place before breakfast, and finish the trade."

"For what?" said Charlie.

"Oh, because I got to come in town in the morning."

"I don't want," said Charlie. "How I'm goin' to come dere?"

"I git you a horse at the liberty stable."

"Well—anyhow—I don't care—I'll go." And they went.

When they had ridden a long time, and were on the road darkened by hedges of Cherokee rose, the Colonel called behind him to the "low-down" scion:

"Keep the road, old man."

"Eh?"

"Keep the road."

"Oh, yes; all right; I keep my word; we don't goin' to play no tricks, eh?"

But the Colonel seemed not to hear. His ungenerous design was beginning to be hateful to him. Not only old Charlie's unprovoked goodness was prevailing; the eulogy on Belles Demoiselles had stirred the depths of an intense love for his beautiful home. True, if he held to it, the caving of the bank, at its present fearful speed, would let the house into the river within three months; but were it not better to lose it so, than sell his birthright? Again,—coming back to the first thought,—to betray his own blood! It was only Injin Charlie; but had not the De Charleu blood just spoken out in him? Unconsciously he groaned.

After a time they struck a path approaching the plantation in the rear, and a little after, passing from behind a clump of live-oaks, they came in sight of the villa. It

looked so like a gem, shining through its dark grove, so like a great glow-worm in the dense foliage, so significant of luxury and gayety, that the poor master, from an overflowing heart, groaned again.

"What?" asked Charlie.

The Colonel only drew his rein, and, dismounting mechanically, contemplated the sight before him. The high, arched doors and windows were thrown wide to the summer air; from every opening the bright light of numerous candelabra darted out upon the sparkling foliage of magnolia and bay, and here and there in the spacious verandas a colored lantern swayed in the gentle breeze. A sound of revel fell on the ear, the music of harps; and across one window, brighter than the rest, flitted, once or twice, the shadows of dancers. But oh! the shadows flitting across the heart of the fair mansion's master!

"Old Charlie," said he, gazing fondly at his house, "You and me is both old, eh?"

"Yaas," said the stolid Charlie.

"And we has both been bad enough in our time, eh, Charlie?"

Charlie, surprised at the tender tone, repeated "Yaas."

"And you and me is mighty close?"

"Blame close, yaas."

"But you never know me to cheat, old man!"

"No,"—impassively.

"And do you think I would cheat you now?"

"I dunno," said Charlie. "I don't believe."

"Well, old man, old man,"—his voice began to quiver,—*"I sha'n't cheat you now. My God!—old man, I tell you—you better not make the trade!"*

"Because for what?" asked Charlie in plain anger; but both looked quickly toward the house! The Colonel tossed his hands wildly in the air, rushed forward a step or two, and giving one fearful scream of agony and fright, fell forward on his face in the path. Old Charlie stood transfixed with horror. Belles Demoiselles, the realm of maiden beauty, the home of merriment, the house of dancing, all in the tremor and glow of pleasure, suddenly sunk, with one short, wild wail of terror—sunk, sunk, down, down, down, into the merciless, unfathomable flood of the Mississippi.

Twelve long months were midnight to the mind of the childless father; when they were only half gone, he took his bed; and every day, and every night, old Charlie, the "low-down," the "fool," watched him tenderly, tended him lovingly, for the sake of his name, his misfortunes, and his broken heart. No woman's step crossed the floor of the sick-chamber, whose western dormer-windows overpeered the dingy architecture of old Charlie's block; Charlie and a skilled physician, the one all interest, the other all gentleness, hope, and patience—these only entered by the door; but by the window came in a sweet-scented evergreen vine, transplanted from the caving bank of Belles Demoiselles. It caught the rays of sunset in its flowery net and let them softly in upon the sick man's bed; gathered the glancing beams of the moon at midnight, and often wakened the sleeper to look, with his mindless eyes, upon their pretty silver fragments strewn upon the floor.

By and by there seemed—there was—a twinkling dawn of returning reason. Slowly, peacefully, with an increase unseen from day to day, the light of reason came into the eyes, and speech became coherent; but withal there came a failing of the wrecked body, and the doctor said that monsieur was both better and worse.

One evening, as Charlie sat by the vine-clad window with his fireless pipe in his hand, the old Colonel's eyes fell full upon his own, and rested there.

"Charl—," he said with an effort, and his delighted nurse hastened to the bedside and bowed his best ear. There was an unsuccessful effort or two, and then he whispered, smiling with sweet sadness,—

"We didn't trade."

The truth, in this case, was a secondary matter to Charlie; the main point was to give a pleasing answer. So he nodded his head decidedly, as who should say—"Oh yes, we did, it was a bona-fide swap!" but when he saw the smile vanish, he tried the other expedient and shook his head with still more vigor, to signify that they had not so much as approached a bargain; and the smile returned.

Charlie wanted to see the vine recognized. He stepped backward to the window with

a broad smile, shook the foliage, nodded and looked smart.

"I know," said the Colonel, with beaming eyes, "—many weeks."

The next day—

"Charl—"

The best ear went down.

"Send for a priest."

The priest came, and was alone with him a whole afternoon. When he left, the patient was very haggard and exhausted, but smiled and would not suffer the crucifix to be removed from his breast.

One more morning came. Just before

dawn Charlie, lying on a pallet in the room, thought he was called, and came to the bedside.

"Old man," whispered the failing invalid, "is it caving yet?"

Charlie nodded.

"It won't pay you out."

"Oh, dat makes not'ing," said Charlie. Two big tears rolled down his brown face.

"Dat makes not'in."

The Colonel whispered once more:

"*Mes belles demoiselles!* in paradise;—in the garden—I shall be with them at sunrise"; and so he was.

LAFCADIO HEARN (1850-1904)

Hearn was born on one of the Ionian Islands—one which the modern Greeks call Levkas, or Lefcada (hence his name)—on 27 June, 1850. His father came of an English family which had been settled for a century and a half in Ireland. He was a surgeon-major in the British army, attached to a regiment which in the late 1840's was ordered to the Ionian Islands (then held by Great Britain) for garrison duty. There he fell in love with a Greek girl, whom he succeeded in marrying despite the violent opposition of her family. Lafcadio was the second of three sons born to them. In 1856 the surgeon-major returned to Ireland with his family; but in less than a year Hearn's mother fled back to her native land, made desperately unhappy not only by her strange surroundings in Ireland but also by her husband's treatment of her. The marriage was annulled, the surgeon-major at once married again, Lafcadio was adopted by a great-aunt who took him to Wales, and he never afterwards saw either his younger brother (his elder brother had died at birth), or his father, or his mother. He was an abnormally sensitive child—and man—instinctively a lover of the beautiful, sensuous, passionate, imaginative, the creature of strange moods, ready to endow those whom he loved with all the attributes of perfection and equally bitter in his inevitable disillusionments and enmities. He was a child who needed sympathy and understanding if ever any child did, while his great-aunt was a pious Roman Catholic whose affairs were directed and whose money was spent by priests, so that from the beginning there was a tacit opposition between the two which was bound sooner or later to end in a break. And thus it did end when Hearn was sixteen or seventeen, though meanwhile his aunt made possible some years of study in several Catholic schools. An accident during a game at the last school which Hearn attended caused him (in his sixteenth year) to become totally blind in his left eye. He was probably near-sighted from birth, and his eyes were unusually sensitive, if not weak. In the course of time his right eye became somewhat enlarged because of the strain it had to bear, and his near-sightedness rapidly increased, so that he had to use a very heavy magnifying glass, and even then could see distinctly only by fairly burying his face in an object.

It is not known precisely how or when the break came between Hearn and his great-aunt, but it must have occurred not long after the accident to his eye. He is thought to have spent about two years in London, alone, friendless, and suffering from the direst poverty, before he somehow found the means of crossing over to New York in 1869. There his poverty and loneliness were as unrelieved as in London, but he managed after a time to make his way to Cincinnati, where he found employment as a typesetter and proof-reader, and later as a reporter for the *Inquirer*. The editors of this newspaper by accident made the discovery that their shy, strange-looking young employee was a painstaking artist in words, with a remarkable power for vivid and colorful descriptive writing which he delighted to exercise upon subjects terrible or horrible in character. Thus his place in journalism was made secure, even in spite of the difficulties he was bound to keep creating for himself. In time he drifted from the *Inquirer* to other Cincinnati newspapers, and in 1877 he departed for New Orleans. One reason for his departure was the universal condemnation which greeted his quixotic attempt to marry a mulatto girl, Althea Foley, because he had formed a connection with her and thought marriage due her. She had been, it would appear, the one person in Cincinnati who had given Hearn food and warmth and sympathy when he had most needed them, and, in addition, he did not then, nor until much later, understand the reasons behind American race-prejudice, but thought it a cruel wrong which ought to be combated. However, in any event Hearn would not long have remained in one place. He felt irresistibly the call of the remote and the strange, and he was born a wanderer. He loved the warmth and color and melancholy beauty of New Orleans after his experience of the trying climate and alien atmosphere of Cincinnati, and he there readily found journalistic employment which gave him an excellent opportunity to develop and perfect his literary artistry, partly through careful and discriminating translation from the French; but, nevertheless, as early as 1884, while he was on a visit to Grande Isle in the Gulf of Mexico, he was writing: "One *lives* here. In New Orleans one only exists." To Grande Isle he returned more than once, and it became the scene of his tale entitled *Chita* (printed in the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*; several years later, 1889, published in book-form), which was his earliest notable piece of original work. Partly because of the excellence of this tale he obtained in 1887 a commission from Messrs. Harper and Brothers which took him to the West Indies, where

he remained in all about two years, writing for *Harper's Magazine* the sketches which were later (1890) gathered into a book entitled *Two Years in the French West Indies*.

In 1889, when Hearn was in New York, he was hoping to return to the West Indies and to go on to explore the exotic possibilities of South America; but, instead, he agreed to a proposal that he should make a journey to Japan, and he left in the spring of 1890. He intended to remain in Japan only a few months, but things so turned out that he lived there until his death on 26 September, 1904. Immediately upon his arrival he quarreled with the Harpers, considering that the terms of his agreement with them were grossly unjust, and abandoned journalistic work. He secured a post in a school, and within a few months definitely threw in his lot with Japan by marrying a Japanese woman, Setsu Koizumi. During the remainder of his life he taught in several schools or universities, save for two intervals when he devoted his time wholly to writing. In 1894 he published *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* (2 vols.), the first of the series of works in which he attempted to interpret Japan and far Eastern thought to Western minds. There followed: *Out of the East, Reveries and Studies in New Japan* (1895); *Kokoro, Hints and Echoes of Japanese Inner Life* (1896); *Gleanings in Buddha-Fields, Studies of Hand and Soul in the Far East* (1897); *Exotics and Retrospectives* (1898); *In Ghostly Japan* (1899); *Shadowings* (1900); *A Japanese Miscellany* (1901); *Japanese Fairy Tales* (4 vols., 1902, published in Tokyo); *Kotto, Being Japanese Curios, with Sundry Cobwebs* (1902); *Kwaidan, Stories and Studies of Strange Things* (1904); *Japan, An Attempt at Interpretation* (1904); and *The Romance of the Milky Way, and Other Studies and Stories* (1905). In form these studies are classics of their kind, and classics without rivals in American literature. Some aspects of the substance of Hearn's efforts in what he himself felt to be the ultimately impossible task of expounding the East to the West are discussed in Mr. P. E. More's essay on Hearn reprinted in this volume. In recent years the list of Hearn's works has been increased by the publication of several volumes containing lectures—derived from a student's notes—which he delivered in Japan.

FUJI-NO-YAMA¹

Kité miréba,
Sahodo madé nashi,
Fuji no Yama!

Seen on close approach, the mountain of Fuji does not come up to expectation.—*Japanese proverbial philosophy*.

THE most beautiful sight in Japan, and certainly one of the most beautiful in the world, is the distant apparition of Fuji on cloudless days,—more especially days of spring and autumn, when the greater part of the peak is covered with late or with early snows. You can seldom distinguish the snowless base, which remains the same color as the sky: you perceive only the white cone seeming to hang in heaven; and the Japanese comparison of its shape to an inverted half-open fan is made wonderfully exact by the fine streaks that spread downward from the notched top, like shadows of fan-ribs. Even lighter than a fan the vision appears,—rather the ghost or dream of a

fan;—yet the material reality a hundred miles away is grandiose among the mountains of the globe. Rising to a height of nearly 12,500 feet, Fuji is visible from thirteen provinces of the Empire. Nevertheless it is one of the easiest of lofty mountains to climb; and for a thousand years it has been scaled every summer by multitudes of pilgrims. For it is not only a sacred mountain, but the most sacred mountain of Japan,—the holiest eminence of the land that is called Divine,—the Supreme Altar of the Sun;—and to ascend it at least once in a life-time is the duty of all who reverence the ancient gods. So from every district of the Empire pilgrims annually wend their way to Fuji; and in nearly all the provinces there are pilgrim-societies—*Fuji-Kō*,—organized for the purpose of aiding those desiring to visit the sacred peak. If this act of faith cannot be performed by everybody in person, it can at least be performed by proxy. Any hamlet, however remote, can occasionally send one representative to pray before the shrine of the divinity of Fuji, and to salute the rising sun from that sublime eminence. Thus a single company of Fuji-pilgrims may be composed of men from a hundred different settlements.

By both of the national religions Fuji is held in reverence. The Shintō deity of

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Fuji is the beautiful goddess Ko-no-hana-saku-ya-himé,—she who brought forth her children in fire without pain, and whose name signifies “Radiant-blooming-as-the-flowers-of-the-trees,” or, according to some commentators, “Causing-the-flowers-to-blossom-brightly.” On the summit is her temple; and in ancient books it is recorded that mortal eyes have beheld her hovering, like a luminous cloud, above the verge of the crater. Her viewless servants watch and wait by the precipices to hurl down whomsoever presumes to approach her shrine with unpurified heart. . . . Buddhism loves the grand peak because its form is like the white bud of the Sacred Flower,—and because the eight cusps of its top, like the eight petals of the Lotos, symbolize the Eight Intelligences of Perception, Purpose, Speech, Conduct, Living, Effort, Mindfulness, and Contemplation.

But the legends and traditions about Fuji, the stories of its rising out of the earth in a single night,—of the shower of pierced-jewels once flung down from it,—of the first temple built upon its summit eleven hundred years ago,—of the Luminous Maiden that lured to the crater an Emperor who was never seen afterward, but is still worshiped at a little shrine erected on the place of his vanishing,—of the sand that daily rolled down by pilgrim feet nightly reascends to its former position,—have not all these things been written in books? There is really very little left for me to tell about Fuji except my own experience of climbing it.

I made the ascent by way of Gotemba,—the least picturesque, but perhaps also the least difficult of the six or seven routes open to choice. Gotemba is a little village chiefly consisting of pilgrim-inns. You reach it from Tōkyō in about three hours by the Tōkaidō railway, which rises for miles as it approaches the neighborhood of the mighty volcano. Gotemba is considerably more than two thousand feet above the sea, and therefore comparatively cool in the hottest season. The open country about it slopes to Fuji; but the slope is so gradual that the table-land seems almost level to the eye. From Gotemba in perfectly clear weather the mountain looks uncomfortably near,—formidable by proximity,—though actually

miles away. During the rainy season it may appear and disappear alternately many times in one day,—like an enormous specter. But on the gray August morning when I entered Gotemba as a pilgrim, the landscape was muffled in vapors; and Fuji was totally invisible. I arrived too late to attempt the ascent on the same day; but I made my preparations at once for the day following, and engaged a couple of *gōriki* (“strong-pull men”), or experienced guides. I felt quite secure on seeing their broad honest faces and sturdy bearing. They supplied me with a pilgrim-staff, heavy blue *tabi* (that is to say, cleft-stockings, to be used with sandals), a straw hat shaped like Fuji, and the rest of a pilgrim’s outfit;—telling me to be ready to start with them at four o’clock in the morning.

What is hereafter set down consists of notes taken on the journey, but afterwards amended and expanded,—for notes made while climbing are necessarily hurried and imperfect.

I

August 24th, 1897.

From strings stretched above the balcony upon which my inn-room opens, hundreds of towels are hung like flags,—blue towels and white, having printed upon them in Chinese characters the names of pilgrim-companies and of the divinity of Fuji. These are gifts to the house, and serve as advertisements. . . . Raining from a uniformly gray sky. Fuji always invisible.

August 25th.

3:30 a. m.—No sleep;—tumult all night of parties returning late from the mountain, or arriving for the pilgrimage;—constant clapping of hands to summon servants;—banqueting and singing in the adjoining chambers, with alarming bursts of laughter every few minutes. . . . Breakfast of soup, fish, and rice. *Gōriki* arrive in professional costume, and find me ready. Nevertheless they insist that I shall undress again and put on heavy underclothing;—warning me that even when it is *Doyō* (the period of greatest summer heat) at the foot of the mountain, it is *Daikan* (the period of greatest winter cold) at the top. Then they start in advance, carrying provisions and bundles of heavy clothing. . . . A *kuruma* waits for

me, with three runners,—two to pull, and one to push, as the work will be hard uphill. By *kuruma* I can go to the height of five thousand feet.

Morning black and slightly chill, with fine rain; but I shall soon be above the rain-clouds. . . . The lights of the town vanish behind us;—the *kuruma* is rolling along a country-road. Outside of the swinging penumbra made by the paper-lantern of the foremost runner, nothing is clearly visible; but I can vaguely distinguish silhouettes of trees and, from time to time, of houses,—peasants' houses with steep roofs.

Gray wan light slowly suffuses the moist air;—day is dawning through drizzle. . . . Gradually the landscape defines with its colors. The way lies through thin woods. Occasionally we pass houses with high thatched roofs that look like farmhouses; but cultivated land is nowhere visible. . . .

Open country with scattered clumps of trees,—larch and pine. Nothing in the horizon but scraggy tree-tops above what seems to be the rim of a vast down. No sign whatever of Fuji. . . . For the first time I notice that the road is black,—black sand and cinders apparently, volcanic cinders: the wheels of the *kuruma* and the feet of the runners sink into it with a crunching sound.

The rain has stopped, and the sky becomes a clearer gray. . . . The trees decrease in size and number as we advance.

What I have been taking for the horizon, in front of us, suddenly breaks open, and begins to roll smokily away to left and right. In the great rift part of a dark-blue mass appears,—a portion of Fuji. Almost at the same moment the sun pierces the clouds behind us; but the road now enters a copse covering the base of a low ridge, and the view is cut off. . . . Halt at a little house among the trees,—a pilgrims' resting-place, —and there find the *gōriki*, who have advanced much more rapidly than my runners, waiting for us. Buy eggs, which a *gōriki* rolls up in a narrow strip of straw matting;—tying the matting tightly with straw cord

between the eggs,—so that the string of eggs has somewhat the appearance of a string of sausages. . . . Hire a horse.

Sky clears as we proceed;—white sunlight floods everything. Road reascends; and we emerge again on the moorland. And, right in front, Fuji appears,—naked to the summit,—stupendous,—startling as if newly risen from the earth. Nothing could be more beautiful. A vast blue cone,—warm-blue, almost violet through the vapors not yet lifted by the sun,—with two white streaklets near the top which are great gullies full of snow, though they look from here scarcely an inch long. But the charm of the apparition is much less the charm of color than of symmetry,—a symmetry of beautiful bending lines with a curve like the curve of a cable stretched over a space too wide to allow of pulling taut. (This comparison did not at once suggest itself: The first impression given me by the grace of those lines was an impression of femininity;—I found myself thinking of some exquisite sloping of shoulders towards the neck.) I can imagine nothing more difficult to draw at sight. But the Japanese artist, through his marvelous skill with the writing-brush,—the skill inherited from generations of calligraphists,—easily faces the riddle: he outlines the silhouette with two flowing strokes made in the fraction of a second, and manages to hit the exact truth of the curves,—much as a professional archer might hit a mark, without consciously taking aim, through long exact habit of hand and eye.

II

I see the *gōriki* hurrying forward far away,—one of them carrying the eggs round his neck! . . . Now there are no more trees worthy of the name,—only scattered stunted growths resembling shrubs. The black road curves across a vast grassy down; and here and there I see large black patches in the green surface,—bare spaces of ashes and scoriæ; showing that this thin green skin covers some enormous volcanic deposit of recent date. . . . As a matter of history, all this district was buried two yards deep in 1707 by an eruption from the side of Fuji. Even in far-off Tōkyō the rain of ashes

covered roofs to a depth of sixteen centimeters. There are no farms in this region, because there is little true soil; and there is no water. But volcanic destruction is not eternal destruction; eruptions at last prove fertilizing; and the divine "Princess-who-causes-the-flowers-to-blossom-brightly" will make this waste to smile again in future hundreds of years.

. . . The black openings in the green surface become more numerous and larger. A few dwarf-shrubs still mingle with the coarse grass. . . . The vapors are lifting; and Fuji is changing color. It is no longer a glowing blue, but a dead somber blue. Irregularities previously hidden by rising ground appear in the lower part of the grand curves. One of these to the left,—shaped like a camel's hump,—represents the focus of the last great eruption.

The land is not now green with black patches, but black with green patches; and the green patches dwindle visibly in the direction of the peak. The shrubby growths have disappeared. The wheels of the kuruma, and the feet of the runners sink deeper into the volcanic sand. . . . The horse is now attached to the kuruma with ropes, and I am able to advance more rapidly. Still the mountain seems far away; but we are really running up its flank at a height of more than five thousand feet.

Fuji has ceased to be blue of any shade. It is black,—charcoal-black,—a frightful extinct heap of visible ashes and cinders and slaggy lava. . . . Most of the green has disappeared. Likewise all of the illusion. The tremendous naked black reality,—always becoming more sharply, more grimly, more atrociously defined,—is a stupefaction, a nightmare. . . . Above—miles above—the snow patches glare and gleam against that blackness,—hideously. I think of a gleam of white teeth I once saw in a skull,—a woman's skull,—otherwise burnt to a sooty crisp.

So one of the fairest, if not the fairest of earthly visions, resolves itself into a spectacle of horror and death. . . . But have not all human ideals of beauty, like the beauty of Fuji seen from afar, been created by forces of death and pain?—are not all, in their

kind, but composites of death, beheld in retrospective through the magical haze of inherited memory?

III

The green has utterly vanished;—all is black. There is no road,—only the broad waste of black sand sloping and narrowing up to those dazzling, grinning patches of snow. But there is a track,—a yellowish track made by thousands and thousands of cast-off sandals of straw (*waraji*), flung aside by pilgrims. Straw sandals quickly wear out upon this black grit; and every pilgrim carries several pair for the journey. Had I to make the ascent alone, I could find the path by following that wake of broken sandals,—a yellow streak zigzagging up out of sight across the blackness.

6:40 a.m.—We reach Tarōbō, first of the ten stations on the ascent: height, 6000 feet. The station is a large wooden house, of which two rooms have been fitted up as a shop for the sale of staves, hats, raincoats, sandals,—everything pilgrims need. I find there a peripatetic photographer offering for sale photographs of the mountain which are really very good as well as very cheap. . . . Here the gōriki take their first meal; and I rest. The kuruma can go no further; and I dismiss my three runners, but keep the horse,—a docile and surefooted creature; for I can venture to ride him up to *Ni-gō-goséki*, or Station No. 2½.

Start for No. 2½ up the slant of black sand, keeping the horse at a walk. No. 2½ is shut up for the season. . . . Slope now becomes steep as a stairway, and further riding would be dangerous. Alight and make ready for the climb. Cold wind blowing so strongly that I have to tie on my hat tightly. One of the gōriki unwinds from about his waist a long stout cotton girdle, and giving me one end to hold, passes the other over his shoulder for the pull. Then he proceeds over the sand at an angle, with a steady short step, and I follow; the other guide keeping closely behind me to provide against any slip.

There is nothing very difficult about this climbing, except the weariness of walking

through sand and cinders: it is like walking over dunes. . . . We mount by zigzags. The sand moves with the wind; and I have a slightly nervous sense—the feeling only, not the perception; for I keep my eyes on the sand,—of height growing above depth. . . . Have to watch my steps carefully, and to use my staff constantly, as the slant is now very steep. . . . We are in a white fog,—passing through clouds! Even if I wished to look back, I could see nothing through this vapor; but I have not the least wish to look back. The wind has suddenly ceased—cut off, perhaps, by a ridge; and there is a silence that I remember from West Indian days: the Peace of High Places. It is broken only by the crunching of the ashes beneath our feet. I can distinctly hear my heart beat. . . . The guide tells me that I stoop too much,—orders me to walk upright, and always in stepping to put down the heel first. I do this, and find it relieving. But climbing through this tiresome mixture of ashes and sand begins to be trying. I am perspiring and panting. The guide bids me keep my honorable mouth closed, and breathe only through my honorable nose.

We are out of the fog again. . . . All at once I perceive above us, at a little distance, something like a square hole in the face of the mountain,—a door! It is the door of the third station,—a wooden hut half-buried in black drift. . . . How delightful to squat again,—even in a blue cloud of wood-smoke and under smoke-blackened rafters! Time, 8:30 a.m. Height, 7,085 feet.

In spite of the wood-smoke the station is comfortable enough inside; there are clean mattings and even kneeling-cushions. No windows, of course, nor any other opening than the door; for the building is half-buried in the flank of the mountain. We lunch. . . . The station-keeper tells us that recently a student walked from Gotemba to the top of the mountain and back again—in geta! Geta are heavy wooden sandals, or clogs, held to the foot only by a thong passing between the great and the second toe. The feet of that student must have been made of steel!

Having rested, I go out to look around. Far below white clouds are rolling over the

landscape in huge fluffy wreaths. Above the hut, and actually trickling down over it, the sable cone soars to the sky. But the amazing sight is the line of the monstrous slope to the left,—a line that now shows no curve whatever, but shoots down below the clouds, and up to the gods only know where (for I cannot see the end of it), straight as a tightened bowstring. The right flank is rocky and broken. But as for the left,—I never dreamed it possible that a line so absolutely straight and smooth, and extending for so enormous a distance at such an amazing angle, could exist even in a volcano. That stupendous pitch gives me a sense of dizziness, and a totally unfamiliar feeling of wonder. Such regularity appears unnatural, frightful; seems even artificial,—but artificial upon a superhuman and demoniac scale. I imagine that to fall thence from above would be to fall for leagues. Absolutely nothing to take hold of. But the gōriki assure me that there is no danger on that slope: it is all soft sand.

IV

Though drenched with perspiration by the exertion of the first climb, I am already dry, and cold. . . . Up again. . . . The ascent is at first through ashes and sand as before; but presently large stones begin to mingle with the sand; and the way is always growing steeper. . . . I constantly slip. There is nothing firm, nothing resisting to stand upon: loose stones and cinders roll down at every step. . . . If a big lava-block were to detach itself from above! . . . In spite of my helpers and of the staff, I continually slip, and am all in perspiration again. Almost every stone that I tread upon turns under me. How is it that no stone ever turns under the feet of the gōriki? *They* never slip,—never make a false step,—never seem less at ease than they would be in walking over a matted floor. Their small brown broad feet always poise upon the shingle at exactly the right angle. They are heavier men than I; but they move lightly as birds. . . . Now I have to stop for rest every half-a-dozen steps. . . . The line of broken straw sandals follows the zigzags we take. . . . At last—at last another door in the face of the mountain. Enter the fourth

station, and fling myself down upon the mats. Time, 10:30 *a.m.* Height, only 7,937 feet;—yet it seemed such a distance!

Off again. . . . Way worse and worse. . . . Feel a new distress due to the rarefaction of the air. Heart beating as in a high fever. . . . Slope has become very rough. It is no longer soft ashes and sand mixed with stones, but stones only,—fragments of lava, lumps of pumice, scoriæ of every sort, all angled as if freshly broken with a hammer. All would likewise seem to have been expressly shaped so as to turn upside-down when trodden upon. Yet I must confess that they never turn under the feet of the *gōriki*. . . . The cast-off sandals strew the slope in ever-increasing numbers. . . . But for the *gōriki* I should have had ever so many bad tumbles: they cannot prevent me from slipping; but they never allow me to fall. Evidently I am not fitted to climb mountains. . . . Height, 8,659 feet—but the fifth station is shut up! Must keep zigzagging on to the next. Wonder how I shall ever be able to reach it! . . . And there are people still alive who have climbed Fuji three and four times, *for pleasure!* . . . Dare not look back. See nothing but the black stones always turning under me, and the bronzed feet of those marvelous *gōriki* who never slip, never pant, and never perspire. . . . Staff begins to hurt my hand. . . . *Gōriki* push and pull: it is shameful of me, I know, to give them so much trouble. . . . Ah! sixth station!—may all the myriads of the gods bless my *gōriki!* Time, 2:07 *p.m.* Height, 9,317 feet.

Resting, I gaze through the doorway at the abyss below. The land is now dimly visible only through rents in a prodigious wilderness of white clouds; and within these rents everything looks almost black. . . . The horizon has risen frightfully,—has expanded monstrously. . . . My *gōriki* warn me that the summit is still miles away. I have been too slow. We must hasten upward.

Certainly the zigzag is steeper than before. . . . With the stones now mingle angular rocks; and we sometimes have to flank queer black bulks that look like basalt. . . . On the right rises, out of sight, a jagged black

hideous ridge,—an ancient lava-stream. The line of the left slope still shoots up, straight as a bowstring. . . . Wonder if the way will become any steeper;—doubt whether it can possibly become any rougher. Rocks dislodged by my feet roll down soundlessly;—I am afraid to look after them. Their noiseless vanishing gives me a sensation like the sensation of falling in dreams. . . .

There is a white gleam overhead—the lowermost verge of an immense stretch of snow. . . . Now we are skirting a snow-filled gully,—the lowermost of those white patches which, at first sight of the summit this morning, seemed scarcely an inch long. It will take an hour to pass it. . . . A guide runs forward, while I rest upon my staff, and returns with a large ball of snow. What curious snow! Not flaky, soft, white snow, but a mass of transparent globules,—exactly like glass beads. I eat some, and find it deliciously refreshing. . . . The seventh station is closed. How shall I get to the eighth? . . . Happily, breathing has become less difficult. . . . The wind is upon us again, and black dust with it. The *gōriki* keep close to me, and advance with caution. . . . I have to stop for rest at every turn on the path;—cannot talk for weariness. . . . I do not feel;—I am much too tired to feel. . . . How I managed it, I do not know;—but I have actually got to the eighth station! Not for a thousand millions of dollars will I go one step further to-day. Time, 4:40 *p.m.* Height, 10,693 feet.

V

It is much too cold here for rest without winter clothing; and now I learn the worth of the heavy robes provided by the guides. The robes are blue, with big white Chinese characters on the back, and are padded thickly as bedquilts; but they feel light; for the air is really like the frosty breath of February. . . . A meal is preparing;—I notice that charcoal at this elevation acts in a refractory manner, and that a fire can be maintained only by constant attention. . . . Cold and fatigue sharpen appetite: we consume a surprising quantity of *Zō-sui*,—rice boiled with eggs and a little meat.

By reason of my fatigue and of the hour, it has been decided to remain here for the night.

Tired as I am, I cannot but limp to the doorway to contemplate the amazing prospect. From within a few feet of the threshold, the ghastly slope of rocks and cinders drops down into a prodigious disk of clouds miles beneath us,—clouds of countless forms, but mostly wreathings and fluffy pilings;—and the whole huddling mass, reaching almost to the horizon, is blinding white under the sun. (By the Japanese, this tremendous cloud-expanse is well named *Wata-no-Umi*, “the Sea of Cotton.”) The horizon itself—enormously risen, phantasmally expanded—seems halfway up above the world: a wide luminous belt ringing the hollow vision. Hollow, I call it, because extreme distances below the sky-line are sky-colored and vague,—so that the impression you receive is not of being on a point under a vault, but of being upon a point rising into a stupendous blue sphere, of which this huge horizon would represent the equatorial zone. To turn away from such a spectacle is not possible. I watch and watch until the dropping sun changes the colors,—turning the Sea of Cotton into a Fleece of Gold. Half-round the horizon a yellow glory grows and burns. Here and there beneath it, through cloudrifts, colored vaguenesses define: I now see golden water, with long purple headlands reaching into it, with ranges of violet peaks thronging behind it;—these glimpses curiously resembling portions of a tinted topographical map. Yet most of the landscape is pure delusion. Even my guides, with their long experience and their eagle-sight, can scarcely distinguish the real from the unreal;—for the blue and purple and violet clouds moving under the Golden Fleece, exactly mock the outlines and the tones of distant peaks and capes: you can detect what is vapor only by its slowly shifting shape. . . . Brighter and brighter glows the gold. Shadows come from the west,—shadows flung by cloud-pile over cloud-pile; and these, like evening shadows upon snow, are violaceous blue. . . . Then orange-tones appear in the horizon; then smoldering crimson. And now the greater part of the Fleece of Gold

has changed to cotton again,—white cotton mixed with pink. . . . Stars thrill out. The cloud-waste uniformly whitens;—thickening and packing to the horizon. The west glooms. Night rises; and all things darken except that wondrous unbroken world-round of white,—the Sea of Cotton.

The station-keeper lights his lamps, kindles a fire of twigs, prepares our beds. Outside it is bitterly cold, and, with the fall of night, becoming colder. Still I cannot turn away from that astounding vision. . . . Countless stars now flicker and shiver in the blue-black sky. Nothing whatever of the material world remains visible, except the black slope of the peak before my feet. The enormous cloud-disk below continues white; but to all appearance it has become a liquidly level white, without forms,—a white flood. It is no longer the Sea of Cotton. It is a Sea of Milk, the Cosmic Sea of ancient Indian legend,—and always self-luminous, as with ghostly quickenings.

VI

Squatting by the wood fire, I listen to the *gōriki* and the station-keeper telling of strange happenings on the mountain. One incident discussed I remember reading something about in a *Tōkyō* paper: I now hear it retold by the lips of a man who figured in it as a hero.

A Japanese meteorologist named Nonaka, attempted last year the rash undertaking of passing the winter on the summit of Fuji for purposes of scientific study. It might not be difficult to winter upon the peak in a solid observatory furnished with a good stove, and all necessary comforts; but Nonaka could afford only a small wooden hut, in which he would be obliged to spend the cold season *without fire*! His young wife insisted on sharing his labors and dangers. The couple began their sojourn on the summit towards the close of September. In midwinter news was brought to Gotemba that both were dying.

Relatives and friends tried to organize a rescue-party. But the weather was frightful; the peak was covered with snow and ice; the chances of death were innumerable; and the *gōriki* would not risk their lives.

Hundreds of dollars could not tempt them. At last a desperate appeal was made to them as representatives of Japanese courage and hardihood: they were assured that to suffer a man of science to perish, without making even one plucky effort to save him, would disgrace the country;—they were told that the national honor was in their hands. This appeal brought forward two volunteers. One was a man of great strength and daring, nicknamed by his fellow-guides, *Oniguma*, “the Demon-Bear,” the other was the elder of my *gōriki*. Both believed that they were going to certain destruction. They took leave of their friends and kindred, and drank with their families the farewell cup of water,—*midzu-no-sakazuki*,—in which those about to be separated by death pledge each other. Then, after having thickly wrapped themselves in cotton-wool, and made all possible preparation for ice climbing, they started,—taking with them a brave army-surgeon who had offered his services, without fee, for the rescue. After surmounting extraordinary difficulties, the party reached the hut; but the inmates refused to open! Nonaka protested that he would rather die than face the shame of failure in his undertaking; and his wife said that she had resolved to die with her husband. Partly by forcible, and partly by gentle means, the pair were restored to a better state of mind. The surgeon administered medicines and cordials; the patients, carefully wrapped up, were strapped to the backs of the guides; and the descent was begun. My *gōriki*, who carried the lady, believes that the gods helped him on the ice-slopes. More than once, all thought themselves lost; but they reached the foot of the mountain without one serious mishap. After weeks of careful nursing, the rash young couple were pronounced out of danger. The wife suffered less, and recovered more quickly, than the husband.

The *gōriki* have cautioned me not to venture outside during the night without calling them. They will not tell me why; and their warning is peculiarly uncanny. From previous experiences during Japanese travel, I surmise that the danger implied is supernatural; but I feel that it would be useless to ask questions.

The door is closed and barred. I lie down between the guides, who are asleep in a moment, as I can tell by their heavy breathing. I cannot sleep immediately;—perhaps the fatigues and the surprises of the day have made me somewhat nervous. I look up at the rafters of the black roof,—at packages of sandals, bundles of wood, bundles of many indistinguishable kinds there stowed away or suspended, and making queer shadows in the lamplight. . . . It is terribly cold, even under my three quilts; and the sound of the wind outside is wonderfully like the sound of great surf,—a constant succession of bursting roars, each followed by a prolonged hiss. The hut, half buried under tons of rock and drift, does not move; but the sand does, and trickles down between the rafters; and small stones also move after each fierce gust, with a rattling just like the clatter of shingle in the pull of a retreating wave.

4 a.m.—Go out alone, despite last evening’s warning, but keep close to the door. There is a great and icy blowing. The Sea of Milk is unchanged: it lies far below this wind. Over it the moon is dying. . . . The guides, perceiving my absence, spring up and join me. I am reproved for not having awakened them. They will not let me stay outside alone: so I turn in with them.

Dawn: a zone of pearl grows round the world. The stars vanish; the sky brightens. A wild sky, with dark wrack drifting at an enormous height. The Sea of Milk has turned again into Cotton,—and there are wide rents in it. The desolation of the black slope,—all the ugliness of slaggy rock and angled stone, again defines. . . . Now the cotton becomes disturbed;—it is breaking up. A yellow glow runs along the east like the glare of a wind-blown fire. . . . Alas! I shall not be among the fortunate mortals able to boast of viewing from Fuji the first lifting of the sun! Heavy clouds have drifted across the horizon at the point where he should rise. . . . Now I know that he has risen; because the upper edges of those purple rags of cloud are burning like charcoal. But I have been so disappointed!

More and more luminous the hollow world. League-wide heapings of cottony cloud roll apart. Fearfully far-away there is a light of gold upon water: the sun here remains view-

less, but the ocean sees him. It is not a flicker, but a burnished glow;—at such a distance ripples are invisible. . . . Further and further scattering, the clouds unveil a vast gray and blue landscape;—hundreds and hundreds of miles throng into vision at once. On the right I distinguish Tōkyō bay, and Kamakura, and the holy island of Enoshima (no bigger than the dot over this letter “i”);—on the left the wilder Suruga coast, and the blue-toothed promontory of Idzu, and the place of the fishing-village where I have been summering,—the merest pin-point in that tinted dream of hill and shore. Rivers appear but as sun-gleams on spider-threads;—fishing-sails are white dust clinging to the gray-blue glass of the sea. And the picture alternately appears and vanishes while the clouds drift and shift across it, and shape themselves into spectral islands and mountains and valleys of all Elysian colors. . . .

VII

6:40 a.m.—Start for the top. . . . Hardest and roughest stage of the journey, through a wilderness of lava-blocks. The path zig-zags between ugly masses that project from the slope like black teeth. The trail of cast-away sandals is wider than ever. . . . Have to rest every few minutes. . . . Reach another long patch of the snow that looks like glass-beads, and eat some. The next station—a half-station—is closed; and the ninth has ceased to exist. . . . A sudden fear comes to me, not of the ascent, but of the prospective descent by a route which is too steep even to permit of comfortably sitting down. But the guides assure me that there will be no difficulty, and that most of the return-journey will be by another way,—over the interminable level which I wondered at yesterday,—nearly all soft sand, with very few stones. It is called the *bashiri* (“glissade”); and we are to descend at a run! . . .

All at once a family of field-mice scatter out from under my feet in panic; and the *gōriki* behind me catches one, and gives it to me. I hold the tiny shivering life for a moment to examine it, and set it free again. These little creatures have very long pale noses. How do they live in this waterless

desolation,—and at such an altitude,—especially in the season of snow? For we are now at a height of more than eleven thousand feet! The *gōriki* say that the mice find roots growing under the stones. . . .

Wilder and steeper;—for me, at least, the climbing is sometimes on all fours. There are barriers which we surmount with the help of ladders. There are fearful places with Buddhist names, such as the *Sai-no-Kawara*, or Dry Bed of the River of Souls,—a black waste strewn with heaps of rock, like those stone-piles which, in Buddhist pictures of the underworld, the ghosts of children build. . . .

Twelve thousand feet, and something,—the top! Time, 8:20 a.m. . . . Stone huts; Shintō shrine with *tōrii*; icy well, called the Spring of Gold; stone tablet bearing a Chinese poem and the design of a tiger; rough walls of lava-blocks round these things,—possibly for protection against the wind. Then the huge dead crater,—probably between a quarter of a mile and half-a-mile wide, but shallowed up to within three or four hundred feet of the verge by volcanic detritus,—a cavity horrible even in the tones of its yellow crumbling walls, streaked and stained with every hue of scorching. I perceive that the trail of straw sandals ends *in* the crater. Some hideous overhanging cusps of black lava—like the broken edges of a monstrous cicatrix—project on two sides several hundred feet above the opening; but I certainly shall not take the trouble to climb them. Yet these,—seen through the haze of a hundred miles,—through the soft illusion of blue spring-weather,—appear as the opening snowy petals of the bud of the Sacred Lotos! . . . No spot in this world can be more horrible, more atrociously dismal, than the cindered tip of the Lotos as you stand upon it.

But the view—the view for a hundred leagues,—and the light of the far faint dreamy world,—and the fairy vapors of morning,—and the marvelous wreathings of cloud: all this, and only this, consoles me for the labor and the pain. . . . Other pilgrims, earlier climbers,—poised upon the highest crag, with faces turned to the tremendous East,—are clapping their hands

in Shintō prayer, saluting the mighty Day. . . . The immense poetry of the moment enters into me with a thrill. I know that the colossal vision before me has already become a memory ineffaceable,—a memory of which no luminous detail can fade till the hour when thought itself must fade, and the dust of these eyes be mingled with the dust of the myriad million eyes that also have looked, in ages forgotten before my birth, from the summit supreme of Fuji to the Rising of the Sun.

A QUESTION IN THE ZEN TEXTS¹

I

MY friend opened a thin yellow volume of that marvelous text which proclaims at sight the patience of the Buddhist engraver. Movable Chinese types may be very useful; but the best of which they are capable is ugliness itself when compared with the beauty of the old block-printing.

"I have a queer story for you," he said.

"A Japanese story?"

"No,—Chinese."

"What is the book?"

"According to Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese characters of the title, we call it *Mu-Mon-Kwan*, which means 'The Gateless Barrier.' It is one of the books especially studied by the Zen sect, or sect of Dhyâna. A peculiarity of some of the Dhyâna texts,—this being a good example,—is that they are not explanatory. They only suggest. Questions are put; but the student must think out the answers for himself. He must *think* them out, but not write them. You know that Dhyâna represents human effort to reach, through meditation, zones of thought beyond the range of verbal expression; and any thought once narrowed into utterance loses all Dhyâna quality. . . . Well, this story is supposed to be true; but it is used only for a Dhyâna question. There are three different Chinese versions of it; and I can give you the substance of the three."

Which he did as follows:—

II

—*The story of the girl Ts'ing, which is told in the Lui-shwo-li-hwan-ki, cited by the Ching-tang-luh, and commented upon in the Wu-mu-kwan (called by the Japanese Mu-Mon-Kwan), which is a book of the Zen sect:—*

There lived in Han-yang a man called Chang-Kien, whose child-daughter, Ts'ing, was of peerless beauty. He had also a nephew called Wang-Chau,—a very handsome boy. The children played together, and were fond of each other. Once Kien jestingly said to his nephew:—"Some day I will marry you to my little daughter." Both children remembered these words; and they believed themselves thus betrothed.

When Ts'ing grew up, a man of rank asked for her in marriage; and her father decided to comply with the demand. Ts'ing was greatly troubled by this decision. As for Chau, he was so much angered and grieved that he resolved to leave home, and go to another province. The next day he got a boat ready for his journey, and after sunset, without bidding farewell to any one, he proceeded up the river. But in the middle of the night he was startled by a voice calling to him, "Wait!—it is I!"—and he saw a girl running along the bank towards the boat. It was Ts'ing. Chau was unspeakably delighted. She sprang into the boat; and the lovers found their way safely to the province of Chuh.

In the province of Chuh they lived happily for six years; and they had two children. But Ts'ing could not forget her parents, and often longed to see them again. At last she said to her husband:—"Because in former time I could not bear to break the promise made to you, I ran away with you and forsook my parents,—although knowing that I owed them all possible duty and affection. Would it not now be well to try to obtain their forgiveness?" "Do not grieve yourself about that," said Chau;—"we shall go to see them." He ordered a boat to be prepared; and a few days later he returned with his wife to Han-yang.

According to custom in such cases, the husband first went to the house of Kien, leaving Ts'ing alone in the boat. Kien welcomed his nephew with every sign of joy, and said:—

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"How much I have been longing to see you! I was often afraid that something had happened to you."

Chau answered respectfully:—

"I am distressed by the undeserved kindness of your words. It is to beg your forgiveness that I have come."

But Kien did not seem to understand. He asked:—

"To what matter do you refer?"

"I feared," said Chau, "that you were angry with me for having run away with Ts'ing. I took her with me to the province of Chuh."

"What Ts'ing was that?" asked Kien.

"Your daughter Ts'ing," answered Chau, beginning to suspect his father-in-law of some malevolent design.

"What are you talking about?" cried Kien, with every appearance of astonishment. "My daughter Ts'ing has been sick in bed all these years,—ever since the time when you went away."

"Your daughter Ts'ing," returned Chau, becoming angry, "has not been sick. She has been my wife for six years; and we have two children; and we have both returned to this place only to seek your pardon. Therefore please do not mock us!"

For a moment the two looked at each other in silence. Then Kien arose, and motioning to his nephew to follow, led the way to an inner room where a sick girl was lying. And Chau, to his utter amazement, saw the face of Ts'ing,—beautiful, but strangely thin and pale.

"She cannot speak," explained the old man; "but she can understand." And Kien said to her, laughingly:—"Chau tells me that you ran away with him, and that you gave him two children."

The sick girl looked at Chau, and smiled; but remained silent.

"Now come with me to the river," said the bewildered visitor to his father-in-law. "For I can assure you,—in spite of what I have seen in this house,—that your daughter Ts'ing is at this moment in my boat."

They went to the river; and there, indeed, was the young wife, waiting. And seeing her father, she bowed down before him, and besought his pardon.

Kien said to her:—

"If you really be my daughter, I have

nothing but love for you. Yet though you seem to be my daughter, there is something which I cannot understand. . . . Come with us to the house."

So the three proceeded towards the house. As they neared it, they saw that the sick girl,—who had not before left her bed for years,—was coming to meet them, smiling as if much delighted. And the two Ts'ings approached each other. But then—nobody could ever tell how—they suddenly melted into each other, and became one body, one person, one Ts'ing,—even more beautiful than before, and showing no sign of sickness or of sorrow.

Kien said to Chau:—

"Ever since the day of your going, my daughter was dumb, and most of the time like a person who had taken too much wine. Now I know that her spirit was absent."

Ts'ing herself said:—

"Really I never knew that I was at home. I saw Chau going away in silent anger; and the same night I dreamed that I ran after his boat. . . . But now I cannot tell which was really I,—the I that went away in the boat, or the I that stayed at home."

III

"That is the whole of the story," my friend observed. "Now there is a note about it in the *Mu-Mon-Kwan* that may interest you. This note says:—'The fifth patriarch of the Zen sect once asked a priest,—"*In the case of the separation of the spirit of the girl Ts'ing, which was the true Ts'ing?*"' It was only because of this question that the story was cited in the book. But the question is not answered. The author only remarks:—'If you can decide which was the real Ts'ing, then you will have learned that to go out of one envelope and into another is merely like putting up at an inn. But if you have not yet reached this degree of enlightenment, take heed that you do not wander aimlessly about the world. Otherwise, when Earth, Water, Fire, and Wind shall suddenly be dissipated, you will be like a crab with seven hands and eight legs, thrown into boiling water. And in that time do not say that you were never told about the *Thing*.' . . . Now the *Thing*—"

"I do not want to hear about the *Thing*,"

I interrupted,—“nor about the crab with seven hands and eight legs. I want to hear about the clothes.”

“What clothes?”

“At the time of their meeting, the two Ts’ings would have been differently dressed,—very differently, perhaps; for one was a maid, and the other a wife. Did the clothes of the two also blend together? Suppose that one had a silk robe and the other a robe of cotton, would these have mixed into a texture of silk and cotton? Suppose that one was wearing a blue girdle, and the other a yellow girdle, would the result have been a green girdle? . . . Or did one Ts’ing simply slip out of her costume, and leave it on the ground, like the cast-off shell of a cicada?”

“None of the texts say anything about the clothes,” my friend replied: “so I cannot tell you. But the subject is quite irrelevant, from the Buddhist point of view. The doctrinal question is the question of what I suppose you would call the personality of Ts’ing.”

“And yet it is not answered,” I said.

“It is best answered,” my friend replied, “by not being answered.”

“How so?”

“Because there is no such thing as personality.”

OF MOON-DESIRE ¹

I

HE was two years old when—as ordained in the law of perpetual recurrence—he asked me for the Moon.

Unwisely I protested,—

“The Moon I cannot give you because it is too high up. I cannot reach it.”

He answered:—

“By taking a very long bamboo, you probably could reach it, and knock it down.”

I said,—

“There is no bamboo long enough.”

He suggested:—

“By standing on the ridge of the roof of the house, you probably could poke it with the bamboo.”

—Whereat I found myself constrained to make some approximately truthful statements concerning the nature and position of the Moon.

This set me thinking. I thought about the strange fascination that brightness exerts upon living creatures in general,—upon insects and fishes and birds and mammals,—and tried to account for it by some inherited memory of brightness as related to food, to water, and to freedom. I thought of the countless generations of children who have asked for the Moon, and of the generations of parents who have laughed at the asking. And then I entered into the following meditation:—

Have we any right to laugh at the child’s wish for the Moon? No wish could be more natural; and as for its incongruity,—do not we, children of a larger growth, mostly nourish wishes quite as innocent,—longings that if realized could only work us woe,—such as desire for the continuance after death of that very sense-life, or individuality, which once deluded us all into wanting to play with the Moon, and often subsequently deluded us in far less pleasant ways?

Now foolish as may seem, to merely empirical reasoning, the wish of the child for the Moon, I have an idea that the highest wisdom commands us to wish for very much more than the Moon,—even for more than the Sun and the Morning-Star and all the Host of Heaven.

II

I remember when a boy lying on my back in the grass, gazing into the summer blue above me, and wishing that I could melt into it,—become a part of it. For these fancies I believe that a religious tutor was innocently responsible: he had tried to explain to me, because of certain dreamy questions, what he termed “the folly and the wickedness of pantheism,”—with the result that I immediately became a pantheist, at the tender age of fifteen. And my imaginings presently led me not only to want the sky for a playground, but also to become the sky!

Now I think that in those days I was really close to a great truth,—touching it, in fact, without the faintest suspicion of its existence.

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I mean the truth that the wish *to become* is reasonable in direct ratio to its largeness,—or, in other words, that the more you wish to be, the wiser you are; while the wish *to have* is apt to be foolish in proportion to its largeness. Cosmic law permits us very few of the countless things that we wish to have, but will help us to become all that we can possibly wish to be. Finite, and in so much feeble, is the wish to have: but infinite in puissance is the wish to become; and every mortal wish to become must eventually find satisfaction. By wanting to be, the monad makes itself the elephant, the eagle, or the man. By wanting to be, the man should become a god. Perhaps on this tiny globe, lighted only by a tenth-rate yellow sun, he will not have time to become a god; but who dare assert that his wish cannot project itself to mightier systems illuminated by vaster suns, and there reshape and invest him with the forms and powers of divinity? Who dare even say that his wish may not expand him beyond the Limits of Form, and make him one with Omnipotence? And Omnipotence, without asking, can have much brighter and bigger playthings than the Moon.

Probably everything is a mere question of wishing,—providing that we wish, not to have, but to be. Most of the sorrow of life certainly exists because of the wrong kind of wishing and because of the contemptible pettiness of the wishes. Even to wish for the absolute lordship and possession of the entire earth were a pitifully small and vulgar wish. We must learn to nourish very much bigger wishes than that! My faith is that we must wish to become the total universe with its thousands of millions of worlds,—and more than the universe, or a myriad universes,—and more even than Space and Time.

III

Possibly the power for such wishing must depend upon our comprehension of the ghostliness of substance. Once men endowed with spirit all forms and motions and utterances of Nature: stone and metal, herb and tree, cloud and wind,—the lights of heaven, the murmuring of leaves and waters, the echoes of the hills, the tumultuous speech of the sea. Then becoming wiser

in their own conceit, they likewise became of little faith; and they talked about “the Inanimate” and “the Inert,”—which are non-existent,—and discoursed of Force as distinct from Matter, and of Mind as distinct from both. Yet we now discover that the primitive fancies were, after all, closer to probable truth. We cannot indeed think of Nature to-day precisely as did our forefathers; but we find ourselves obliged to think of her in very much weirder ways; and the later revelations of our science have revitalized not a little of the primitive thought, and infused it with a new and awful beauty. And meantime those old savage sympathies with savage Nature that spring from the deepest sources of our being,—always growing with our growth, strengthening with our strength, more and more unfolding with the evolution of our higher sensibilities,—would seem destined to sublime at last into forms of cosmical emotion expanding and responding to infinitude.

Have you never thought about those immemorial feelings? . . . Have you never, when looking at some great burning, found yourself exulting without remorse in the triumph and glory of fire?—never unconsciously coveted the crumbling, splitting, iron-wrenching, granite-cracking force of its imponderable touch?—never delighted in the furious and terrible splendor of its phantasmagories,—the ravening and bickering of its dragons,—the monstrosity of its archings,—the ghostly soaring and flapping of its spires? Have you never, with a hill-wind pealing in your ears, longed to ride that wind like a ghost,—to scream round the peaks with it,—to sweep the face of the world with it? Or, watching the lifting, the gathering, the muttering rush and thunderburst of breakers, have you felt no impulse kindred to that giant motion,—no longing to leap with that wild white tossing, and to join in that mighty shout? . . . And all such ancient emotional sympathies with Nature’s familiar forces—do they not prelude, with their modern æsthetic developments, the future growth of rarer sympathies with incomparably subtler forces, and of longings to be limited only by our power to know? Know ether—shivering from star to star;—comprehend its sensitivities, its pene-

trancies, its transmutations;—and sympathies ethereal will evolve. Know the forces that spin the suns;—and already the way has been reached of becoming one with them.

And furthermore, is there no suggestion of such evolvment in the steady widening through all the centuries of the thoughts of their world-priests and poets?—in the later sense of Life-as-Unity absorbing or transforming the ancient childish sense of life-personal?—in the tone of the new rapture in world-beauty, dominating the elder worship of beauty-human?—in the larger modern joy evoked by the blossoming of dawns, the blossoming of stars,—by all quiverings of color, all shudderings of light? And is not the thing-in-itself, the detail, the appearance, being ever less and less studied for its mere power to charm, and ever more and more studied as a single character in that Infinite Riddle of which all phenomena are but ideographs?

Nay!—surely the time must come when we shall desire to be all that is, all that ever has been known,—the past and the present and the future in one,—all feeling, striving, thinking, joying, sorrowing,—and everywhere the Part,—and everywhere the Whole. And before us, with the waxing of the wish, perpetually the Infinities shall widen.

And I—even I!—by virtue of that wish, shall become all forms, all forces, all conditions: Ether, Wind, Fire, Water, Earth,—all motion visible or viewless,—all vibration named of light, of color, of sonority, of torrefaction,—all thrillings piercing substance,—all oscillations picturing in black-

ness, like the goblin-vision of the X-rays. By virtue of that wish I shall become the Source of all becoming and of all ceasing,—the Power that shapes, the Power that dissolves,—creating, with the shadows of my sleep, the life that shall vanish with my wakening. And even as phosphor-lampings in currents of midnight sea, so shall shimmer and pulse and pass, in mine Ocean of Death and Birth, the burning of billions of suns, the whirling of trillions of worlds. . . .

IV

—“Well,” said the friend to whom I read this reverie, “there is some Buddhism in your fancies—though you seem to have purposely avoided several important points of doctrine. For instance, you must know that Nirvana is never to be reached by wishing, but by *not* wishing. What you call the ‘wish-to-become’ can only help us, like a lantern, along the darker portions of the Way. As for wanting the Moon—I think that you must have seen many old Japanese pictures of apes clutching at the reflection of the Moon in water. The subject is a Buddhist parable: the water is the phantom-flux of sensations and ideas; the Moon—not its distorted image—is the sole Truth. And your Western philosopher was really teaching a Buddhist parable when he proclaimed man but a higher kind of ape. For in this world of illusion, man is truly still the ape, trying to seize on water the shadow of the Moon.”

—“Ape indeed,” I made answer,—“but an ape of gods,—even that divine Ape of the Ramayana who may clutch the Sun!”

MARY E. WILKINS FREEMAN (1862-)

Mary Eleanor Wilkins was born in Randolph, Massachusetts, and her parents were of the strictest Puritan descent. Her father was a builder in Randolph, and later a storekeeper in Brattleboro, Vermont. She received her education in the Randolph schools and at Mount Holyoke Seminary, but the period of her schooling was brief. Both of her parents died when she was still young. In 1883 she returned from Brattleboro to Randolph, and lived there—acting for some years as secretary to O. W. Holmes—until 1902, when she was married to Dr. Charles M. Freeman. Since 1902 she has lived in Metuchen, New Jersey.

Thus the earlier portion of her life was passed in New England villages where she was surrounded by the decaying but pervasive and still deeply felt influences of Puritanism. The villagers with whom she mingled were mostly very poor, but were proud and jealous of their independence. They were instinctively conservative, and the more so because the abler and more adventurous among them either had been killed in the Civil War or had gone West in search of better land and larger opportunities. Even in remote and isolated portions of New England, religion was no longer the positive and vital force which once it had been; but, nevertheless, Puritanism survived as an inherited trait, making its severely repressive influence felt in habits of thought, in painful scruples of conscience, in language, and in manners. Thus surviving, however, it was blind and motiveless, operating to distort rather than to chasten character.

These villagers Miss Wilkins set herself to portray, with faithful realism, exactly as she knew them. In many short tales and in several longer stories or novels she conveyed them as it were bodily into literature, and in so doing she fell in—apparently almost by accident—both with the developing exploitation in American fiction of local peculiarities and with the trend towards realism encouraged and exemplified by the work of W. D. Howells. The excellent quality of her tales, with their appropriately bare and economical style, was soon recognized, and Miss Wilkins found that she had made a distinctive place for herself in American fiction. She did so chiefly through four volumes, the first two of which are also the earliest books she published: *A Humble Romance and Other Stories* (1887), *A New England Nun and Other Stories* (1891), *Jane Field, A Novel* (1893), and *Pembroke, A Novel* (1894). Since 1894 she has published many other books and has tried her hand at the portrayal of people very different from those among whom she grew up, but she has never equaled her early achievement. She has only succeeded in making it more and more plain that her place in literature depends entirely upon her successful and extremely faithful delineation of the bleak, bare lives of remote New England villagers of the 1870's and 1880's.

LOUISA¹

"I DON'T see what kind of ideas you've got in your head, for my part." Mrs. Britton looked sharply at her daughter Louisa, but she got no response.

Louisa sat in one of the kitchen chairs close to the door. She had dropped into it when she first entered. Her hands were all brown and grimy with garden-mold; it clung to the bottom of her old dress and her coarse shoes.

Mrs. Britton, sitting opposite by the window, waited, looking at her. Suddenly

Louisa's silence seemed to strike her mother's will with an electric shock; she recoiled, with an angry jerk of her head. "You don't know nothin' about it. You'd like him well enough after you was married to him," said she, as if in answer to an argument.

Louisa's face looked fairly dull; her obstinacy seemed to cast a film over it. Her eyelids were cast down; she leaned her head back against the wall.

"Sit there like a stick if you want to!" cried her mother.

Louisa got up. As she stirred, a faint earthy odor diffused itself through the room. It was like a breath from a ploughed field.

Mrs. Britton's little sallow face contracted more forcibly. "I s'pose now you're goin'

¹ Reprinted from *A New England Nun and Other Stories* (1891) with the permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers.

back to your potater patch," said she. "Plantin' potaters out there jest like a man, for all the neighbors to see. Pretty sight, I call it."

"If they don't like it, they needn't look," returned Louisa. She spoke quite evenly. Her young back was stiff with bending over the potatoes, but she straightened it rigorously. She pulled her old hat farther over her eyes.

There was a shuffling sound outside the door and a fumble at the latch. It opened, and an old man came in, scraping his feet heavily over the threshold. He carried an old basket.

"What you got in that basket, father?" asked Mrs. Britton.

The old man looked at her. His old face had the round outlines and naïve grin of a child.

"Father, what you got in that basket?"

Louisa peered apprehensively into the basket. "Where did you get those potatoes, grandfather?" said she.

"Digged 'em." The old man's grin deepened. He chuckled hoarsely.

"Well, I'll give up if he ain't been an' dug up all them potaters you've been plantin'!" said Mrs. Britton.

"Yes, he has," said Louisa. "Oh, grandfather, didn't you know I'd jest planted those potatoes?"

The old man fastened his bleared blue eyes on her face, and still grinned.

"Didn't you know better, grandfather?" she asked again.

But the old man only chuckled. He was so old that he had come back into the mystery of childhood. His motives were hidden and inscrutable; his amalgamation with the human race was so much weaker.

"Land sakes! don't waste no more time talkin' to him," said Mrs. Britton. "You can't make out whether he knows what he's doin' or not. I've give it up. Father, you jest set them pertaters down, an' you come over here an' set down in the rockin'-chair; you've done about 'nough work to-day."

The old man shook his head with slow mutiny.

"Come right over here."

Louisa pulled at the basket of potatoes. "Let me have 'em, grandfather," said she. "I've got to have 'em."

The old man resisted. His grin disappeared, and he set his mouth. Mrs. Britton got up, with a determined air, and went over to him. She was a sickly, frail-looking woman, but the voice came firm, with deep bass tones, from her little lean throat.

"Now, father," said she, "you jest give her that basket, an' you walk across the room, and you set down in that rockin'-chair."

The old man looked down into her little, pale, wedge-shaped face. His grasp on the basket weakened. Louisa pulled it away, and pushed past out of the door, and the old man followed his daughter sullenly across the room to the rocking-chair.

The Brittons did not have a large potato field; they had only an acre of land in all. Louisa had planted two thirds of her potatoes; now she had to plant them all over again. She had gone to the house for a drink of water; her mother had detained her, and in the meantime the old man had undone her work.

She began putting the cut potatoes back in the ground. She was careful and laborious about it. A strong wind, full of moisture, was blowing from the east. The smell of the sea was in it, although this was some miles inland. Louisa's brown calico skirt blew out in it like a sail. It beat her in the face when she raised her head.

"I've got to get these in to-day somehow," she muttered. "It'll rain to-morrow."

She worked as fast as she could, and the afternoon wore on. About five o'clock she happened to glance at the road—the potato field lay beside it—and she saw Jonathan Nye driving past with his gray horse and buggy. She turned her back to the road quickly, and listened until the rattle of the wheels died away. At six o'clock her mother looked out of the kitchen window and called her to supper.

"I'm comin' in a minute," Louisa shouted back. Then she worked faster than ever. At half-past six she went into the house, and the potatoes were all in the ground.

"Why didn't you come when I called you?" asked her mother.

"I had to get the potatoes in."

"I guess you wa'n't bound to get 'em all in to-night. It's kind of discouragin' when you work, an' get supper all ready, to have it stan' an hour, I call it. An' you've worked

'bout long enough for one day out in this damp wind, I should say."

Louisa washed her hands and face at the kitchen sink, and smoothed her hair at the little glass over it. She had wet her hair too, and made it look darker: it was quite a light brown. She brushed it in smooth straight lines back from her temples. Her whole face had a clear bright look from being exposed to the moist wind. She noticed it herself, and gave her head a little conscious turn.

When she sat down to the table her mother looked at her with admiration, which she veiled with disapproval.

"Jest look at your face," said she; "red as a beet. You'll be a pretty-lookin' sight before the summer's out, at this rate."

Louisa thought to herself that the light was not very strong, and the glass must have flattered her. She could not look as well as she had imagined. She spread some butter on her bread very sparsely. There was nothing for supper but some bread and butter and weak tea, though the old man had his dish of Indian-meal porridge. He could not eat much solid food. The porridge was covered with milk and molasses. He bent low over it, and ate large spoonfuls with loud noises. His daughter had tied a towel around his neck as she would have tied a pinafore on a child. She had also spread a towel over the table-cloth in front of him, and she watched him sharply lest he should spill his food.

"I wish I could have somethin' to eat that I could relish the way he does that porridge and molasses," said she. She had scarcely tasted anything. She sipped her weak tea laboriously.

Louisa looked across at her mother's meager little figure in its neat old dress, at her poor small head bending over the tea-cup, showing the wide parting in the thin hair.

"Why don't you toast your bread, mother?" said she. "I'll toast it for you."

"No, I don't want it. I'd jest as soon have it this way as any. I don't want no bread, nohow. I want somethin' to relish—a herrin', or a little mite of cold meat, or somethin'. I s'pose I could eat as well as anybody if I had as much as some folks have. Mis' Mitchell was sayin' the other day that

she didn't believe but what they had butcher's meat up to Mis' Nye's every day in the week. She said Jonathan he went to Wolfsborough and brought home great pieces in a market-basket every week. I guess they have everything."

Louisa was not eating much herself, but now she took another slice of bread with a resolute air. "I guess some folks would be thankful to get this," said she.

"Yes, I s'pose we'd ought to be thankful for enough to keep us alive, anybody takes so much comfort livin'," returned her mother, with a tragic bitterness that sat oddly upon her, as she was so small and feeble. Her face worked and strained under the stress of emotion; her eyes were full of tears; she sipped her tea fiercely.

"There's some sugar," said Louisa. "We might have had a little cake."

The old man caught the word. "Cake?" he mumbled, with pleased inquiry, looking up, and extending his grasping old hand.

"I guess we ain't got no sugar to waste in cake," returned Mrs. Britton. "Eat your porridge, father, an' stop teasin'. There ain't no cake."

After supper Louisa cleared away the dishes; then she put on her shawl and hat.

"Where you goin'?" asked her mother.

"Down to the store."

"What for?"

"The oil's out. There wasn't enough to fill the lamps this mornin'. I ain't had a chance to get it before."

It was nearly dark. The mist was so heavy it was almost rain. Louisa went swiftly down the road with the oil-can. It was a half-mile to the store where the few staples were kept that sufficed the simple folk in this little settlement. She was gone a half-hour. When she returned, she had besides the oil-can a package under her arm. She went into the kitchen and set them down. The old man was asleep in the rocking-chair. She heard voices in the adjoining room. She frowned, and stood still, listening.

"Louisa!" called her mother. Her voice was sweet, and higher pitched than usual. She sounded the *i* in Louisa long.

"What say?"

"Come in here after you've taken your things off."

Louisa knew that Jonathan Nye was in the sitting-room. She flung off her hat and shawl. Her old dress was damp, and had still some earth stains on it; her hair was roughened by the wind, but she would not look again in the glass; she went into the sitting-room just as she was.

"It's Mr. Nye, Louisa," said her mother, with effusion.

"Good-evenin', Mr. Nye," said Louisa.

Jonathan Nye half arose and extended his hand, but she did not notice it. She sat down peremptorily in a chair at the other side of the room. Jonathan had the one rocking-chair; Mrs. Britton's frail little body was poised anxiously on the hard rounded top of the carpet-covered lounge. She looked at Louisa's dress and hair, and her eyes were stony with disapproval, but her lips still smirked, and she kept her voice sweet. She pointed to a glass dish on the table.

"See what Mr. Nye has brought us over, Louisa," said she.

Louisa looked indifferently at the dish.

"It's honey," said her mother; "some of his own bees made it. Don't you want to get a dish an' taste of it? One of them little glass sauce dishes."

"No, I guess not," replied Louisa. "I never cared much about honey. Grandfather 'll like it."

The smile vanished momentarily from Mrs. Britton's lips, but she recovered herself. She arose and went across the room to the china closet. Her set of china dishes was on the top shelves, the lower were filled with books and papers. "I've got somethin' to show you, Mr. Nye," said she.

This was scarcely more than a hamlet, but it was incorporated, and had its town books. She brought forth a pile of them, and laid them on the table beside Jonathan Nye. "There," said she, "I thought mebber you'd like to look at these." She opened one and pointed to the school report. This mother could not display her daughter's accomplishments to attract a suitor, for she had none. Louisa did not own a piano or organ; she could not paint; but she had taught school acceptably for eight years—ever since she was sixteen—and in every one of the town books was testimonial to that effect, intermixed with glowing eulogy.

Jonathan Nye looked soberly through the books; he was a slow reader. He was a few years older than Louisa, tall and clumsy, long-featured and long-necked. His face was a deep red with embarrassment, and it contrasted oddly with his stiff dignity of demeanor.

Mrs. Britton drew a chair close to him while he read. "You see, Louisa taught that school for eight year," said she; "an' she'd be teachin' it now if Mr. Mosely's daughter hadn't grown up an' wanted somethin' to do, an' he put her in. He was committee, you know. I dun' know as I'd ought to say so, an' I wouldn't want you to repeat it, but they do say Ida Mosely don't give very good satisfaction, an' I guess she won't have no reports like these in the town books unless her father writes 'em. See this one."

Jonathan Nye pondered over the fulsome testimony to Louisa's capability, general worth, and amiability, while she sat in sulky silence at the farther corner of the room. Once in a while her mother, after a furtive glance at Jonathan, engrossed in a town book, would look at her and gesticulate fiercely for her to come over, but she did not stir. Her eyes were dull and quiet, her mouth closely shut; she looked homely. Louisa was very pretty when pleased and animated, at other times she had a look like a closed flower. One could see no prettiness in her.

Jonathan Nye read all the school reports; then he arose heavily. "They're real good," said he. He glanced at Louisa and tried to smile; his blushes deepened.

"Now don't be in a hurry," said Mrs. Britton.

"I guess I'd better be goin'; mother's alone."

"She won't be afraid, it's jest on the edge of the evenin'."

"I don't know as she will. But I guess I'd better be goin'." He looked hesitatingly at Louisa.

She arose and stood with an indifferent air.

"You'd better set down again," said Mrs. Britton.

"No; I guess I'd better be goin'." Jonathan turned towards Louisa. "Good-evenin'," said he.

"Good-evenin'."

Mrs. Britton followed him to the door. She looked back and beckoned imperiously to Louisa, but she stood still. "Now come again, do," Mrs. Britton said to the departing caller. "Run in any time; we're real lonesome evenin's. Father he sets an' sleeps in his chair, an' Louisa an' me often wish somebody'd drop in; folks round here ain't none too neighborly. Come in any time you happen to feel like it, an' we'll both of us be glad to see you. Tell your mother I'll send home that dish to-morrer, an' we shall have a real feast off that beautiful honey."

When Mrs. Britton had fairly shut the outer door upon Jonathan Nye, she came back into the sitting-room as if her anger had a propelling power like steam upon her body.

"Now, Louisa Britton," said she, "you'd ought to be ashamed of yourself—ashamed of yourself! You've treated him like a—hog!"

"I couldn't help it."

"Couldn't help it! I guess you could treat anybody decent if you tried. I never saw such actions! I guess you needn't be afraid of him. I guess he ain't so set on you that he means to ketch you up an' run off. There's other girls in town full as good as you an' better-lookin'. Why didn't you go an' put on your other dress? Comin' into the room with that old thing on, an' your hair all in a frowse! I guess he won't want to come again."

"I hope he won't," said Louisa, under her breath. She was trembling all over.

"What say?"

"Nothin'."

"I shouldn't think you'd want to say anything, treatin' him that way, when he came over and brought all that beautiful honey! He was all dressed up, too. He had on a real nice coat—cloth jest as fine as it could be, an' it was kinder damp when he come in. Then he dressed all up to come over here this rainy night an' bring this honey." Mrs. Britton snatched the dish of honey and scudded into the kitchen with it. "Sayin' you didn't like honey after he took all that pains to bring it over!" said she. "I'd said I liked it if I'd lied up hill and down." She set the dish in the pantry. "What in creation smells so kinder strong an' smoky in here?" said she, sharply.

"I guess it's the herrin'. I got two or three down to the store."

"I'd like to know what you got herrin' for?"

"I thought maybe you'd relish 'em."

"I don't want no herrin's, now we've got this honey. But I don't know that you've got money to throw away." She shook the old man by the stove into partial wakefulness and steered him into his little bedroom off the kitchen. She herself slept in one off the sitting-room; Louisa's room was up-stairs.

Louisa lighted her candle and went to bed, her mother's scolding voice pursuing her like a wrathful spirit. She cried when she was in bed in the dark, but she soon went to sleep. She was too healthily tired with her out-door work not to. All her young bones ached with the strain of manual labor as they had ached many a time this last year since she had lost her school.

The Brittons had been and were in sore straits. All they had in the world was this little house with the acre of land. Louisa's meager school money had bought their food and clothing since her father died. Now it was almost starvation for them. Louisa was struggling to wrest a little sustenance from their stony acre of land, toiling like a European peasant woman, sacrificing her New England dignity. Lately she had herself split up a cord of wood which she had bought of a neighbor, paying for it in installments with work for his wife.

"Think of a school-teacher goin' into Mis' Mitchell's house to help clean!" said her mother.

She, although she had been of poor, hard-working people all her life, with the humblest surroundings, was a born aristocrat, with that fiercest and most bigoted aristocracy which sometimes arises from independent poverty. She had the feeling of a queen for a princess of the blood about her school-teacher daughter; her working in a neighbor's kitchen was as galling and terrible to her. The projected marriage with Jonathan Nye was like a royal alliance for the good of the state. Jonathan Nye was the only eligible young man in the place; he was the largest land-owner; he had the best house. There were only himself and his mother; after her death the property would all be his. Mrs. Nye was an older woman than Mrs. Britton,

who forgot her own frailty in calculating their chances of life.

"Mis' Nye is considerable over seventy," she said often to herself; "an' then Jonathan will have it all."

She saw herself installed in that large white house as reigning dowager. All the obstacle was Louisa's obstinacy, which her mother could not understand. She could see no fault in Jonathan Nye. So far as absolute approval went, she herself was in love with him. There was no more sense, to her mind, in Louisa's refusing him than there would have been in a princess refusing the fairy prince and spoiling the story.

"I'd like to know what you've got against him," she said often to Louisa.

"I ain't got anything against him."

"Why don't you treat him different, then, I want to know?"

"I don't like him." Louisa said "like" shamefacedly, for she meant love, and dared not say it.

"*Like!* Well, I don't know nothin' about such likin's as some pretend to, an' I don't want to. If I see anybody is good an' worthy, I like 'em, an' that's all there is about it."

"I don't—believe that's the way you felt about—father," said Louisa, softly, her young face flushed red.

"Yes, it was. I had some common-sense about it."

And Mrs. Britton believed it. Many hard middle-aged years lay between her and her own love-time, and nothing is so changed by distance as the realities of youth. She believed herself to have been actuated by the same calm reason in marrying young John Britton, who had had fair prospects, which she thought should actuate her daughter in marrying Jonathan Nye.

Louisa got no sympathy from her, but she persisted in her refusal. She worked harder and harder. She did not spare herself in doors or out. As the summer wore on her face grew as sunburnt as a boy's, her hands were hard and brown. When she put on her white dress to go to meeting on a Sunday there was a white ring around her neck where the sun had not touched it. Above it her face and neck showed browner. Her sleeves were rather short, and there were also white rings above her brown wrists.

"You look as if you were turnin' Injun by inches," said her mother.

Louisa, when she sat in the meeting-house, tried slyly to pull her sleeves down to the brown on her wrists; she gave a little twitch to the ruffle around her neck. Then she glanced across, and Jonathan Nye was looking at her. She thrust her hands, in their short-wristed, loose cotton gloves, as far out of the sleeves as she could; her brown wrists showed conspicuously on her white lap. She had never heard of the princess who destroyed her beauty that she might not be forced to wed the man whom she did not love, but she had something of the same feeling, although she did not have it for the sake of any tangible lover. Louisa had never seen anybody whom she would have preferred to Jonathan Nye. There was no other marriageable young man in the place. She had only her dreams, which she had in common with other girls.

That Sunday evening before she went to meeting her mother took some old wide lace out of her bureau drawer. "There," said she, "I'm goin' to sew this in your neck an' sleeves before you put your dress on. It'll cover up a little; it's wider than the ruffle."

"I don't want it in," said Louisa.

"I'd like to know why not? You look like a fright. I was ashamed of you this mornin'."

Louisa thrust her arms into the white dress sleeves peremptorily. Her mother did not speak to her all the way to meeting. After meeting, Jonathan Nye walked home with them, and Louisa kept on the other side of her mother. He went into the house and stayed an hour. Mrs. Britton entertained him, while Louisa sat silent. When he had gone, she looked at her daughter as if she could have used bodily force, but she said nothing. She shot the bolt of the kitchen door noisily. Louisa lighted her candle. The old man's loud breathing sounded from his room; he had been put to bed for safety before they went to meeting; through the open windows sounded the loud murmur of the summer night, as if that, too, slept heavily.

"Good-night, mother," said Louisa, as she went up-stairs; but her mother did not answer.

The next day was very warm. This was an exceptionally hot summer. Louisa went out early; her mother would not ask her where she was going. She did not come home until noon. Her face was burning; her wet dress clung to her arms and shoulders.

"Where have you been?" asked her mother.

"Oh, I've been out in the field."

"What field?"

"Mr. Mitchell's."

"What have you been doin' out there?"

"Rakin' hay."

"Rakin' hay with the men?"

"There wasn't anybody but Mr. Mitchell and Johnny. Don't, mother!"

Mrs. Britton had turned white. She sank into a chair. "I can't stan' it nohow," she moaned. "All the daughter I've got."

"Don't, mother! I ain't done any harm. What harm is it? Why can't I rake hay as well as a man? Lots of women do such things, if nobody round here does. He's goin' to pay me right off, and we need the money. Don't, mother!" Louisa got a tumbler of water. "Here, mother, drink this."

Mrs. Britton pushed it away. Louisa stood looking anxiously at her. Lately her mother had grown thinner than ever; she looked scarcely bigger than a child. Presently she got up and went to the stove.

"Don't try to do anything, mother; let me finish getting dinner," pleaded Louisa. She tried to take the pan of biscuits out of her mother's hands, but she jerked it away.

The old man was sitting on the door-step, huddled up loosely in the sun, like an old dog.

"Come, father," Mrs. Britton called, in a dry voice, "dinner's ready—what there is of it!"

The old man shuffled in, smiling.

There was nothing for dinner but the hot biscuits and tea. The fare was daily becoming more meager. All Louisa's little hoard of school money was gone, and her earnings were very uncertain and slender. Their chief dependence for food through the summer was their garden, but that had failed them in some respects.

One day the old man had come in radiant, with his shaking hands full of potato blossoms; his old eyes twinkled over them like

a mischievous child's. Reproaches were useless; the little potato crop was sadly damaged. Lately, in spite of close watching, he had picked the squash blossoms, piling them in a yellow mass beside the kitchen door. Still, it was nearly time for the pease and beans and beets; they would keep them from starvation while they lasted.

But when they came, and Louisa could pick plenty of green food every morning, there was still a difficulty: Mrs. Britton's appetite and digestion were poor; she could not live upon a green-vegetable diet; and the old man missed his porridge, for the meal was all gone.

One morning in August he cried at the breakfast-table like a baby, because he wanted his porridge, and Mrs. Britton pushed away her own plate with a despairing gesture.

"There ain't no use," said she. "I can't eat no more garden-sauce nohow. I don't blame poor father a mite. You ain't got no feelin' at all."

"I don't know what I can do; I've worked as hard as I can," said Louisa, miserably.

"I know what you can do, and so do you."

"No, I don't, mother," returned Louisa, with alacrity. "He ain't been here for two weeks now, and I saw him with my own eyes yesterday carryin' a dish into the Moselys', and I knew 'twas honey. I think he's after Ida."

"Carryin' honey into the Moselys'? I don't believe it."

"He was; I saw him."

"Well, I don't care if he was. If you're a mind to act decent now, you can bring him round again. He was dead set on you, an' I don't believe he's changed round to that Mosely girl as quick as this."

"You don't want me to ask him to come back here, do you?"

"I want you to act decent. You can go to meetin' to-night, if you're a mind to—I sha'n't go; I ain't got strength 'nough—an' 'twouldn't hurt you none to hang back a little after meetin', and kind of edge round his way. 'Twouldn't take more'n a look."

"Mother!"

"Well, I don't care. 'Twouldn't hurt you none. It's the way more'n one girl does, whether you believe it or not. Men don't do

all the courtin'—not by a long shot. 'Twon't hurt you none. You needn't look so scart."

Mrs. Britton's own face was a burning red. She looked angrily away from her daughter's honest, indignant eyes.

"I wouldn't do such a thing as that for a man I liked," said Louisa; "and I certainly sha'n't for a man I don't like."

"Then me an' your grandfather'll starve," said her mother; "that's all there is about it. We can't neither of us stan' it much longer."

"We could—"

"Could what?"

"Put a—little mortgage on the house."

Mrs. Britton faced her daughter. She trembled in every inch of her weak frame. "Put a mortgage on this house, an' by-an'-by not have a roof to cover us! Are you crazy? I tell you what 'tis, Louisa Britton, we may starve, your grandfather an' me, an' you can follow us to the graveyard over there, but there's only one way I'll ever put a mortgage on this house. If you have Jonathan Nye, I'll ask him to take a little one to tide us along an' get your weddin' things."

"Mother, I'll tell you what I'm goin' to do."

"What?"

"I am goin' to ask Uncle Solomon."

"I guess when Solomon Mears does anythin' for us you'll know it. He never forgave your father about that wood lot, an' he's hated the whole of us ever since. When I went to his wife's funeral he never answered when I spoke to him. I guess if you go to him you'll take it out in goin'."

Louisa said nothing more. She began clearing away the breakfast dishes and setting the house to rights. Her mother was actually so weak that she could scarcely stand, and she recognized it. She had settled into the rocking-chair, and leaned her head back. Her face looked pale and sharp against the dark calico cover.

When the house was in order, Louisa stole up-stairs to her own chamber. She put on her clean old blue muslin and her hat, then she went slyly down and out the front way.

It was seven miles to her uncle Solomon Mears's, and she had made up her mind to walk them. She walked quite swiftly until the house windows were out of sight, then she slackened her pace a little. It was one of

the fiercest dog-days. A damp heat settled heavily down upon the earth; the sun scalded.

At the foot of the hill Louisa passed a house where one of her girl acquaintances lived. She was going in the gate with a pan of early apples. "Hullo, Louisa," she called.

"Hullo, Vinnie."

"Where you goin'?"

"Oh, I'm goin' a little way."

"Ain't it awful hot? Say, Louisa, do you know Ida Mosely's cuttin' you out?"

"She's welcome."

The other girl, who was larger and stouter than Louisa, with a sallow, unhealthy face, looked at her curiously. "I don't see why you wouldn't have him," said she. "I should have thought you'd jumped at the chance."

"Should you if you didn't like him, I'd like to know?"

"I'd like him if he had such a nice house and as much money as Jonathan Nye," returned the other girl.

She offered Louisa some apples, and she went along the road eating them. She herself had scarcely tasted food that day.

It was about nine o'clock; she had risen early. She calculated how many hours it would take her to walk the seven miles. She walked as fast as she could to hold out. The heat seemed to increase as the sun stood higher. She had walked about three miles when she heard wheels behind her. Presently a team stopped at her side.

"Good-mornin'," said an embarrassed voice.

She looked around. It was Jonathan Nye, with his gray horse and light wagon.

"Good-mornin'," said she.

"Goin' far?"

"A little ways."

"Won't you—ride?"

"No, thank you. I guess I'd rather walk."

Jonathan Nye nodded, made an inarticulate noise in his throat, and drove on. Louisa watched the wagon bowling lightly along. The dust flew back. She took out her handkerchief and wiped her dripping face.

It was about noon when she came in sight of her uncle Solomon Mears's house in Wolfsborough. It stood far back from the road, behind a green expanse of untrodden yard. The blinds on the great square front

were all closed; it looked as if everybody were away. Louisa went around to the side door. It stood wide open. There was a thin blue cloud of tobacco smoke issuing from it. Solomon Mears sat there in the large old kitchen smoking his pipe. On the table near him was an empty bowl; he had just eaten his dinner of bread and milk. He got his own dinner, for he had lived alone since his wife died. He looked at Louisa. Evidently he did not recognize her.

"How do you do, Uncle Solomon?" said Louisa.

"Oh, it's John Britton's daughter! How d'ye do?"

He took his pipe out of his mouth long enough to speak, then replaced it. His eyes, sharp under their shaggy brows, were fixed on Louisa; his broad bristling face had a look of stolid rebuff like an ox; his stout figure, in his soiled farmer dress, surged over his chair. He sat full in the doorway. Louisa standing before him, the perspiration trickling over her burning face, set forth her case with a certain dignity. This old man was her mother's nearest relative. He had property and to spare. Should she survive him, it would be hers, unless willed away. She, with her unsophisticated sense of justice, had a feeling that he ought to help her.

The old man listened. When she stopped speaking he took the pipe out of his mouth slowly, and stared gloomily past her at his hay field, where the grass was now a green stubble.

"I ain't got no money I can spare jest now," said he. "I s'pose you know your father cheated me out of consider'ble once?"

"We don't care so much about money, if you have got something you could spare to—eat. We ain't got anything but garden-stuff."

Solomon Mears still frowned past her at the hay field. Presently he arose slowly and went across the kitchen. Louisa sat down on the door-step and waited. Her uncle was gone quite a while. She, too, stared over at the field, which seemed to undulate like a lake in the hot light.

"Here's some things you can take, if you want 'em," said her uncle, at her back.

She got up quickly. He pointed grimly to

the kitchen table. He was a deacon, an orthodox believer; he recognized the claims of the poor, but he gave alms as a soldier might yield up his sword. Benevolence was the result of warfare with his own conscience.

On the table lay a ham, a bag of meal, one of flour, and a basket of eggs.

"I'm afraid I can't carry 'em all," said Louisa.

"Leave what you can't then." Solomon caught up his hat and went out. He muttered something about not spending any more time as he went.

Louisa stood looking at the packages. It was utterly impossible for her to carry them all at once. She heard her uncle shout to some oxen he was turning out of the barn. She took up the bag of meal and the basket of eggs and carried them out to the gate; then she returned, got the flour and ham, and went with them to a point beyond. Then she returned for the meal and eggs, and carried them past the others. In that way she traversed the seven miles home. The heat increased. She had eaten nothing since morning but the apples that her friend had given her. Her head was swimming, but she kept on. Her resolution was as immovable under the power of the sun as a rock. Once in a while she rested for a moment under a tree, but she soon arose and went on. It was like a pilgrimage, and the Mecca at the end of the burning, desert-like road was her own maiden independence.

It was after eight o'clock when she reached home. Her mother stood in the doorway watching for her, straining her eyes in the dusk.

"For goodness sake, Louisa Britton! where have you been?" she began; but Louisa laid the meal and eggs down on the step.

"I've got to go back a little ways," she panted.

When she returned with the flour and ham, she could hardly get into the house. She laid them on the kitchen table, where her mother had put the other parcels, and sank into a chair.

"Is this the way you've brought all these things home?" asked her mother.

Louisa nodded.

"All the way from Uncle Solomon's?"

"Yes."

Her mother went to her and took her hat off. "It's a mercy if you ain't got a sun-stroke," said she, with a sharp tenderness. "I've got somethin' to tell you. What do you s'pose has happened? Mr. Mosely has been here, an' he wants you to take the school again when it opens next week. He says Ida ain't very well, but I guess that ain't it. They think she's goin' to get somebody. Mis' Mitchell says so. She's been in. She says he's carryin' things over there the whole time, but she don't b'lieve there's anything settled yet. She says they feel so sure of it they're goin' to have Ida give the school up. I told her I thought Ida would make him a good wife, an' she was easier suited than some girls. What do you s'pose Mis' Mitchell says? She says old Mis' Nye told her that there was one thing about it: if Jonathan had you, he wa'n't goin' to have me an' father hitched on to him; he'd look out for that. I told Mis' Mitchell that I guess there wa'n't none of us willin' to hitch, you nor anybody else. I hope she'll tell Mis' Nye. Now I'm a-goin' to turn you out a tumbler of milk—Mis' Mitchell she brought

over a whole pitcherful; says she's got more'n they can use—they ain't got no pig now—an' then you go an' lay down on the sittin'-room lounge, an' cool off; an' I'll stir up some porridge for supper, an' boil some eggs. Father'll be tickled to death. Go right in there. I'm dreadful afraid you'll be sick. I never heard of anybody doin' such a thing as you have."

Louisa drank the milk and crept into the sitting-room. It was warm and close there, so she opened the front door and sat down on the step. The twilight was deep, but there was a clear yellow glow in the west. One great star had come out in the midst of it. A dewy coolness was spreading over everything. The air was full of bird calls and children's voices. Now and then there was a shout of laughter. Louisa leaned her head against the door-post.

The house was quite near the road. Some one passed—a man carrying a basket. Louisa glanced at him, and recognized Jonathan Nye by his gait. He kept on down the road toward the Moselys', and Louisa turned again from him to her sweet, mysterious, girlish dreams.

CLYDE FITCH (1865-1909)

William Clyde Fitch was born at Elmira, New York, on 2 May, 1865. Elmira was not the home of his parents, but merely a temporary abode. His mother, Alice M. Clark, was a native of Hagerstown, Maryland, where she met William G. Fitch of Hartford, Connecticut, who was at the time an officer of the Union army in the Civil War. In Hagerstown they were married during the war. They had no settled home until 1869, when they removed to Schenectady, New York, where Clyde's boyhood and youth were passed. In 1879 he was sent to a boys' school in Holderness, New Hampshire, where he was prepared for Amherst College. He was graduated from Amherst with the class of 1886. Academic distinction was not for him (though later Amherst gave him an honorary degree), but in college he clearly showed his qualities—attracting attention, not at first favorable, and getting into debt, because of his clothes, showing an eye for decorative effect in his rooms, writing much for the college periodical, reworking on extremely short notice a dramatic piece to be performed by members of his fraternity, acting in college plays, and directing their performance. His father wanted him to become an architect, but he found an irresistible appeal in literature and determined, upon his graduation, to make his own way as a writer. At first he had a sufficiently hard time of it, writing verse, children's stories (a volume of these was published in 1891, *The Knighting of the Twins*), and other slight pieces, while he earned his bread and butter as a private tutor—work which he detested. He also wrote at this time a novel, *A Wave of Life*, which was printed in *Lippincott's Magazine* in 1891, but which was never republished.

Before this year, however, in the fall of 1889, an opportunity had come to him to try his hand at what was to be his life's work, the writing of stage plays. Richard Mansfield wanted a play about Beau Brummell and, at the suggestion of a common friend, asked Fitch to write it for him. The young author soon found Mansfield "unbearable," and wrote to a friend: "To suit a star actor, who wants all the good situations for himself, and is jealous of any other good lines, and who would rather cut all out save his own, is a difficult piece of work, and one needs *strength, stubbornness, and great diplomacy*, and, besides, a *yielding power* when it becomes necessary." (*Clyde Fitch and His Letters*, by M. J. Moses and V. Gerson.) Whatever qualities were needed, however, Fitch seemed to have, and the play was a success. From the time of its first performance (17 May, 1890) he was a play-writer and nothing else. *Beau Brummell* gave him an exceptional start, but, even so, his way was for some years not easy, and his income remained small and uncertain. The success of *Beau Brummell* was itself a source of grave embarrassment, because it brought forth a widely published charge that Fitch was in no sense the play's author, but had merely acted as Mansfield's secretary in writing it. The charge, though plausible, was false, and fortunately it did no permanent harm. Originating, however, as it did with a dramatic critic, it was the forerunner of many difficulties which the playwright was to have with other members of that tribe, for he had to contend against adverse press-criticism practically until the end of his life. He wrote a number of plays which were failures or only moderately successful, and it was only about 1898 that he became firmly established in his profession. By this time, however, he still occasionally lacked ready money, not because his income was really insufficient, but because his expenditures were lavish. As a youth he was rather a dandy, and as a man his tastes were luxurious. During his annual summers in Europe he habitually bought himself poor, carrying back with him much old furniture, tapestries, paintings, and smaller objects of art. In 1900 he built himself a small but perfectly appointed house in New York, and later he built a country home at Greenwich, Connecticut, and afterwards bought another at Katonah, New York. After about 1902 or 1903 the state of his health began to cause his friends some uneasiness, and physicians warned him that the combination of continuous overwork and grave digestive disorders was one that might soon put a term to his life. Warnings, however, were of small avail, and Fitch died, at Châlons-sur-Marne, on 4 September, 1909.

He had written sixty-two plays, of which thirty-six were original, twenty-one were adaptations of French or German plays, and five were dramatizations of novels (including *The House of Mirth*, by Edith Wharton). The most important of these are: *Beau Brummell* (1890), *Frederic Lemaitre* (1890), *Pamela's Prodigy* (1891), *The Social Swim* (1893), *His Grace de Grammont* (1894), *Mistress Betty* (1895), *The Moth and the Flame* (1898), *Nathan Hale* (1899), *Barbara Frietchie* (1899), *The Cowboy and the Lady*

(1899), *Sapho* (from Alphonse Daudet's novel of the same title, 1900), *The Climbers* (1901), *Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines* (1901), *Lovers' Lane* (1901), *The Last of the Dandies* (1901), *The Way of the World* (1901), *The Girl and the Judge* (1901), *The Stubbornness of Geraldine*, (1902) *The Girl with the Green Eyes* (1902), *Her Own Way* (1903), *Major André* (1903), *Glad of It* (1903), *The Coronet of the Duchess* (1904), *The Woman in the Case* (1905), *Her Great Match* (1905), *The Girl Who Has Everything* (1906), *The Straight Road* (1907), *The Truth* (1907), *The Bachelor* (1909), *A Happy Marriage* (1909), and *The City* (1909).

Fitch's success as a practical playwright remains probably unparalleled in America. Nevertheless, as was said, he was subjected throughout his career to attacks from the press. He was accused of hasty, slipshod workmanship, of false taste, of willingness to sacrifice truth for theatrical effect, and of a lack of ideas. Much of this criticism was, as Fitch protested, itself hasty and careless, but it was not wholly mistaken. He was a nervously energetic worker, impressionistic in his methods, full of boyish verve and naïveté, eager, restless, and inevitably superficial. He had ideals, was not without conscience in his work, and not without ideas. His ideas and ideals both were perhaps not the worse for being elementary; but, on the other hand, it is true that he had his way to make in the world, that he wanted the generous, immediate rewards which he obtained, and that he was too ready to adapt himself to the conditions of practical success, shifting the responsibility by declaring, with a sigh, that "there will never be good American dramatists till there are good American producers!" He wrote illuminatingly in reply to adverse criticism of two of his plays: "What I *am* trying to do is to reflect life of all kinds as I see it. To write, first, plays that will interest and mean something; and, after that, amuse. I would rather entertain everybody than one body. And always and in any case with a result to the good. I am trying especially to reflect our own life of the present, and to get into the heart of the pictures made by the past. To do this I do not consider any detail too small, so long as it is not boring. Nor any method wrong which I feel to be true." Further light on his ideals is cast by an incident of 1904. W. D. Howells had been pleased by Fitch's *Glad of It*, recognizing in its very looseness of structure a fidelity to his sense of "the way things happen," and he printed an appreciative review of the play in *Harper's Weekly*. Fitch's letter of thanks should probably be taken at something less than its face value, both because of his eager reactions and because of his gratitude at the support of a really eminent man of letters; nevertheless, it sheds light on his aims. He wrote: "I don't think I was ever more pleased, or so thoroughly encouraged to *do more*, and get close to the 'Real Thing,' than I have been by your 'article.' . . . You see I really represent the *Howells's Age!* by which I mean when you were in the first glory and fight of your success, I was a boy beginning to 'take notice,'—never in a scholastic sense either, entirely from instinct and the impulse of my nature—or I might leave out the 'my.' I grew up on you! And so when I began to bump along the thirties I began to grow hungry to please *you*, not in *your* way, but in my own. I have an individual trait, that one sees in children, I cannot be guided. I must learn to walk in my work alone. Tumble after tumble doesn't discourage me. I want to 'get there' through my own experience, from my own point of view, even at the risk of being *bow-minded*. It's a sort of mental stubbornness or conceit, and it is hampered—perhaps?—by my determination to take my work, but *not myself, seriously*. All of which means—a long way around."

Perhaps the way was too long, other factors which increased its length not being mentioned in this letter. But, still, the fact remains that many of Fitch's plays have, within limits, a genuine documentary interest and value. And the best of them have a felicity and a liveliness which need not acting for their appreciation, so that Fitch fairly earned a place among American men of letters. It is safe to say that no American play written before 1890, or thereabouts, preserves now more than an antiquarian interest, and of playwrights who have written since that year Fitch has been not only the most prolific and the most successful, but also the most conspicuous for sustained power of dramatic conception and of adroit execution. Moreover, says a recent critic (T. H. Dickinson, *Playwrights of the New American Theater*), "under a skill in the handling of pure artifice second to none in the history of our stage, Clyde Fitch possessed a real knowledge of the fundamentals of character. His treatment of feminine character was not alone the legerdmain of 'the man who knows women.'" It is true, the same critic continues, that "this mastery of character never eventuated into a play worthy of the insight displayed in its details," but this "must not blind us to his real contributions to our stage. the flesh and blood and nerves of the gentlemen and gentlewomen next door." These living gentlemen and gentlewomen are to be found chiefly, not in the historical plays or in the farces which Fitch produced in considerable numbers, but in those of his plays in which he attempted seriously "to reflect our own life of the present." *The Girl with the Green Eyes* is one of these, and it fairly exhibits Fitch's skill, mastery of character, and limitations. It is effective on the stage, and is eminently readable, but its theme of jealousy is one of almost unlimited possibilities, while Fitch's treatment of it can only be called superficial.

THE GIRL WITH THE GREEN EYES¹

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

THE PERSONS MORE OR LESS CONCERNED IN THE PLAY

"JINNY" AUSTIN.

MR. TILLMAN } *Her Parents.*
MRS. TILLMAN }GEOFFREY TILLMAN. *Her Brother.*SUSIE. *Her Cousin.*MISS RUTH CHESTER } *Her Bridesmaids.*
MISS GRACE DANE }
MISS BELLE WESTING }
MISS GERTRUDE WOOD }MAGGIE. *Maid at the Tillmans'.*HOUSEMAID. *At the Tillmans'.*BUTLER. *At the Tillmans'.*FOOTMAN. *At the Tillmans'.*

JOHN AUSTIN.

MRS. CULLINGHAM.

PETER CULLINGHAM. *Her Son.*

MRS. LOPP.

CARRIE. *Her Daughter.*

A FRENCH COUPLE.

A GERMAN COUPLE.

A GUIDE.

A DRIVER.

A GROUP OF TOURISTS.

ACT I

A charming room in the Tillmans' house.² The walls are white woodwork, framing in old tapestries of deep foliage design, with here and there a flaming flamingo; white furniture with old, green brocade cushions. The room is in the purest Louis XVI. The noon sunlight streams through a window on the Left. On the opposite side is a door to the hall. At back double doors open into a corridor which leads to the ballroom. At Left Center are double doors to the front hall. A great, luxurious sofa is at the left, with

chairs sociably near it, and on the other side of the room a table has chairs grouped about it. On floral small table are books and objets d'art, and everywhere there is a profusion of white roses and maidenhair fern.

In the stage directions Left and Right mean Left and Right of actor, as he faces audience.

Three smart-looking SERVANTS are peering through the crack of the folding door, their backs to the audience. The pretty, slender MAID is on a chair. The elderly BUTLER dignifiedly stands on the floor. The plump, overfed little HOUSEMAID is kneeling so as to see beneath the head of the BUTLER.

HOUSEMAID. [Gasping.]³ Oh, ain't it a beautiful sight!

BUTLER. [Pompously.] Not to me who 'ave seen a Lord married in Hengland.

MAGGIE. Oh, you make me sick, Mr. Potts, always talking of your English Aristocracy! I'm sure there never was no prettier wedding than this. Nor as pretty a bride as Miss Jinny.

BUTLER. [Correcting her.] Mrs. Haustin!

HOUSEMAID. She looks for all the world like one of them frosted angels on a Christmas card. My, I wish I could 'a' seen her go up the aisle with the organ going for all it was worth!

MAGGIE. It was a beautiful sight!

BUTLER. A good many 'appens to be 'aving the sense to be going now.

HOUSEMAID. Could you hear Miss Jinny say "I do," and make them other remarks?

MAGGIE. Yes, plain, though her voice was trembly like. But Mr. Austin he almost shouted!

[Laughing nervously in excitement.

BUTLER. 'E's glad to get 'er!

MAGGIE. And her him!

HOUSEMAID. Yes, that's what I likes about it. Did any one cry?

MAGGIE. Mrs. Tillman. Lots of people are going now.

HOUSEMAID. What elegant clothes! Oh, gosh!

BUTLER. [Superciliously.] Mrs. Cullingham don't seem in no 'urry; she's a common lot!

¹ Copyrighted by Messrs. Little, Brown, and Company and reprinted with their permission. Fitch thought of writing this play at least as early as 1894, and from that time considered the theme at frequent intervals and kept making tentative plans for the project. It was first performed on Christmas night, 1902, with Clara Bloodgood (who later committed suicide while on tour with another of Fitch's plays) taking the part of "Jinny" Austin. When the play was published it was dedicated to Miss Bloodgood.

² In New York,

³ The square brackets are in all cases the author's.

MAGGIE. I don't care, she's rich and Miss Jinny likes her; she just throws money around to any poor person or church or hospital that wants it, or *don't!* So she can't be so *very common* neither, Mr. Potts!

HOUSEMAID. Say, I catch on to something! Young Mr. Tillman's sweet on that there tall bridesmaid.

MAGGIE. [*Sharply.*] Who?

BUTLER. Miss Chester. I've seen there was something goin' hon between them whenever she's dined or lunched 'ere.

MAGGIE. [*Angry.*] 'Tain't true!

BUTLER. I'll bet my month's wages.

MAGGIE. I don't believe you!

BUTLER. Why, what's it to you, please?

MAGGIE. [*Saving herself.*] Nothing—

HOUSEMAID. Well, I guess it's truth enough. That's the second time I've seen him squeeze her hand when no one wasn't lookin'.

MAGGIE. Here, change places with me! [*Getting down from her chair.*] If you was a gentleman, Mr. Potts, you'd have given me your place! [*Witheringly.*]

BUTLER. If I was a gentleman, miss, I wouldn't be here; I'd be on the other side of the door. [*He moves the chairs away.*]

MAGGIE. [*To Housemaid.*] Honest, you saw something between them?

HOUSEMAID. Who?

MAGGIE. Him and her? Mr. Geoffrey and Miss Chester—

HOUSEMAID. Cheese it! they're coming this way!

[*She and the MAID and the BUTLER vanish through the door Right.*]

[*GEOFFREY and RUTH enter through the double doors quickly at back. GEOFFREY is a young good-looking man, but with a weak face. He is of course very smartly dressed. RUTH is a very serenely beautiful girl, rather noble in type, but unconscious and unpretending in manner. They close the doors quickly behind them.*]

GEOFFREY. We'll not be interrupted here, and I must have a few words with you before you go.

[*He follows her to the sofa where she sits, and leans over it, with his arm about her shoulder.*]

RUTH. Oh, Geof,—Geof, why weren't we married like this?

GEOFFREY. It couldn't be helped, darling!

RUTH. It isn't the big wedding I miss, oh, no, it's only it seemed sweeter in a church. Why did we have to steal off to Brooklyn, to that poor, strange little preacher in his stuffy back parlor, and behave as if we were doing something of which we were ashamed?

GEOFFREY. You love me, I love you,—isn't that the chief thing, dearest?

RUTH. But how much longer must we keep it secret?

GEOFFREY. Till I can straighten my affairs out. I can't explain it all to you; there are terrible debts,—one more than all the others,—a debt I made when I was in college.

RUTH. If I could only help you! I have a little money.

GEOFFREY. No, I love you too much; besides, this debt isn't *money*, and I hope to get rid of it somehow before long.

RUTH. Forgive me for worrying you. It is only that every one is so happy at this wedding except me,—dear Jinny brimming over with joy, as I would be,—and it's made me feel—a little—

GEOFFREY. [*Comes around the sofa and sits beside her.*] I know, dear, and it's made me feel what a brute I am! Oh, if you knew how I hate myself for all I've done, and for the pain and trouble I cause you now!

[*MAGGIE, her sharp features set tense, appears in the doorway on the left behind the curtains and listens.*]

RUTH. Never mind, we won't think of that any more.

GEOFFREY. I can never throw it off, not for a minute! I'm a worthless fellow and how can you love me—

RUTH. [*Interrupting him.*] I do! You are worth everything to me, and you will be worth much to the world yet!

GEOFFREY. I love you, Ruth—that's the one claim I can make to deserve you. But it's helped me to give up *all* the beastly pleasures I used to indulge in!

RUTH. [*Softly.*] Geof!

GEOFFREY. Which I used to think the only things worth living for, and which now, thanks to you, I loathe,—every one of them.

RUTH. I'm so glad! I've been some help, then.

GEOFFREY. If I'd only got you earlier, I'd have been a different man, Ruth!

RUTH. [*Smiling and taking his nervous hand in hers.*] Then I mightn't have fallen in love with you if you were a *different* man!

GEOFFREY. Dear girl! Anyway, this is the good news that I want to tell you—I hope now to have things settled in a couple of weeks.

RUTH. [*In glad relief.*] Geoffrey!

GEOFFREY. But—I mayn't be successful; it might be, Ruth—it might be, we would have to wait—for years—

RUTH. [*Quietly.*] I don't think I could bear that! It's not easy for me to lie and deceive as I've had to the last few months; I don't think I could keep it up.

[PETER CULLINGHAM *enters suddenly, from the ballroom, a pale young man, but, unlike GEOFFREY, hard and virile.*

PETER. Oh, here you are! I say, are you two spoony? Just the way I feel! [*Laughing.*] I caught and hugged old Mrs. Parmby just now! I think it's sort of in the air at weddings, don't you?

GEOFFREY. [*Rising.*] I'm surprised to see you've left the refreshment table, Peter.

PETER. They sent me to find Miss Chester—they're going to cut the bridesmaid's cake, and if you two really are spoony, Miss Chester, you'd better not miss it—you might get the ring!

[*They laugh as PETER takes out a bottle from which he takes a round, black tablet which he puts in his mouth.*

RUTH. [*Also rising.*] I'd better go.

[PETER *is making frantic efforts to swallow the tablet.*

GEOFFREY. [*Noticing him.*] What's the matter with you?

PETER. O dear! I've eaten so many ices and fancy cakes, I've got awful indigestion, and I'm trying to swallow a charcoal tablet.

RUTH. Come with me and get a glass of water.

PETER. No, it's very bad to drink water with your meals; but I'll get a piece of bridesmaid's cake—that'll push it down!

[PETER and RUTH *go out through the double doors.*

[*The moment they are out of the room, MAGGIE comes from behind the curtain and goes straight up to GEOFFREY. He looks astonished and frightened.*

GEOFFREY. What do you want? Have you been listening?

MAGGIE. So that's it, is it? You want to marry her when you can get rid of me.

GEOFFREY. [*With relief.*] What do you mean?

MAGGIE. Oh, I may not have heard everything, but I heard and saw enough to catch on that you're in love with Miss Chester.

GEOFFREY. Well?

MAGGIE. Well, you won't marry her—I'll never set you free.

GEOFFREY. Sh!

[*Looking about and closing the doors.*

MAGGIE. Oh, they're all in the dining room.

GEOFFREY. [*Angry.*] What do you want, anyway?

MAGGIE. [*She pleads a little.*] When I came here to your house and got a position, it was because I *loved* you, if you *had* treated me bad, and I hoped by seeing you again, and being near you, you might come back to me and everything be made straight!

GEOFFREY. Never! Never! It's impossible.

MAGGIE. [*Angry again.*] Oh, is it! Well, the dirty little money you give me now only holds my tongue quiet so long's you behave yourself and don't run after any other girls! But the minute you try to throw me down, I'll come out with the whole story.

GEOFFREY. I was drunk when I married you!

MAGGIE. More shame to you!

GEOFFREY. You're right. But I was only twenty—and you—led me on—

MAGGIE. [*Interrupting him.*] Me! led you on! *me*, as decent and nice a girl as there was in New Haven if I do do housework, and that's my wedding ring and you put it there, and mother's got the certificate locked up good and safe in her box with my dead baby sister's hair and the silver plate off my father's coffin!

GEOFFREY. We mustn't talk here any more!

MAGGIE. You look out! If I wasn't so fond of your sister Miss Jinny, and if the old people weren't so good to me, I'd just show you right up *here—now!*

GEOFFREY. I'll buy you off if I can't divorce you!

MAGGIE. You! Poof!

[GIRLS' voices *are heard from the ballroom.*

GEOFFREY. Look out—some one's coming!

MAGGIE. *[Going.]* You haven't got a red cent; my check's always one of your *father's!*

[She goes out Right.]

GEOFFREY. Good God! what am I going to do—shoot myself, if I don't get out of this soon—I must get some air!

[He goes out Left.]

[JINNY opens the double doors, looks in, and then enters. She is an adorable little human being, pretty, high-strung, temperamental, full of certain feminine fascination that defies analysis, which is partly due to the few faults she possesses. She is, of course, dressed in the conventional wedding-dress, a tulle veil thrown over her face.]

JINNY. Not a soul! Come on!

[She is followed in by the four BRIDESMAIDS—nice girls every one of them—and also, very slyly, by SUSIE, a very modern spoiled child, who sits unobserved out of the way at the back.]

Now, my dears, I wish to say good-by all by ourselves so I can make you a little speech! *[All laugh gently.]* In the first place I want to tell you that there's nothing like marriage! And you must every one of you try it! Really, I was never so happy in my life!

GRACE. Must we stand, or may we sit down?

JINNY. Oh, stand; it won't be long and you'll only crush your lovely frocks. In fact, I advise you not to lose any time sitting down again until you've got the happy day fixed!

RUTH. You know, Jinny darling, that there is no one so glad for your happiness as your four bridesmaids are—isn't that so, girls?

ALL. Yes!

[And they all together embrace JINNY, saying "Dear old Jinny," "Darling Jinny," "We'll miss you dreadfully," etc., ad lib., till they get tearful.]

JINNY. Good gracious, girls, we mustn't cry. I'll get red eyes, and Jack'll think what an awful difference just the marriage service makes in a woman.

[The doors at the back open, and AUSTIN appears in the doorway.]

[AUSTIN is a typical New Yorker in appearance, thirty-two years old, good-looking, manly, self-poised, and somewhat phlegmatic in temperament.]

AUSTIN. Hello! May a mere man come in to this delectable tea party?

JINNY. No, Jack! But *wait*—by the door till I call you!

AUSTIN. *[Amused.]* Thank you!

[He goes out, closing the door.]

GERTRUDE. We'll miss you so awfully, Jinny.

JINNY. Just what I say! Get a man to keep you company, and then you won't miss any one.

BELLE. Yes, but attractive men with lots of money don't come into the Grand Central Station by every train!

JINNY. *[Putting her arm about her.]* You want too much, my dear Belle! And you aren't watching the Grand Central Station either half so much as you are the steamer docks for a suitable person. Now don't be angry; you know you want a good big title, and you've got the money to pay, but, my dear Belle, it's those ideas of yours that have kept you single till—twenty-six!—now *that* you must confess was nice of me, to take off *three* years!

BELLE. *[Laughing.]* Jinny, you're horrid!

JINNY. No, I'm not! You know I'm *really* fond of you, or you wouldn't be my bridesmaid to-day; it's only that I want *your* wedding to be as happy as *mine*—that's all, and here's a little gift for you to remember your disagreeable but loving friend by!

[Giving her a small jewelry box.]

BELLE. Thank you, Jinny! Thank you!

[A little moved.]

GRACE. Mercy! I hope you're not going to take each one of us!

JINNY. I am, and come here, *you're* next!

GRACE. I'll swear I don't want to get married at all!

JINNY. Don't be silly, you *icicle!* Of course you don't; you freeze all the men away, so that you've no idea how nice and comfy they can be! My advice to you, Grace darling,—and I *love* you, or I wouldn't bother,—is to *thaw!* *[Laughs.]* I used to be awfully jealous of you—

GRACE. *[Interrupting.]* Oh!

JINNY. Yes, I was! You're lots prettier than I am.

GRACE. Jinny!

JINNY. *You are!* But I got over it because I soon saw you were so cold, there was no danger of any conflagration near you!

Oh, I've watched your *eyes* often to see if any man had lighted the fires in them yet. And now I'm determined they shall be lighted. You're too *cold*! Thaw, dear,—not to *everybody*,—that would be like slushy weather, but don't keep yourself so continually so far below zero that you won't have time to strike—well—say eighty-five in the *shade*, when the right bit of masculine sunshine *does* come along! Here—with my best love!

[Giving her a small jewelry box.

[GRACE kisses JINNY.

GERTRUDE. I am the next *victim*, I believe!

JINNY. All I've got to say to you, Miss, is, that if you don't decide pretty soon on *one* of the half dozen men you are flirting with *disgracefully* at present, they'll every one find you out and you'll have to go in for widowers.

GERTRUDE. [Mockingly.] Horrors!

JINNY. Oh, I don't know! I suppose a widower is sort of *broken in* and would be more likely to put up with your caprices! For the sake of your charm and wit and true heart underneath it all, you dear old girl you!

[Giving her a small jewel box.

GERTRUDE. Thank you, Jinny. I'm only afraid I will do the wrong thing with you away! You know you're always my ballast!

JINNY. Nonsense! Female ballast is no good; masculine ballast is the only kind that's safe if you want to make life's journey in a love balloon. [SHE turns to RUTH CHESTER.] Ruth—the trouble with you is, you're too sad lately, and show such a lack of interest. I should think you might be in love, only I haven't been able to find the man. Anyway, if you aren't in love, you must *pretend* an interest in things. Of course, men's affairs are awfully dull, but they don't like you to talk about them, so it's really very easy. All you have to do is listen, stare them straight in the eyes, think of whatever you like, and look pleased! It *does* flatter them, and they think *they* are *interesting*, and you *charming*! Wear this, and think of me! [Giving her a box.] and be happy! I want you to be *happy*—and I can see you aren't!

RUTH. [Kissing her.] Thank you, dear!

JINNY. There, that's all!—except—when I come home from abroad in October, if every

one of you aren't engaged to be married, I'll wash my hands of you— [They all laugh.

[SUSIE, sliding off her chair at back, comes forward.

SUSIE. Now, it's my turn! You can't chuck me!

JINNY. [Trying not to laugh.] Susie! where did you come from and *what* do you mean?

SUSIE. Oh, you give me a pain!—I went up the aisle with you to-day, too—what's the matter with telling me how to get married!

JINNY. I'll tell you this, your language is dreadful; where do you get all the boy's slang? You don't talk like a lady.

SUSIE. I'm not a lady. I'm a little girl!

JINNY. You *talk* much more like a common boy.

SUSIE. Well, I'd rather *be* a boy!

JINNY. Susie, I shall tell Aunt Laura her daughter needs looking after.

SUSIE. Oh, very well, cousin Jinny. If you're going to make trouble, why, forget it!

[Turns and goes out haughtily, Right.

JINNY. [Going to the double doors, calls.] Now you can come in, Jack. [AUSTIN enters.

AUSTIN. And now I've only time to say good-by. All your guests have gone except the Cullinghams, who are upstairs with your mother, looking at the presents.

GERTRUDE. Come! All hands around him!

[The five GIRLS join hands, with AUSTIN in the center.

BELLE. We don't care if every one else has gone or not, *we're* here yet!

AUSTIN. So I see! But I am ordered by my father-in-law—ahem! [all laugh]—to go to my room, or he thinks there will be danger of our losing our train.

ALL THE BRIDESMAIDS. [Ad lib.] Where are you going? Where are you going? We won't let you out till you tell us.

AUSTIN. I daren't—I'm afraid of my wife!

JINNY. Bravo, Jack!

GRACE. Very well, then, we'll let you out, on *one* condition, that you kiss us all in turn.

[The GIRLS laugh.

JINNY. No! No! [Breaking away.] He shan't do any such thing!

[They all laugh and break up the ring.

GERTRUDE. Dear me, isn't she jealous!

BELLE. Yes, it is evidently time we all went! Good-by, Jinny! [Kissing her.] A happy journey to *Washington*!

JINNY. No, it isn't!

[General good-bys. JINNY begins with RUTH at one end, and AUSTIN at the other; he says good-by and shakes hands with each girl.]

GERTRUDE. [Kissing JINNY.] Good-by, and a pleasant trip to Niagara Falls!

JINNY. Not a bit!

GRACE. [Kissing JINNY.] Good-by, I believe it's Boston or Chicago!

JINNY. Neither!

RUTH. Good-by, dear, and all the happiness in the world.

[Kisses her.]

JINNY. Thank you.

[She turns and goes with the other three girls to the double doors at back, where they are heard talking.]

RUTH. Mr. Austin?

AUSTIN. Yes? [Joining her.]

RUTH [Embarrassed.] You like your new brother, don't you?

AUSTIN. Geoff? most certainly I do, and Jinny adores him.

RUTH. I know, then, you'll be a good friend to him if he needs one.

AUSTIN. Surely I will.

RUTH. I think he does need one.

AUSTIN. Really—

[The GIRLS are passing out through the doors.]

BELLE. Come along, Ruth.

[THEY pass out and JINNY stands in the doorway talking to them till they are out of hearing.]

RUTH. Sh! please don't tell any one, not even Jinny, what I've said! I may be betraying something I've no right to do, and don't tell him I've spoken to you.

AUSTIN. All right!

[JINNY turns around in the doorway.]

RUTH. Thank you—and good-by.

[Shaking his hand again.]

[JINNY notices that they shake hands twice. A queer little look comes into her face.]

AUSTIN. Good-by.

RUTH. Have they gone?—Oh! [Hurrying past JINNY.] Good-by, dear.

[She goes out through the double doors.]

JINNY. [In a curious little voice.] Good-by . . .

[She comes slowly down the room toward AUSTIN, and smiles at him quizzically.] What were you two saying?

AUSTIN. Good-by!

JINNY. But you'd said it once to her already! Why did you have to say good-by twice to Ruth? Once was enough for all the other girls!

AUSTIN. [Banteringly.] The first time I said good-by to her, and the second time she said good-by to me!

JINNY. Do you know what I believe—Ruth Chester's in love with you!

AUSTIN. Oh, darling!

[Laughs.]

JINNY. Yes, that explains the whole thing. No wonder she was *triste* to-day.

AUSTIN. [Laughing.] Jinny, sweetheart, don't get such an absurd notion into your head.

JINNY. [Looks straight at him a moment, then speaks tenderly.] No—no—I know it's not your fault. There was no other woman in this house for you to-day but me, was there?

AUSTIN. There was no other woman in the world for me since the first week I knew you.

[Taking her into his arms.]

JINNY. This is good-by to Jinny Tillman!

[He kisses her.]

Jack, darling, do you think I could sit on your knee like a little child and put my arm around your neck and rest my head on your shoulder for just five seconds—I'm so tired!

[MRS. CULLINGHAM opens the door.]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh!

[Shuts the door very quickly and knocks.]

[JINNY and AUSTIN laugh.]

JINNY. Yes, yes—come in!

[MRS. CULLINGHAM enters. She is a handsome, whole-souled, florid woman; one of those creatures of inexhaustible vitality who make people of a nervous temperament tired almost on contact by sheer contrast. She is the kindest, best meaning creature in the world.]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, do excuse me! I haven't any more tact!—and I hate to interrupt you, but I must say good-by. [Calls.] Peter!

PETER. Yes'm.

[Entering with a glass of water and a powder. He sits in the arm-chair at right, and constantly looks at his watch.]

AUSTIN. I'm much obliged to you, Mrs. Cullingham, for the interruption, as I was

sent long ago to make myself ready for the train, if you'll excuse me!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Certainly!

JINNY. Good-by!

[*Taking his hand as he passes her.*]

AUSTIN. Good-by!

[*He goes out Right.*]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. If it's time for *him*, it's certainly time for *you*. I won't keep you a minute!

JINNY. No, really we've plenty of time,—[*both sit on sofa.*] Wasn't it a lovely wedding!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I never saw a sweeter, my dear! And it was perfectly elegant! Simply great!

JINNY. And isn't Jack—

MRS. CULLINGHAM. He is! And so are you! In fact I've been telling your mother I don't know how to thank you both. You've asked me to-day to meet the swellest crowd I've ever been in where I was *invited*, and didn't have to buy tickets, and felt I had a right to say something besides "excuse me," and "I beg your pardon." Of course, I've sat next to them all before in restaurants and at concerts, but this time I felt like the real thing myself, and I shall never forget it! If you or your husband ever want any mining tips, come to me; what my husband don't know about mines isn't worth knowing!

JINNY. I'm as glad as I can be if you've had a good time, and you mustn't feel indebted to us. Ever since we met in Egypt that winter, mamma and I have always felt you were one of our best friends.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Of course you know it isn't for *my own* sake I'm doing these stunts to get into Society. It's all for *my boy*. He's got to have the best—or the *worst*, however you look at it! [*Laughing.*] Anyway, I want him to have a chance at it, and it belongs to him through his father, for my first husband was a real swell!

[*Looking at PETER lovingly.*]

[*At this moment, PETER, having again looked at his watch, tips up the powder on his tongue, and swallows it down with the water.*]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Poor darling! He suffers terribly from indigestion. That's an alkali powder he takes twenty minutes after eating. Peter, we must say good-by now.

PETER. [*Coming up.*] Good-by, Miss Jinny.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. *Mrs. Austin!*

JINNY. Oh, I'll always be "Miss Jinny" to Peter!

PETER. Thank you! We've had a great time at your wedding! *Bully food!* But I'm feeling it! [*He turns aside.*] Excuse me!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I was just telling Mrs. Austin—

[*Interrupted.*]

JINNY. "Jinny"—don't change.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Thank you—[*Rises to go.*] I was just saying we won't forget in our social life, will we, Peter, that Miss Jinny gave us the biggest boost up we've had yet?

[*JINNY also rises.*]

PETER. Well, you know, mother, I don't think the game's worth the candle. It's begun to pall on me already.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I really think he's going to be superior to it!

PETER. I only go now for your sake.

[*MRS. TILLMAN, coming from Right, speaks off stage.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. Jinny! Jinny!

JINNY. Mother!

[*MRS. TILLMAN enters.*]

JINNY. I ought to dress?

MRS. TILLMAN. [*To MRS. CULLINGHAM.*] She'll be late if she isn't careful.

JINNY. I'm going to. Is Maggie there?

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, waiting!

JINNY. Good-by. [*Kisses MRS. CULLINGHAM.*] Good-by. [*Shakes PETER's hand.*]

PETER. Many happy returns!

[*JINNY goes out Right.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. Come, I want to give you some of Jinny's flowers to take home with you. Would you like some?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I should love them!

[*They go out through the doors at back.*]

[*PETER is suffering with indigestion. He takes a charcoal tablet, and SUSIE cautiously enters Right.*]

SUSIE. There you are! Have you got 'em?

PETER. No, I gave them back to you.

SUSIE. Then they're in there on the table—get 'em quick, the trunks are coming down now!

[*PETER goes out quickly at back, as the BUTLER and MAN SERVANT enter Right, carrying a large new trunk with a port-manteau on top of it.*]

SUSIE. Put them right over there for a minute! [*They put them down in the center of the room, and the FOOTMAN goes out Right.*] And mind, you don't split on us, Thomas. Auntie Tillman knows all about it—it's just to be a nice little surprise for Cousin Jinny and my new uncle.

BUTLER. Very well, miss.

[*He also goes out Right.*]

[*At the same time PETER reënters at back with a roll of papers and some broad white satin ribbon. The papers are about half a foot broad and two feet long, and on them is printed, "We are on our honeymoon."*]

PETER. [*With gay excitement.*] I've got 'em.

SUSIE. Get some water—there's sticky stuff on the back!

[*PETER gives her the papers and ribbons and goes out again at back.*]

SUSIE. Quick! [*Ties a big white bow on the portmanteau and on a trunk handle.*] If Auntie Tillman sees 'em, I'll bet she'll grab 'em off. She'll be as mad as hops!

[*The BUTLER and FOOTMAN reënter Right, and bring down an old steamer trunk and a gentleman's dressing-bag.*]

BUTLER. [*To the FOOTMAN.*] Go and see if the carriage is there!

FOOTMAN. Yes, sir.

[*He goes out Left.*]

[*As PETER reënters from the back, with the water.*]

SUSIE. Quick now! Quick!

[*They stick one label on the big steamer trunk facing the audience.*]

PETER. I say isn't that great!

[*SUSIE giggles aloud with delight. The BUTLER, standing at one side, smiles. They put another label on the other trunk.*]

SUSIE. [*Giggling.*] I heard them plan it,—they're taking one old trunk purposely so as people would not catch on they were just married!

[*Giggles delightedly.*]

[*The FOOTMAN reënters with a driver, Left.*]

FOOTMAN. Yes, sir, it's here.

BUTLER. [*To the driver.*] You can take that first.

[*Pointing to the steamer trunk.*]

[*DRIVER goes out Left with it on his shoulder, and the portmanteau.*]

BUTLER. Now, James, you're to go over with the luggage to Twenty-third Street

Ferry and check the heavy baggage; you know where to.

FOOTMAN. Yes, sir.

SUSIE. [*Eagerly.*] Oh, where to?

BUTLER. I am hunder hoath not to tell, Miss.

SUSIE. O pish!

[*Kneeling in the big arm-chair and watching proceedings from behind its back.*]

BUTLER. [*Continues to the FOOTMAN.*] And wait with the checks and Mr. Austin's dressing-bag—[*Showing it.*—until they come.

FOOTMAN. Yes, sir.

PETER. And make haste, or, I say, somebody'll turn up and give our whole joke away!

[*The DRIVER reënters.*]

SUSIE. Yes, do hurry!

FOOTMAN. [*To the DRIVER.*] Come along. [*They take the big trunk out Left. BUTLER follows with the dressing-bag.*]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Calls from the room at back.*] Peter darling, are you there?

SUSIE. Phew! Just in time!

[*Sliding down into a more correct position in the chair.*]

PETER. Yes, mother!

[*Going to back.*]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*In the doorway, at back.*] Come, take these beautiful roses from Mrs. Tillman!

[*MRS. CULLINGHAM and MRS. TILLMAN enter.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. [*With her arms full of roses.*] Thomas will take them down.

PETER. No, I'd like to. Aren't they bully?

[*He takes them.*]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*To MRS. TILLMAN.*] Good-by, and thank you again. I know you must want to go up to Jinny.

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, she may need me to help her a little. Good-by. Good-by, Peter.

PETER. Good-by, ma'm.

[*MRS. TILLMAN goes out Right.*]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Why, Susie, how do you do?

SUSIE. [*Glides out of the chair and stands before it.*] How do you do?

[*Embarrassed.*]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. You're a good little girl, I hope?

SUSIE. I don't! I hate good little girls!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. O my!

[She goes out, laughing, Left.]

[PETER, coming to SUSIE, catches her in his arms and kisses her, much against her will.]

SUSIE. *[Furious.]* Oh, you horrid, nasty thing, you! *[She strikes at him; he runs; she chases him from one side of the room to the other, around a sofa and table, and out Left, screaming as she chases him.]* I hate you! I hate you!

[MAGGIE enters Right.]

MAGGIE. Miss Susie, Mrs. Tillman wants to see you upstairs.

SUSIE. What for?

MAGGIE. I don't know, Miss.

SUSIE. Pshaw! have I got to go? All right!

[Going toward the door at Right.]

[AUSTIN enters, meeting SUSIE.]

AUSTIN. Hello! Where are you going?

SUSIE. Oh, up to Auntie Tillman's room. Goodness knows what for; it's an awful bore! Want to come along?

AUSTIN. No, thank you; but if you see your Cousin Jinny, you might tell her I am down.

SUSIE. *[Hanging on to him.]* I say! Where are you and Cousin Jinny going to, anyway?

AUSTIN. *[Smiling.]* I don't know.

SUSIE. O my, what a fib! And that's a nice example to set a little girl!

[She goes out Right.]

MAGGIE. *[Coming forward.]* I beg pardon, sir, but may I speak to you a minute?

AUSTIN. Certainly, Maggie, what is it?

MAGGIE. I've been trying for a chance to see you alone. I wouldn't bother you, sir—but it's only because I'm fond of Miss Jinny, and of Mr. and Mrs. Tillman, and they've all been so good to me; I know it would nearly kill 'em if they knew.

AUSTIN. Come, Maggie, knew what?

MAGGIE. Well, one member of this family ain't been good to me, sir. *[From this point her feelings begin to get the better of her and she speaks rapidly and hysterically.]* He's been bad, bad as he could, and somebody's got to talk to him, and I don't see who's a-goin' to do it but you. If he don't change, I'll not hold my tongue any longer. It's all I can do for their sakes to hold it now!

AUSTIN. Look here, what are you talking about? You don't mean Mr. Geoffrey?

MAGGIE. Yes, I do, sir; he's my husband.

AUSTIN. What!!

MAGGIE. We was married when he was at Yale, sir; I was in a shop there.

AUSTIN. But—! Well, after all, isn't this your and Geoffrey's affair? Why bring me in?

MAGGIE. Because he's making love to Miss Chester, and promising to marry her now, and if he don't stop—I'll make trouble!

AUSTIN. But if he's married to you, as you say—he can't marry—any one else.

MAGGIE. He's tried to make me believe our marriage ain't legal, because he was only twenty and he'd been drinking!

AUSTIN. What makes you think Mr. Geoffrey cares for—Miss Chester?

MAGGIE. I just heard and see him making love to her *here!*

AUSTIN. This is a pretty bad story, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Yes, sir, and the worst is, sir, I know I ain't good enough for him, and that's why I've kept still about it these three years, but I can't help loving him no matter how ugly he's treated me. *[Breaking down into tears.]* I just can't help it! I love him, sir, even if I'm only a servant girl, and I can't stand it thinking he's going to try and get rid of me for some one else!

[She sobs out loud.]

AUSTIN. Sh!—Maggie. Sit down a minute, and control yourself. Somebody'll hear you, and besides they'll be coming down presently. I'll have a talk with Mr. Geoffrey when I come back—

[Interrupted as GEOFFREY enters Left. He doesn't see MAGGIE, who is collapsed in a corner of the sofa.]

GEOFFREY. *[To AUSTIN.]* Ah! Thank goodness I've caught you; I had an awful headache and went out for a breath of air, and then I was afraid I might have missed you! I knew in that case Jinny would never forgive me, nor—I—myself—for that—matter—

[His voice grows less exuberant in the middle of his speech and finally at the end almost dies away, as he sees the expression in AUSTIN's face and realizes that something is wrong somewhere. When he stops speaking, MAGGIE gives a gasping sob. He hears it, and starting, sees her.]

GEOFFREY. Maggie!

AUSTIN. Geoffrey, is what this girl says true?

GEOFFREY. That I married her in New Haven? Yes.

MAGGIE. [*Rises.*] I'll go, please, I'd rather go.

AUSTIN. Yes, go, Maggie; it's better.

[*MAGGIE goes out Right.*]

GEOFFREY. [*As soon as she is out of the room.*] Promise me, Jack, you won't tell any one! It's awful, I know! For two years at college I went all to pieces and led a rotten life,—and one night, drunk, I married her, and it isn't so much her fault. I suppose she thought I loved her,—but this would break up the old lady and gentleman so, if they knew, I couldn't stand it! And Jinny, for God's sake, don't tell Jinny. *She respects me.* You won't tell her, will you?

AUSTIN. No. But Maggie says you want to marry some one else now.

GEOFFREY. [*With a change, in great shame.*] That's true, too.

[*He sits in utter dejection on the sofa.*]

AUSTIN. How are you going to do it?

GEOFFREY. I must make money somehow and buy off Maggie.

AUSTIN. Yes, go out to Sioux Falls, get a divorce there on respectable grounds, and settle a sum of money on Maggie.

GEOFFREY. But I can't do that!

AUSTIN. Why not?

GEOFFREY. I can't do anything that would give publicity, and that divorce would.

AUSTIN. Any divorce would; you can't get rid of that.

GEOFFREY. I tell you I can't have publicity. Ruth—Miss Chester—would hear of it.

AUSTIN. Well, if she loves you, she'll forgive your wild oats, especially as every one sees now what a steady, straight fellow you've become.

GEOFFREY. It's Ruth! But I can't do that. No, Jack, you must help—you will, won't you? Oh, *do*, for Jinny's sake! Help me to persuade Maggie to keep silent for good, tear up that certificate of marriage. I was only twenty; it's hardly legal, and I'll settle a good sum—

[*Interrupted.*]

AUSTIN. [*Going straight to him, puts his hand heavily on his shoulder.*] Good God,

you're proposing bigamy! You've done enough; don't stoop to *crime*!

[*The two MEN face each other a moment.*]

GEOFFREY's head drops.

AUSTIN. Forget you ever said that; do what I tell you when Jinny and I have gone abroad, so she will be away from it a little, and if you want money, let me know.

[*JINNY enters Right, with nervous gayety, covering an upheaving emotion which is very near the surface.*]

JINNY. Ready! And there you are, Geof. I've been sending all over the house after you! Good-by! [*Throwing her arms about him.*] Dear old Geof! Haven't we had good times together! Always, always from the youngest days I can remember—I don't believe there were ever a brother and sister so sympathetic; I know there was never a brother such a perfect darling as you were—I'll miss you, Geof! [*The tears come into her voice, anyway.*] I used to think I'd never marry at all if I couldn't marry you, and I do think *he* is the only man in the world who could have taken me away from home, so long as you were there! [*To AUSTIN, smiling.*] You aren't jealous?

AUSTIN. No!

JINNY. [*In jest.*] Isn't it awful! You can't *make* him jealous! I think it's a positive flaw in his character! Not like—*us*, is he?

GEOFFREY. Dear old girl—

JINNY. [*Whispers to him.*] And I've noticed how you've overcome certain things, dear Geof. I know it's been *hard*, and I'm proud of you.

GEOFFREY. Sh! Jinny, dear old sister! I'll miss you! By George, Jin, the house'll be awful without—but you—[*His voice grows husky.*]—just excuse me a minute!

[*He is about to break down, and so hurries out Right.*]

JINNY. [*Sniffing.*] He was going to cry! Oh, Jack, you'll be a brother to Geoffrey, won't you? You know he's been awfully dissipated, and he's changed it all, all by himself! *If he should go wrong again*—I believe it would break my heart, I love him so!

AUSTIN. I'll do *more* for him, if he ever needs me, than if he were *my own* brother, because he's *yours*!

JINNY. [*Presses his hand and looks up at him lovingly and gratefully.*] Thank you. Wait here just a minute; I know he won't come back to say good-by. He's gone up to his room, I'm sure—I'll just surprise him with a hug and my hands over his eyes like we used to do years ago.

[*She starts to go out Right, and meets Mr. and Mrs. TILLMAN, who enter.*]

TILLMAN. The carriage is here!

JINNY. I won't be a second—

[*She goes out Right.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. Where has she gone?

AUSTIN. Up to her brother.

MRS. TILLMAN. Her father's been locked up in his study for three hours—he *says* thinking, but to me his eyes look very suspicious!

[*Taking her husband's arm affectionately.*]

TILLMAN. [*Clears his throat.*] Nonsense!

MRS. TILLMAN. Well, *how many cigars did you smoke?*

TILLMAN. Eight.

MRS. TILLMAN. The amount of emotion that a man can soak out of himself with tobacco is wonderful! He uses it just like a sponge!

TILLMAN. Jack, the first thing I asked about you when I heard that—er—that things were getting this way was, does he smoke? A man who smokes has always that outlet. If things go wrong—go out and smoke a cigar, and when the cigar's finished, ten to one everything's got right, somehow! If you lose your temper, don't speak!—a cigar, and when it's finished, then speak! You'll find the temper all gone up in the smoke! A woman's happiness is safest with a man who smokes. [*He clears his throat, which is filling.*] God bless you, Jack, it is a wrench; our only girl, you know. She's been a great joy—ahem!

[*He quickly gets out a cigar.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Stopping him from smoking.*] No, no, dear, they're going now!

TILLMAN. Well, the best I can say is, I wish you as happy a married life as her mother and I have had.

MRS. TILLMAN. Thirty-five dear years! But now, George, let me say a word—you always have monopolized our new son—he'll be much fonder of you than me!

TILLMAN. Old lady!—Jealous!—

MRS. TILLMAN. Turn about is fair play—you're jealous still of Jinny and me. [*She*

pauses a moment.] I think we'd better tell him!

TILLMAN. All right. The only rifts in our lute, Jack, have been little threads or jealousy that have snapped sometimes!

MRS. TILLMAN. Nothing ever serious—of course, *but* it's a fault that Jinny shares with us, and the *only* fault we've ever been able to find.

TILLMAN. We called her for years the girl with the green eyes. She goes it pretty *strong* sometimes!

AUSTIN. Oh, that's all right—I shall *like* it!

MRS. TILLMAN. You'll always bear with her, won't you, if she should ever get jealous of you?

AUSTIN. Of *me*? I'll never give *her* the chance.

MRS. TILLMAN. It isn't a question of chance; you just can't help it sometimes, can you, George?

TILLMAN. No, you can't.

MRS. TILLMAN. And so—

AUSTIN. Don't worry! Your daughter's safe with me. I'm not the jealous sort myself and I love Jinny so completely, so calmly, and yet with my heart, and soul, and mind, and body, she'll never have a *chance* even to try to be jealous of *me*!

TILLMAN. Sh!

[JINNY enters Right.]

JINNY. I found poor Maggie up in my room crying! She says she can't bear to have me go away. I think she's sorry now she wouldn't come with me as maid—and I said good-by to cook and she sniffed!

[AUSTIN looks at his watch.]

AUSTIN. Oh! we ought to go!

MRS. TILLMAN. Good-by, darling!

[*Kissing JINNY and embracing her a long time, while AUSTIN and TILLMAN shake hands warmly and say good-by.*]

JINNY. [*Going to her father.*] Good-by, father. Dear old father!

[*With happy emotion.*]

[AUSTIN meanwhile is shaking hands with MRS. TILLMAN.]

JINNY. [*Returns to her mother.*] Darling—oh, how good you've always been to me! Oh, mummy darling, I *shall* miss you! You'll send me a letter to-morrow, won't you, or a telegram? Send a telegram—you've got the address!

MRS. TILLMAN. [*With tears in her eyes.*] Yes, it's written down!

JINNY. You can tell father, but no one else!

[*Hugs and kisses her mother.*]

TILLMAN. Come, Susan! They'll lose their train!

[*JINNY again embraces her father.*]

ALL. Good-by! Good-by!

[*JINNY, starting to go with AUSTIN, suddenly leaves him and runs back again to her mother and throws herself in her arms. They embrace, in tears.*]

JINNY. Good-by, mother!

MRS. TILLMAN. Good-by, my darling!

TILLMAN. Come, come! they'll lose their train!

[*JINNY runs to AUSTIN, and with his arms about her, they hurry to the door Left. They go through the doors at back to window in the corridor. JINNY stops at the door and she and AUSTIN face each other a moment.*]

JINNY. [*Looking up at him.*] Oh, Jack!

[*She throws her arms about his neck and buries her face on his shoulder.*]

AUSTIN. Jinny, Jinny dear, you're not sorry?

JINNY. [*Slowly raises her head and looks at him, smiling through her tears, and speaks in a voice full of tears and little sobs.*] Sorry? Oh, no! Oh, no! It hurts me to leave them, but I never was so happy in my life!

[*He kisses her and they hurry out, with his arm about her.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. [*In the corridor, lifts the window.*] I hear the door—

TILLMAN. There they are!

[*SUSIE rushes across the stage with a bowl of rice in her arms and goes out Left.*]

[*MR. and MRS. TILLMAN wave and say "Good-by!" "Good-by!" "Good-by!"*]

They close the window in silence. The sound is heard as the window frame reaches the bottom. They turn and come slowly forward, TILLMAN wiping his eyes and MRS. TILLMAN biting her lips to keep the tears back. They come into the front room and stop, and for a second they look around the empty room. TILLMAN puts his hand in his pocket and takes out his cigar case. MRS. TILLMAN, turning, sees him; she goes to him swiftly and touches his arm, looking up at him through her

tears. He turns to her and slowly takes her in his arms and holds her there close and kisses her tenderly on the cheek.

[*SUSIE enters Left, with empty bowl, sobbing aloud, as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

(Two months later)

The Vatican, Rome; the Tribune of the Apollo Belvedere; a semicircular room with dark red walls; in the center is the large statue of Apollo. There are doorways at Right and Left. There is a bench on the right side of the room. A single LADY TOURIST enters Right, takes a hasty glance, yawns, and looking down at her Baedeker, goes out Left. A PAPAL GUARD is seen passing outside in the court. A FRENCHMAN and his WIFE (with Baedekers) are seen approaching; they are heard talking volubly. They enter Left.

BOTH. Ah!—

[*They stand a moment in silent admiration.*]

HE. [*Reading from Baedeker.*] Apollo Belvedere. [*He looks up.*] C'est superb!

SHE. [*Beaming with admiration.*] Magnifique! Voilà un homme!

HE. Quelle grace!

SHE. Quelle force!

[*Both talk at once in great admiration and intense excitement for a few moments. Then he suddenly drops into his ordinary tone and manner.*]

HE. Allons, allons nous!

SHE. [*In the same tone.*] Oui, j'ai faim!

[*They go out Right.*]

[*JINNY and AUSTIN enter Left, he looking over his shoulder. They stand a moment just inside the doorway.*]

JINNY. What are you looking back so much for, Jackie?

AUSTIN. I thought I saw some one I know.

JINNY. Who?

AUSTIN. I didn't know who; it just seemed to be a familiar back.

JINNY. [*Playfully.*] Oh, come! I think the present works of art and your loving wife are quite enough for you to look at without hunting around for familiar backs!

AUSTIN. And Baedeker! [*Reading from Baedeker about the Apollo.*] Apollo Belvedere,

found at the end of the fifteenth century, probably in a Roman villa—

JINNY. Of course, Apollo!

AUSTIN. Great, isn't it?

JINNY. Stunning! [*She turns and looks at him, smiling quizzically.*] Still—but I suppose I'm prejudiced!

AUSTIN. [*Obtuse.*] Still what?

JINNY. You dear old stupid! You know, Jack, you're deeply and *fundamentally* clever and brilliant, but you're not quite—*bright—not quick!*

[*Laughing.*]

AUSTIN. Don't you think having *one* in the family quick as chain lightning is enough? What have I missed this time, Jinny? You don't mean you've found a family likeness in the statue over there? I don't want to be unappreciative, but it doesn't suggest your father to me in the least,—nor even Geoffrey.

JINNY. *Stupid!!* Of course it doesn't suggest anybody to me—I was only thinking I sympathized with Mrs. Perkins of Boston,—don't you know the old story about her?

AUSTIN. No, what was it?

JINNY. [*After a quick look around to see that they are alone.*] Well—Mrs. Perkins from Boston was personally conducted here once and shown this very statue, and she looked at it for a few moments, and then turned around and said, "Yes, it's all right, but give me Perkins!"

AUSTIN. Jinny!

[*Laughing.*]

JINNY. Are you shocked? Come, I'm tired; let's sit down here and read my letters—there's one from Geof.

[*They sit on the bench at Right, and JINNY takes out a letter from GEOFFREY.*]

AUSTIN. I'll read ahead in Baedeker and you tell me if there's any news. [*He opens the Baedeker and reads, and she opens and reads the letter.*] Where is Geof's letter from?

JINNY. New York, of course; where else would it be?

AUSTIN. I had an idea he was going away.

JINNY. Geof! Where?

AUSTIN. West, a good way somewhere.

JINNY. But *why* would he go West?

AUSTIN. Oh, he had some business, I believe; I remember thinking it was a good idea when he told me. It was the day we were married—I was waiting for you to come downstairs.

JINNY. I think it's very funny Geof never said anything about it to *me*.

AUSTIN. My dear, what time had you? You were *getting married!*

JINNY. I *was!* Thank heaven! I'm so happy, Jack!

[*Snuggling up to him on the bench.*]

AUSTIN. [*Steals a little, quick hug with his arm about her waist.*] Bless you, darling, I don't think there was ever a man as happy as I am!

[*They start apart quickly as a GERMAN COUPLE enter Right, with a YOUNG DAUGHTER, who is munching a cake, and hanging, a tired and unwilling victim, to her mother's hand.*]

WOMAN. Ach! schön! sehr schön!!

MAN. Grösses, nicht?

WOMAN. Yah!

[*They stand admiring.*]

AUSTIN. By the way, when you answer your brother's letter, I wish you'd say I seemed surprised he was still in New York.

JINNY. [*Reading.*] Um—um—

MAN. [*Wiping his warm brow.*] Wunderbaum!

WOMAN. Yah!!

[*They go out Left, talking.*]

JINNY. [*Looking up from her letter.*] Oh! what do you think?

AUSTIN. That you're the sweetest woman in the world.

JINNY. No, *darling*, I mean *who* do you think Geoffrey says is over here and in Italy?

AUSTIN. I haven't the most remote idea! So far as I've been able to observe there has been absolutely *no one* in Italy but *you and me*.

JINNY. If you keep on talking like that, I shall kiss you!

AUSTIN. What! before the tall, white gentleman? [*Motioning to Apollo.*] I am dumb.

JINNY. [*Very lovingly.*] Silly! Well!—Mrs. Cullingham and Peter are over here and have brought Ruth Chester!

AUSTIN. [*Speaking without thinking.*] Then it *was* her back.

JINNY. [*With the smallest sharpening of the look in her eye.*] When?

AUSTIN. That I saw just now.

JINNY. [*With the tiniest suggestion of a strain in her voice.*] You said you didn't know whom it reminded you of.

AUSTIN. Yes, I know, I didn't quite.

JINNY. But if you thought it was Ruth Chester, why not have said so?

AUSTIN. No reason, dear, I simply didn't think.

JINNY. Well—[*Sententiously.*—*next time—think!*]

AUSTIN. What else does Geoffrey say?

JINNY. Oh, nothing. The heat for two days was frightful—already they miss me more than he can say—

AUSTIN. I'll bet. [*Interrupted.*]

JINNY. Father smoked nineteen cigars a day the first week I was gone.

AUSTIN. I haven't *had* to smoke *any*!

JINNY. Mercy! don't boast!—and he thinks they will all soon go to Long Island for the summer.

AUSTIN. Doesn't he say a word nor a hint at his going West?

JINNY. No, he says he may go to Newport for August, and that's all.

[*Putting away letter, and getting out others.*]

AUSTIN. Going to read all those?

JINNY. If you don't mind, while I rest. Do you mind?

AUSTIN. Of course not, but I think while you're reading I'll just take a little turn and see if I can't come across the Cullinghams.

[*Rising.*]

JINNY. [*After the merest second's pause, and looking seriously at him.*] Why don't you?

AUSTIN. I'll bring them here if I find them—

[*He goes out Right.*]

[*JINNY looks up where he went off and gazes, motionless, for a few moments. Then she throws off the mood and opens a letter.*]

[*Two tired Americans enter Right, a girl and her mother, MRS. LOPP and CARRIE.*]

MRS. LOPP. What's this, Carrie?

CARRIE. [*Looking in her Baedeker.*] I don't know; I've sort of lost my place, somehow!

MRS. LOPP. Well, we must be in Room No. 3 or 4—ain't we?

CARRIE. [*Reads out.*] The big statue at the end of Room No. 3 is Diana the Huntress.

MRS. LOPP. This must be it, then,—Diana! Strong-looking woman, ain't she?

CARRIE. Yes, very nice. You know she was the goddess who wouldn't let the men see her bathe.

MRS. LOPP. Mercy, Carrie! and did all the other goddesses? I don't think much of their habits. I suppose this is the same person those Italians sell on the streets at home, and call the Bather.

[*JINNY is secretly very much amused, finally she speaks.*]

JINNY. Excuse me, but you are in one of the cabinets—and this is the Apollo Belvedere.

MRS. LOPP. Oh, thank you very much. I guess we've got mixed up with the rooms,—seems as if there's so many.

CARRIE. [*Triumphantly.*] There! I *thought* it was a man all the time!

MRS. LOPP. Well, what with so many of the statues only being piecemeal, as it were, and so many of the men having kinder women's hair I declare it seems as if I don't know the ladies from the gentlemen half the time.

CARRIE. Did the rest of us go through here?

JINNY. I beg your pardon?

CARRIE. Thirty-four people with a gassy guide? We got so tired hearing him talk that we jes' sneaked off by ourselves, and now we're a little scared about getting home; we belong to the Cook's Gentlemen and Ladies.

JINNY. Oh, no, the others haven't passed through here; probably they have gone to see the pictures; you'd better go back and keep asking the attendants the way to the pictures till you get there.

MRS. LOPP. [*With rather subdued voice.*] Thank you! We've come to do Europe and the Holy Land in five weeks for \$400—but I don't know, seems as if I'm getting awful tired—after jes' seven days.

CARRIE. [*Affectionately.*] Now, mommer, don't give up; it's because you haven't got over being seasick yet; that's all!

JINNY. [*Helplessly.*] Oh, yes, you'll find it much less tiring in a few days, I'm sure.

MRS. LOPP. Still Rome does seem a powerful way from *home*! How'll we ask for the pictures?

CARRIE. Why, mommer! "Tableaux!" "Tableaux!" I should think you'd 'a' learned that from our church entertainments! Good-by; thank you ever so much.

MRS. LOPP. You haven't lost *your party*, too, have you?

JINNY. [*Smiling.*] I hope not! He promised to come back!!

MRS. LOPP. Oh! pleased to have met you—Good-by!

[*They start off Left.*]

JINNY. No, not that way—back the way you came.

MRS. LOPP. Oh, thank you!

[*She drops her black silk bag; out of it drop crackers, an account book, a thimble, a thread-and-needle case, a bottle of pepsin tablets, etc. They all stoop to pick the collection up, JINNY helping.*]

JINNY. [*Handing.*] I'm sure you'll want these!

MRS. LOPP. Yes, indeed; don't you find them coupon meals very dissatisfactory?

CARRIE. Thank you ever so much again. Come on, mommer!

[*MRS. LOPP and CARRIE go out Left.*]

[*JINNY looks at her watch and goes back to her letter.*]

[*MRS. CULLINGHAM enters Left*]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Screams.*] Jinny!

JINNY. [*Jumps up.*] Mrs. Cullingham! [*They embrace.*] Did Jack find you?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. No, we haven't seen him! Ruth and Peter are dawdling along, each on their own; I like to shoot through a gallery. There's no use spending so much time; when it's over you've mixed everything all up just the same!

JINNY. [*Laughing.*] Well, I've this minute read a letter from Geoffrey saying you were over here. And Jack, who thought he got a glimpse of you a little while ago, went straight off to try and find you.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. What fun it is to see you—and how *happy* you look!

JINNY. I couldn't look as happy as I feel!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Glancing at the statue.*] Who's your friend? Nice gent, isn't he?

[*Laughing.*]

JINNY. Mr. Apollo! Would you like to meet him?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Hesitates.*] Er—no—I don't think! You must draw the line somewhere! He wouldn't do a thing to Corbett, would he?

JINNY. Who was Corbett?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. He was a prize fighter, and *is*—but that's another story—Do you mean to say you've never heard of him?

JINNY. Oh, the name sounds familiar. But this, you know, is Apollo.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. No, I don't know; was he a champion?

JINNY. No, he was a Greek god!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, was he? Well, I wouldn't have cared about being in the tailoring business in those days, would you? Let's sit down. [*They sit on bench Right.*] Of course you know we wouldn't accept a thing like that in Peoria, where I come from, as a gift! No, indeed! If the King of Italy sent it over to our Mayor, he'd return it C.O.D.

JINNY. Sounds like Boston and the Macmonnies Bacchante!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, my dear, *worse* than that! It reminds me of a man at home who kept an underclothing store in our principal street and had a plaster cast of this gent's brother, I should think, in his window to show a suit of Jaegers on,—you know, a "combination"! And our Town Committee of Thirteen for the moral improvement of Peoria made the man take it out of his window and hang the suit up empty!

JINNY. Poor man!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. You ought to see our Park!—you know we've got a perfectly beautiful park,—and all the *men* statues wear Prince Alberts, and stand like this—[*She poses with lifted arm at right angle to body.*]—as if they were saying, "This way out" or "To the monkey cage and zoo."

JINNY. [*Laughing.*] But the women statues?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. My dear! They only have heads and hands; all the rest's just clumps of drapery—we only have "Americans" and "Libertys," anyway. They apply the Chinese emigration law to all Venuses and *sich ladies!*

[*They both laugh.*]

JINNY. Where did you say Peter and Ruth were?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Well, I left Peter—who isn't at all well; I hoped this trip would help his indigestion, but it seems to have made it worse!—I left him—er—in a room with a lot of *broken-up Venuses*—I thought it was all right; he was eating candy, and there wasn't a whole woman among 'em!

JINNY. [*Slight strain in her voice.*] How did you happen to bring over Ruth Chester?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Well, you know I always liked her. She never snubbed me in her life—I don't think any one you've introduced me to has been quite so nice to Peter and me as Mrs. Chester and her daughter.

JINNY. O they *are* real people!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Ruth is terribly depressed over something. She's thin as a rail and the family are worried. She says there's nothing worrying her, and the doctors can't find anything the matter with her,—so Mrs. Chester asked me if I wouldn't take her abroad. They thought the voyage and change might do her good, and I seem to have a more cheery influence over her than most people. So here we are! [*As PETER enters Left, eating.*] Here's Peter! How do you think the darling looks?

PETER. How do you do, Mrs. Austin?

JINNY. How do you do, Peter? [*They shake hands.*] I'm sorry to hear you are seedy, but you eat too many sweet things.

PETER. I'm not eating candy; it's soda mints! [*Showing a small bottle.*] I am bad to-day, mother.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. If you don't get better, we'll go to Carlsbad.

JINNY. How do you like Rome, Peter?

PETER. Oh, I don't know—too much Boston and not enough Chicago to make it a real lively town.

JINNY. [*Laughing.*] I think I'll go look for Jack and tell him you've turned up.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Perhaps he's found Ruth.

JINNY. [*With a change in her voice.*] Yes, perhaps.

[*She goes out Right.*]

PETER. [*Going to the doorway Right, calls after her.*] Ruth's in a room on your left, with rows of men's heads on shelves, Emperors and things,—but gee, such a *job* lot!

[*Comes back and looks up at the statue.*]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Isn't it beautiful, Peter?

PETER. No, it's *too big*!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Still this one isn't broken!

PETER. That's a comfort! Yes, it has been mended, too! [*Examining.*] Oh, yes, it's only another of these second-hand

statues. Say, you missed one whole one, the best I've seen yet! A Venus off in a fine little room, all mosaics and painted walls,—that's where I've been.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Why, Peter Cullingham! *Alone*? What kind of a Venus?

PETER. Oh, beautiful! I forgot to take my medicine!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Was she—er—*dressed*, darling?

PETER. We—you know—she *had* been, but she'd sort of pushed it a good way off!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*With a sigh.*] You know we *ought* to admire these things, Peter darling; that's partly what we've come to Europe for!

PETER. O pshaw! here comes a gang of tourists. Come on, let's skip!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. But Ruth and Mrs. Austin?

PETER. We didn't agree to wait, and we can all meet at our hotel.

[*A crowd of TOURISTS, led by a GUIDE, presses and crowds in the doorway. They drag their tired feet in a listless shuffle across the room and stand in a somewhat sheepish and stupid bunch at the statue. One or two of the younger women nudge each other and giggle. The GUIDE stands a little in advance of them. The GUIDE describes the statue, and while he is doing so PETER and MRS. CULLINGHAM go out Right. Most of the TOURISTS turn and watch them go instead of looking at the statue.*]

GUIDE. This is the Apollo Belvedere, discovered at the end of the fifteenth century, some say in a Roman villa or farm-house near the Grotter Terratter. Very fine specimen both as marble and man. This statyer is calculated to make Sandow et cetry look like thirty cents. Height seven feet, weight—

A MAN TOURIST. How much?

A GIRL TOURIST. Was he married?

[*Titters from the group.*]

GUIDE. Give it up! Should judge he was. The god once held a bow in his left hand and probably a laurel wreath in his right.

ANOTHER WOMAN TOURIST. A what?

GUIDE. A laurel wreath. You want to take a good look at this, as it is a very fine piece. Now come along, please—make haste; we must finish up this place before feeding!

[He leads the way out Right, and the TOURISTS follow, shuffling along, without speaking, MRS. LOPP and CARRIE lagging in the rear.]

[AUSTIN enters Left, followed by Ruth.]

AUSTIN. This is where I left her with Apollo! *[Calls.]* Jinny! She seems to have gone!

[He looks behind the statue and out door, Right.]

RUTH. Probably the Cullinghams, who were headed in this direction, found her, and they've all gone back for us; you see I walked all around the court first without going into the rooms, so I missed them, but found you.

AUSTIN. What shall we do? Sit down here and wait for them to come back, or shall I go in search?

RUTH. Oh, no, you might miss them, and then we'd all be lost! If you left Jinny here, she's sure to come back to meet you.

[She sits on the bench and AUSTIN stands behind her.]

AUSTIN. I'm sorry to learn you've been ill.

RUTH. Oh! it's nothing.

AUSTIN. Ah, I'm afraid it's a good deal. Will you forgive me if I say I think I know what it is!

[She looks up startled.]

[After a moment.]

You haven't forgotten the day of Jinny's and my wedding, when you told me Geoffrey Tillman needed a friend?

RUTH. I hoped you'd forgotten; I oughtn't to have told you; I oughtn't to have!

AUSTIN. Why not? I had a talk with Geoffrey, then, and he told me everything.

RUTH. He did! You are sure?

AUSTIN. Sure. *[He sits beside her.]*

RUTH. That he and I—

AUSTIN. Love each other.

RUTH. Oh, but that isn't all.

AUSTIN. I know the rest!

RUTH. He told you—about—about—

AUSTIN. The marriage?—Yes?

RUTH. Oh, I'm so glad, so glad! Now I can speak of it to some one, and some one who can advise me, and will help us.

AUSTIN. I have already advised him, but he doesn't seem to be taking my advice; it has worried me.

RUTH. When I left he was awfully depressed. He said he saw no prospect of being able to publish our marriage for years, maybe!

AUSTIN. What marriage?

[In astonishment.]

RUTH. Our marriage, in Brooklyn! *[She notices his expression and is alarmed.]* You said he had told you!

AUSTIN. *[Recovering himself, and speaking at first with hesitation.]* Yes, but not the details, not—wait, I'm a little confused. *[Rising and walking a moment.]* Let's get it all quite clear now, that's the only way I can help you—both; I ought, of course, to have gone through it all with him, but there really wasn't time.

RUTH. I can't go on like this much longer. It's killing me to deceive mother; I must tell her soon!

AUSTIN. *[Quickly, stops walking.]* No. You mustn't, not yet, if I'm going to help you; you'll obey me, won't you?

RUTH. Yes, if you only will help us!

AUSTIN. You said you and Geoffrey Tillman were married where?

RUTH. In Brooklyn.

AUSTIN. When?

RUTH. A month before your wedding.

AUSTIN. *[To himself.]* It's impossible!

[Walking up and down.]

RUTH. *[Smiling sadly.]* Oh, no! I remember the date only too well.

AUSTIN. I didn't mean that.

RUTH. I lied to my mother that day for the first time—at any rate, since I was a child—and I've been lying to her ever since.

AUSTIN. *[Probing her.]* But—but why were you married so secretly?

RUTH. We couldn't afford to marry and set up for ourselves. He expected then to be sent off at once to the Philippines, and—well he didn't want to leave me behind, free; I'm afraid he's rather jealous—you must have found out by now that Jinny is. They all are! And I didn't want him to go so far off without my belonging to him either; I'm that jealous, too! *[Smiling.]* So—that's why!

AUSTIN. And this long period of secrecy since then—do you understand that?

RUTH. Hasn't he explained to you his debts? You know before he loved me he was very fast, but since—

AUSTIN. Yes, I know how he gave up every one of his old habits with a great deal of courage.

RUTH. *Nobody* knows what it cost him! How can you help us? Get him something to do to pay off his debts? Or can't you make him feel even if we do have to go on living at our different homes for a while, it is better to publish the fact that we are married?—

AUSTIN. I shall go back at once to America if I can persuade Jinny!

RUTH. And I, too?

AUSTIN. No. You must stay abroad till I send word for you to come home. If I am going to help you, you will help me by doing exactly as I say, won't you?

RUTH. Yes.

AUSTIN. It's *very* important that you should *absolutely* obey me!

RUTH. *I will.* [A pause.]

[JINNY, unnoticed by either of them, appears in the doorway at Right. AUSTIN is walking up and down. RUTH is leaning her elbow on the back of the bench and burying her face in her hands.]

AUSTIN. It's awful! My God, it's awful!

JINNY. [In a strained, assumed, nonchalant tone.] *What is?*

RUTH. Jinny! [Rising.]

AUSTIN. I didn't hear you, Jinny!

JINNY. No, you both seemed so absorbed.

RUTH. [Going to JINNY.] I'm so glad to see you.

[Kisses her, but JINNY only gives her her cheek and that rather unwillingly; she is looking all the time at her husband.]

JINNY. Thank you, I've just left the Cullighams. They sent word to you they were going and would wait for you outside.

RUTH. Oh, then, I mustn't keep them waiting. We'll all meet at dinner to-night, won't we? Good-by—good-by.

[With a grateful look at AUSTIN, she goes out Right.]

JINNY. [Watches her go; then turns to AUSTIN.] That wasn't true, what I told her—I haven't seen the Cullighams, and I don't know where they are, and what's more, I don't care!

AUSTIN. What do you mean?

JINNY. [Beginning by degrees to lose control of herself.] What did *she* mean by following you to Rome?

AUSTIN. Jinny!

JINNY. Oh, don't try to deny it; that'll only make me suspect you!

AUSTIN. My dear girl, you don't know what you're saying!

JINNY. She's ill, they say at home! Yes, and they don't know what's the matter with her, do they? No! But I can tell them! She's in love with another woman's husband!

AUSTIN. [Taking her hand.] Hush! I won't allow you to say such things!

JINNY. [With a disagreeable little laugh.] Oh, won't you? You'd better be careful,—my eyes are opened!

AUSTIN. Yes, and much too wide.

JINNY. A half-blind person would have known there was something between you two. When I came into this room just now, it was in the air—it was in both your faces!

[She sits on the bench.]

AUSTIN. You've worked yourself up to such a pitch you're not responsible for what you're saying!

JINNY. *I not responsible!* What was it you were saying was so "awful" when I came in here? "My God, so awful!"

[He doesn't answer.]

[Almost hysterical, she rises.]

She had told you she loved you! She'd confessed she'd followed you over here!

AUSTIN. Absolutely false, *both* your suppositions!

JINNY. Oh, of course you'd protect her; you're a gentleman! But if I *thought* you *knew* she was coming over—

AUSTIN. Jinny! Jinny! How *can* you have such a thought?

JINNY. Well, why didn't you tell me when you thought you saw her a little while ago?

AUSTIN. Oh—

JINNY. Oh, it's very easy to say "Oh!" [Imitating him.] but *why* didn't you?

AUSTIN. I told you I didn't think who it was; I only thought something familiar flashed across my eyes. Jinny darling, this is sheer madness on your part, letting yourself go like this. It has no reason, it has no excuse! Ask your own heart, and your own mind, if in speaking to *me* as you have, you haven't done me at least an injustice and my love for you a little wrong.

JINNY. Well, I'm sure *she's* in love with you, anyway.

AUSTIN. No, she isn't! And it's disgraceful of you to say so! I know she isn't—

JINNY. How do you know she isn't?

AUSTIN. There's no question of it. I'm sure of it! You mustn't think, dear, that because *you* love me, everybody does—you idealize me!

[Smiling apologetically.]

JINNY. Oh, you're so modest you don't see! but I do—on the steamer, in the hotels, everywhere we go, always, all the women admire you awfully! I see it!

AUSTIN. [Laughing.] What utter nonsense! [Taking her into his arms.] You've got something in your eyes!

JINNY. Only tears!

AUSTIN. No, something else,—something green.

JINNY. [Laughs through her tears.] Somebody's told you my old nickname!

AUSTIN. What?

JINNY. [Laughs and is a little embarrassed.] The girl with the green eyes.

AUSTIN. Ahem!—

JINNY. Well, I don't care if it is appropriate, I can't help it.

[Slipping from his arms.]

AUSTIN. You must—or it will threaten our happiness if you let yourself be carried away by jealousy for no earthly reason outside of your dear, little imagination, like you have this time—

[Interrupted.]

JINNY. You honestly don't think she cares for you?

AUSTIN. Not a bit!

JINNY. But what was it you were so serious about—what *is* between you?

AUSTIN. She is in a little trouble, and I happen to know about it.

JINNY. How?

AUSTIN. [After a second's hesitation.] That you mustn't ask me; it was not from her I knew of it.

JINNY. Truly?

AUSTIN. Truly.

JINNY. I don't care, she hadn't any business to go to you! I should think she'd have gone to a *woman* instead of a *man* for sympathy. She's got Mrs. Cullingham!

AUSTIN. She can't go to her, poor girl. Mrs. Cullingham knows nothing about it.

JINNY. Now don't you get too sympathetic—that's very dangerous!

AUSTIN. Look out, your imagination is peeping through the keyhole.

[A moment's pause.]

JINNY. [In a sympathetic tone, the jealousy gone.] What is her trouble, Jack?

AUSTIN. That, dear, I can't tell you now; some day, perhaps, if you want me to, but not now. Only I give you my word of honor, it has nothing to do with you and me—does not touch our life! And I want you to tell me you believe me, and *trust* me, and won't let yourself be jealous again!

JINNY. I do believe you, and I do trust you, and I will try not to be jealous again!

AUSTIN. That's right.

JINNY. You know that book of De Maupassant's [*They move away together.*] I was reading in the rain the other day,—about the young girl who killed herself with charcoal fumes when her lover deserted her?

AUSTIN. [Half laughing.] This is apropos of what, please? I have absolutely *no* sympathy with such people.

JINNY. In America that girl would have simply turned on the gas.

AUSTIN. You're getting morbid, Jinny!

JINNY. No, I'm not! but if ever—

AUSTIN. [Interrupting—laughing it off.] I shall install *electric light* as soon as we get home!

[They both laugh.]

JINNY. I'm sorry I was so disagreeable to Ruth, but I'll try to make up for it in every way I can.

[She sits on the bench and he leans over the back toward her.]

AUSTIN. There's one other thing, Jinny, I'd like to speak of now. Would you mind giving up the Lakes and going home this week?

JINNY. Going home—at once?

AUSTIN. Yes—*Wall Street* is very uncertain. I'm worried,—I don't mind telling you,—and I want to see Geoffrey about his business.

JINNY. [Half in earnest.] Jack! You're not running away from *her*, are you?

AUSTIN. Jinny! *After all* we've said!

JINNY. No! I wasn't in earnest! I'm ready to go. I've seen the Lakes, and whether you are in Italy or in New York, so long as we are together, it's our honeymoon just the same.

AUSTIN. And may it last *all our lives*!

JINNY. Still, I don't mind owning up that leaving Ruth Chester behind here is rather pleasanter! [*She rises quickly with a sudden thought.*] *She is not going back, too?*

AUSTIN. Oh, no, not for a long time. They are over here indefinitely.

JINNY. I've been too horrid and nasty for words this morning, Jack—I'm so sorry.

AUSTIN. It's over and forgotten now.

JINNY. You *do* forgive me?

AUSTIN. Of course, dear; only I want to say this one thing to you: to suspect unjustly a *true* love is to insult that love!

JINNY. I didn't really suspect you.

AUSTIN. Of course I know you didn't; this is only by way of a grandfatherly warning! It is possible to insult a true love too often—and love can die—

JINNY. Sh! don't, please, say any more. You have forgiven me, haven't you?

AUSTIN. Yes!

JINNY. Then kiss me!

AUSTIN. [*Smiling.*] Here! My dear, some one will see us!

JINNY. No, only Apollo; see, there's no one else about—it's luncheon hour!

AUSTIN. But— [*Taking her hand.*]

JINNY. [*Pulling him.*] Come along, then, behind the statue. No one will see us there!

[*They are behind the statue a moment and then come around the other side.*]

JINNY. There! no one saw us, and I'm so happy, are you?

AUSTIN. "So happy!"

[*JINNY takes his arm and they go to the Left entrance. She stops and looks up at him.*]

JINNY. Are my eyes green now?

AUSTIN. Now they're blue!

JINNY. Hurrah! and I'm going, from now on, to be *so good*, you won't know me.

[*And hugging his arm tight they go out as—*]

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT III

(*Three weeks later*)

The Austins' library;¹ a warm, attractive room, with dark woodwork, and the walls hung in crimson brocade; Dutch marqueterie furniture; blue and white china on the mantel and tops of the bookshelves; carbon photographs of pictures by Reynolds, Romney, and

Gainsborough on the wall. There is a double window at the back. A door at Right leads to the hall, and another on the Left side of the room leads to JINNY's own room. MRS. TILLMAN sits at a pianola Right, playing "Tell me, Pretty Maiden"; she stops once in a while, showing that she is unaccustomed to the instrument. JINNY enters from Left, singing as her mother plays.

JINNY. Darling mother!

[*She puts her arms about her and kisses her.*]

[*They come away from the pianola together, to a big armchair.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. I really must get one of those sewing-machine pianos for your father. I believe even he could play it, and it would be lots of amusement for us.

JINNY. Jack adores it; I gave it to him for an anniversary present.

MRS. TILLMAN. What anniversary?

[*Sitting in the chair.*]

JINNY. Day before yesterday. The eleventh Tuesday since our marriage. Have you been in town all day? I am glad to see you!

[*She sits on the arm of the chair with her arm about her mother.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, and I told your father to meet me here and we'd take the six-thirty train from Long Island City.

JINNY. Jack and I are going to the theater to-night.

MRS. TILLMAN. I thought they were all closed!

JINNY. Oh, no, there are several musical comedies on,—Jack's favorite form of amusement,—and I've bought the tickets myself for a sort of birthday party.

MRS. TILLMAN. Is it his birthday?

JINNY. No, that's only my excuse!

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Laughing.*] Had we dreamed you and Jack were coming home in June, your father and I wouldn't have gone into the country so early.

JINNY. We've been home two weeks and it hasn't been hot yet.

MRS. TILLMAN. And you're still ideally happy, aren't you, darling?

JINNY. Yes—

[*She rises and goes to a table near the center of the room and looks at the titles of several books without realizing what they are.*]

¹ The house is in New York.

MRS. TILLMAN. Why, Jinny,—what does that mean?

JINNY. Oh, it's all my horrid disposition!

MRS. TILLMAN. Been seeing green?

JINNY. Um! Um! Once in Rome, and on the steamer, and again since we've been back.

MRS. TILLMAN. Nothing serious?

JINNY. [*Hesitatingly, she turns and faces her mother.*] No—but the last time Jack was harder to bring around than before, and he looked at me for fully five minutes without a particle of love in his eyes, and they were almost—*dead eyes!*

MRS. TILLMAN. What was it all about?

JINNY. Ruth Chester, principally.

MRS. TILLMAN. Why Ruth?

JINNY. Well, the first real scene I made was in Rome in the Vatican. I was jealous of her; I can't explain it all to you—as a matter of fact, it hasn't been all explained to *me!* Something was troubling Ruth that Jack knew, and he said he'd help her.

MRS. TILLMAN. What?

JINNY. That's just it; Jack won't tell me. And the day we sailed from Naples a telegram came, and of course I opened it, and it said, "Trust me, I will do everything you say. Ruth."

MRS. TILLMAN. Why haven't you told me anything of all this before, dear?

JINNY. [*Going back to her mother.*] I was ashamed to! Somehow, in the end I always knew I was wrong and had hurt him—hurt him terribly, mother, the man I love better than everything else in the world! Yes, even better than you and father and Geoffrey—all together!

[*In her mother's arms, crying a little.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. Oh, this curse of jealousy! I was in hopes he was so strong he would help you to overcome it.

JINNY. He does try hard, I can see sometimes; but he hasn't a spark of it in him, and he can't understand it, and I know I'm unreasonable, and before I know it I am saying things I don't know what, and some day he won't forgive them! I'm sure some day he won't!—

[*Breaking down again.*]

[*She rises and turns away.*]

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Rising and putting her arms about her.*] Come, dear! Now you're getting yourself all unstrung, and that

won't do you any good; you've got to fight this battle out, I'm afraid, by yourself, trusting in the deep love of your husband to teach him forbearance. Your father's and my troubles were never very big because we *shared* the curse, so we knew how to sympathize with each other!

JINNY. What an awful thing it is!

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, my dear child. Jealousy has no saving grace, and it only destroys what is always most precious to you. Jinny, don't let it destroy *your best happiness!*

JINNY. Mother, if it *should*, I'd kill myself!

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Shocked, but quite disbelieving her.*] My dear!

[*MAGGIE enters Right.*]

MAGGIE. Mr. Tillman is downstairs, madam.

MRS. TILLMAN. Tell him to come up.

MAGGIE. Yes, madam.

[*She goes out Right.*]

JINNY. Don't tell father anything before me.

MRS. TILLMAN. I don't know that I shall tell him at all; he would only advise more cigars!

[*TILLMAN enters Right.*]

[*MRS. TILLMAN sits on the sofa at Left.*]

TILLMAN. Are you here?

JINNY. [*Going to meet him.*] We are, father dear, and your presence *almost* completes us. [*Kisses him.*] I say *almost*, because Jack hasn't come up to town yet, and Geoffrey's heartless enough to stay on fishing at Cape Cod!

TILLMAN. No, he isn't; he's back to-day.

[*He sits in the armchair at Right.*]

JINNY. Oh, I do want to see him!

[*Sitting near her father.*]

TILLMAN. He ought to have been in by now—I met him this morning. He was to lunch with Jack, and he's going to put up for a few days at the University.

JINNY. He must dine with us every night.

TILLMAN. Jinny!—[*Looking at her.*]—You look as if you've been crying!

[*The two WOMEN are embarrassed, and*

JINNY doesn't reply.

TILLMAN. [*Hurt.*] Oh, if you prefer to have secrets from your father, it's all right! I don't begrudge your mother her *first place* in your affections!

JINNY. Not at all, father; with you and mother there's no first place. She will tell you all about it on the way home! Please, mother.

MRS. TILLMAN. Very well, dear.

TILLMAN. A little "scrap" between you and Jack?

JINNY. Yes, but it's all over!

TILLMAN. Um!—[*Thinks a second, then taking out his cigar case, he empties it of cigars and hands them to JINNY.*] Give your husband these, please, when he comes in!

[JINNY and her MOTHER exchange a smile.

JINNY. But, father, Jack's got boxes full—

TILLMAN. Never mind; give him those, from me, with my compliments!

JINNY. [*Laughing.*] Very well!

TILLMAN. How are you and Maggie getting on?

JINNY. Splendidly.

MRS. TILLMAN. Such a nice girl!

JINNY. And wasn't it odd Jack was bitterly opposed to my taking her?

MRS. TILLMAN. My dear, if we hadn't lent her to you for these few weeks, you wouldn't have got anybody decent for so short a time.

TILLMAN. Why didn't Jack want her to come?

JINNY. I don't know, he just didn't want her; and then last week he talked with her in the library for three-quarters of an hour by my watch.

MRS. TILLMAN. Why?

JINNY. Oh, it seems *she* has troubles, too! All single young women with troubles, of no matter what class, seem to make a bee line for my husband, even if they have to cross the ocean!

TILLMAN. What do you mean?

JINNY. [*Half laughing.*] Oh, nothing, but it was about that talk with Maggie that we had our last quarrel.

[MAGGIE enters Right.

MAGGIE. Mrs. Cullingham.

[*A second's dead silence, the announcement falling like a bombshell.*

JINNY. [*Astounded.*] Who?

[*She rises.*

TILLMAN AND MRS. TILLMAN. Who?

MAGGIE. Mrs. Cullingham and her son, madam.

JINNY. They're in Europe.

MRS. TILLMAN. Are you sure you're not mistaken, Maggie?

MAGGIE. Oh, yes'm. Even if you *could* mistake Mrs. Cullingham, you couldn't mistake Mr. Peter!

JINNY. Ask them to please come up, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Yes'm.

[*She goes out Right.*

TILLMAN. Why, they only just sailed the other day, didn't they?

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, and they were supposed to be gone all summer at least, for Ruth Chester's health! What in the world can they have come back for?

JINNY. [*With curious determination.*] That is what I intend to find out.

TILLMAN. [*Rising.*] We must be going, Susan; we've lost our train as it is.

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Rising.*] We can take the seven-two.

[MAGGIE shows in MRS. CULLINGHAM and

PETER. PETER shakes hands with MRS.

TILLMAN, then with JINNY, and then with MR. TILLMAN.

[MRS. CULLINGHAM kisses MRS. TILLMAN and shakes hands with MR. TILLMAN.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Jinny, you angel, aren't you surprised!

[*Kissing her.*

JINNY. Well, rather!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Well, you aren't a bit more surprised than I am. [*A clock strikes six-thirty.*] There goes the half hour, Peter; you must take your powder.

PETER. I beg your pardon, mother; it's the tablet now.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Excuse me, dear, I'm so dead tired.

[*Sits on the sofa.*

JINNY. [*To Peter.*] Will you have some water?

PETER. No, thank you, I've learned now to take them *au naturel*, and without much, if any, inconvenience!

[*Takes his tablet with still a certain amount of difficulty, and sits Right.*

MRS. TILLMAN. [*To MRS. CULLINGHAM.*] Did you have a bad voyage?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. No, perfectly beautiful.

PETER. [*Reproachfully, and with a final swallow.*] Oh, mother!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Except, of course, for poor Peter; he gets worse every trip! He can eat *absolutely nothing*—that is *for long*! But it's the Custom House that's worn me out; I was there from twelve till four.

MRS. TILLMAN. But you wouldn't have had time to buy anything!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Of course not! But I took plenty of new dresses for the entire summer; most of them hadn't been worn, and they were determined to make me pay duty.

JINNY. We had to pay awfully for things! I wanted to try and smuggle, but Jack wouldn't let me!

MR. TILLMAN. I'm afraid *we* must go!
[ALL rise.]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. What do you think the Inspector had the impudence to ask me finally,—if I wanted to bring the dresses in as theatrical properties!

[They laugh.]

MRS. TILLMAN. You must have some gorgeous frocks!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, there are some *paillettes*! But who do you suppose he took me for—Sarah Bernhardt!

TILLMAN. [Looking at his watch.] I don't wish to interrupt this vital political conversation, but, Susan, if you don't want to miss the seven-two train, too—!

MRS. TILLMAN. [Rising.] Oh, no, we mustn't do that. Good-by. [To MRS. CULLINGHAM, shaking hands.] It's nice to see you again, anyway. Is Ruth better?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I'm sorry to say—I don't think she is—good-by.

[To MR. TILLMAN, who says good-by—general good-bys.]

MRS. TILLMAN. [To JINNY.] You want me to tell your father?

JINNY. Yes, it's better; it does make him jealous if he thinks I tell you things and keep secrets from him.

TILLMAN. Good-by, Peter.

MRS. TILLMAN. Good-by, Peter.

PETER. By-by.

[MR. and MRS. TILLMAN quickly go out Right, JINNY going to the door with them.]

JINNY. [Coming back from doorway.] Now do tell me what it means. I thought you were abroad indefinitely, or for the summer at least.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. So did I! I'm just as surprised to be here as you *seem to be*! [They sit down near each other.] Didn't you really know we were coming?

JINNY. No! How should I?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I don't know—I thought—

[She hesitates, embarrassed.]

[After a pause.]

JINNY. What did you think?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Nothing, except that you must know we were coming home.

JINNY. Why—that I must?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. You mustn't put me into a corner like that!

JINNY. How do you mean "corner"? How did you happen to come home like this?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Ruth suddenly got a cable—she didn't tell me from whom—but she said she must go home at once.

JINNY. But her mother's never been better!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [Carelessly.] The cable wasn't from her mother.

JINNY. Oh, then, you know who it was from? [No answer.] Oh, I see now why you thought I ought to know about it; the cable was from Jack, wasn't it?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [Relieved.] Yes.

JINNY. Oh, it was!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I looked at it when she was out of the room; of course, it was sort of by accident—[Very much embarrassed.]—that is, I just happened to see—O dear, there! You know what I mean; it was dreadful of me, but I couldn't help it.

JINNY. [In a strained voice.] Jack and Ruth are very good friends and he looks after some of her affairs. You know having no man in the family complicates things.

PETER. Oh! I say!

[Standing up, suddenly.]

MRS. CULLINGHAM. What is it, dear?

PETER. I believe I haven't got my before-dinner tabs.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, look carefully!

PETER. [He looks in his right-hand pocket, takes out a bottle.] Soda mints! [From his left-hand pocket a box.] Alkali powders! [From third pocket a bottle.] Charcoal tablets! [From fourth pocket another bottle.] Dr. Man's Positive Cure! [From fifth pocket a box.] Bicarbonate soda!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. There's your other side pocket!

PETER. That's my saccharine [*Showing bottle.*] and my lithia tabs. [*Showing another bottle.*] We'll have to go, mother; I've left them home!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. We must go, anyway, my dear.

[*Rising.*

[JINNY also rises.

PETER. [*Suddenly claps his hand behind him and speaks joyfully.*] No, we needn't go after all; I forgot my hip pocket. Here they are!

[*Bringing them out.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. We must go all the same! [*To JINNY.*] Sometimes I think he takes too much medicine stuff!

JINNY. I should think so! Peter, you ought to diet.

PETER. I can't! I've tried, and I lose my appetite right away!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Good-by, dear. How long will you be in town?

JINNY. I don't know—several weeks, I imagine. Jack came home on some business, you know, and I don't think it's settled yet. Good-by.

[*To PETER.*

PETER. Good-by. You know you mustn't drink water with your meals; that's the great thing. So I drink only champagne.

[*He goes out Right.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Waits and speaks to JINNY with real feeling.*] I'm awfully ashamed of myself, and I hope I haven't made any trouble or fuss with my meddling. Don't let me!

JINNY. No, of course not.

[*With a strained smile.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I wish I could believe you.

JINNY. Well, do.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Good-by.

[*She goes out Right.*

JINNY. Good-by. Where's that telegram that came for him a little while ago? [*Going to the desk at Right, and finding the telegram.*] Of course it's from her, saying that she's arrived. That's the trouble with telegrams; the address doesn't give the handwriting away. She must have sent it from the dock! Couldn't even wait till she was home! [*She walks to the window and stands there a*

moment, then comes back, looking at her watch.] Nearly seven already, and no sign of him, and we must dress and dine—huh! I think I might as well tear up my theater tickets! [*She paces up and down the room, stopping now and then with each new thought that comes to her.*] I wonder if he went down there to meet her—he must have known the boat; if he cabled her to come back, she must have cabled an answer and what boat she'd take! But no other telegram has come for Jack here to my knowledge—oh! of course, what am I thinking of, she sent *that one* to his office to-day; she was afraid he might have left before this one could get there, so she risked it here. Good Heavens! why am I maudling on like this to myself out loud? It's really nothing—Jack will *explain* once more that he *can't* explain, but that Ruth has "troubles," and I'll believe him again! But I won't! He promised me she should stay over there! [*Looks at her watch again.*] He's there, with her! *Nothing ever* kept him half as late down town as this! What a little fool I am!

[GEOFFREY enters suddenly Right.

JINNY. [*Cries out, joyfully.*] Geoffrey! [*And rushing to him, embraces him.*] You brute, you, not to come straight back to New York when you heard I was home! You dear old darling, you!

GEOFFREY. I couldn't, old girl; there were reasons—I don't have to tell you I wanted to.

JINNY. I don't know! Was there a pretty girl up there, Geof? I'm sure I shouldn't think her pretty if you were in love with her. I believe I shall be awfully jealous of your wife when you get one!

GEOFFREY. Rubbish! Hasn't Jack come back yet?

JINNY. "Come back" from where?

GEOFFREY. Brooklyn.

JINNY. Brooklyn! Why, he told me—what did he go there for?

GEOFFREY. [*Embarrassed.*] I don't know if you don't—

JINNY. You *do*!!

GEOFFREY. No—really—I—

JINNY. Oh, it's something to be concealed, then?

GEOFFREY. Hang it, Jinny! drop the subject. I thought he said he was going to Brooklyn; probably I was mistaken.

JINNY. [*Satirically.*] One is so apt to think just casually that every one's going to Brooklyn! [*Looks at her watch.*] Of course it's Brooklyn. [*Goes and looks at the telegram; turns.*] So you're going back on me, too, are you? You're going to *protect* Jack at my expense!

[AUSTIN enters Right.]

AUSTIN. [*Absorbed.*] Good evening, Jinny dear.

JINNY. It's after seven!

AUSTIN. [*Pleasantly.*] Is it? Have you been waiting long, Geoffrey?

GEOFFREY. No, I've only just now come in.

JINNY. It's *I* who have done the waiting!

AUSTIN. I'm sorry, but it couldn't be helped.

JINNY. You didn't tell me you were going to Brooklyn.

AUSTIN. [*After a quick, sharp look at Geoffrey, who shakes his head once emphatically.*] It must have escaped my mind.

JINNY. That's very likely! Going to Brooklyn's the sort of thing one talks about and dreads for days.

AUSTIN. Well, Jinny, that will bear postponement, and my conversation with Geoffrey won't; will you please leave us together here for a while?

JINNY. And what about the theater?

AUSTIN. What theater?

JINNY. Oh, you've *forgotten* entirely my little birthday party! Thanks!

AUSTIN. Oh, Jinny! I *did*! Forgive me! I'm awfully sorry! I've got a lot on my mind to-day.

[*Tries to put his arms about her and kiss her.*

She pushes herself away from him, refusing to let him kiss her.

JINNY. Yes—I know you have—[*At door Left.*—I'll leave you two to your confidences. You can trust Geof; he just now refused to betray you.

[AUSTIN only looks at her fixedly, seriously.

She looks back at him with bravado.

Then she deliberately crosses the room, gets the cable, and recrosses with it and goes out Left.

AUSTIN. Poor Jinny! [*Turning to GEOFFREY.*] and that, too, lies largely on your already overcrowded shoulders.

GEOFFREY. [*Breaking down.*] I know! I know!

AUSTIN. [*Sitting in the corner of the sofa.*] Here, don't cry! You've got to be strong now, and you've no use nor time for crying. I've had another long interview with the Brooklyn minister.

GEOFFREY. Yes?—

AUSTIN. [*Drawing a chair near to him and sitting.*] Well, of course we both know that he's doing wrong to keep silent, but he will. He wishes I hadn't told him, because he thinks he'd never have noticed your divorce from Maggie when it was granted—nor remembered your name if he had seen it in the papers.

GEOFFREY. That's what I *told* you!

AUSTIN. You only argued that for fear I'd insist on *your* going to this minister yourself. But in the bottom of your heart you know it was a risk we couldn't afford to run. I've explained everything to him—how such a fine, sweet girl would suffer if he did expose you, and I gave him my word you would be remarried to Ruth at once after the divorce. Of course we both know it's wrong, but we both hope the end justifies the means that removes difficulty number two.

GEOFFREY. You're sure about Maggie?

AUSTIN. She's signed a paper; she realizes you'll never live with her, and—it's pathetic—she loves you—that girl, too—so much as to give you your freedom—Good Lord! what is it about you weak men that wins women so? What is it in *you* that has made two women love *you* to such a self-sacrificing extent?

GEOFFREY. [*Half tragic, half comic laugh.*] I give it up!

AUSTIN. [*Bitterly.*] So do I. Well, Maggie is to have six hundred dollars a year.

GEOFFREY. Where'll I get it?

AUSTIN. We'll talk about that when the time comes. [*He rises.*] Now the most important, the most painful, task of all must be done and *you* must do it. *Not I this time—*you!

GEOFFREY. [*Looking up, frightened.*] What?

AUSTIN. Ruth Chester landed this morning.

GEOFFREY. [*Starting up.*] Impossible!

[*Rising.*

AUSTIN. The moment Maggie signed my paper I cabled Miss Chester to return. You can't go out west and institute proceedings

for divorce without her *knowing the whole truth from you first!* You don't want her to find it out from the newspapers, do you?

GEOFFREY. And you want *me* to tell her?

AUSTIN. *To-day.* And to-morrow you start west!

GEOFFREY. [*Facing AUSTIN.*] I *won't* tell her!

AUSTIN. [*Calmly.*] You've got to!

GEOFFREY. I'd rather shoot myself; do you understand me—I'd rather shoot myself!

AUSTIN. That's nothing! That would be decidedly the *easiest* course out of it, *and* the most cowardly.

GEOFFREY. She'll hate me! She'll loathe me! How could she help it at first! But just after a little, if I weren't there, the love she has for me might move her somehow or other—and by degrees perhaps—to forgive—

AUSTIN. I don't deny that you will have to go through a terrible degradation with her—but that is nothing compared with what you deserve. If you tell her, at least the humiliation is secret, locked there between you two, and no one else in the world can ever know what happens; *but* if you send some one else, and no matter who,—*any one* else but you *is* an outsider,—you ask her to make a spectacle of her humiliation, to let a third in as witness to the relations and emotions between you two! It's insulting her *again!* Don't you *see?*

[*A pause.*]

GEOFFREY. Yes, I see! My God! I *must* tell her myself.

AUSTIN. That's right, don't waver, make up your mind and do it—Come!

[*Urging him up.*]

GEOFFREY. [*Hesitates a moment.*] And Jinny?

AUSTIN. Oh, she'll come round all right; she always does.

GEOFFREY. And she doesn't suspect?

AUSTIN. Not the slightest.

[*A pause.*]

GEOFFREY. Need she?

AUSTIN. The worst? No, *never!*

GEOFFREY. [*He rises, with new encouragement.*] You'll give me your word?

AUSTIN. Yes. [*Shakes his hand.*] I know how much she loves you; I wouldn't have her know anything. It's made us some ugly

scenes, but they soon pass, and when you are once out of your trouble for good, we'll have no excuse, I'm sure, for any more!

GEOFFREY. Then I shall go to bed to-night with the respect still of at least two women who are dear to me, my mother and Jinny, even if I lose the respect and love of the one woman who is dearer! Only think, Jack, how I've got to stand up there—never mind about myself—and make *her suffer tortures!* Good-by. God give me courage to do the heart-breaking thing I must do.

AUSTIN. I am sure the one hope you have of forgiveness is in your manliness of going to her as you are doing and telling her yourself *all* the truth!

GEOFFREY. And that, like everything else, I owe to you.

AUSTIN. No, to *Jinny!* Good luck!

[*He shakes GEOFFREY's hand and GEOFFREY goes out Right.*]

AUSTIN. [*Goes to the door Left, opens it, and calls to JINNY, in the next room.*] Jinny, Geoffrey's gone,—what are you doing?

JINNY. [*Answers in a very little staccato voice.*] Waiting till you should have the leisure to receive me!

AUSTIN. Come along!

[*Leaves the doorway.*]

[*JINNY enters Left and stands in the doorway.*]

JINNY. [*With affected nonchalance.*] I didn't care to go downstairs for dinner, so I have had a tray up here. Maggie brought up something for you, too; would you like it now?

AUSTIN. [*Ignoring purposely her mood and manner.*] I shouldn't mind! I do feel a little hungry.

[*He sits in the armchair.*]

JINNY. [*Speaks off through the doorway Left.*] Bring in the tray for Mr. Austin, Maggie.

MAGGIE. [*Off stage.*] Yes'm.

[*JINNY pulls forward a little tea table beside his chair. Her whole manner must be one of slow, dragging carelessness, like the calm before a storm. Her expression must be hard. She carries the telegram still unopened, and on top of it the theater tickets torn in pieces.*]

[*MAGGIE brings in the tray, puts it on the table, and goes out Right. On the tray are chops, peas, some whiskey, a syphon, a roll, etc.*]

AUSTIN. [*Sits down quickly and with a show of eagerness.*] Ah!

[*Begins to eat as if he were hungry and enjoyed it.*]

[JINNY sits on the sofa at his Left, and looks at him,—AUSTIN is of course conscious of JINNY's mood, but pretends not to notice it.]

AUSTIN. [*After a silence during which he eats.*] I say I am hungry! And these chops are very good, aren't they?

[*No answer.*]

I'll tell you what it is, Jinny! Of course traveling is great sport and all the rest of it, but after all one does get tired of hotels, and to quote a somewhat familiar refrain, "There's no place like home."

[*No answer.*]

Have you a headache, Jinny?

JINNY. [*Very short.*] No.

AUSTIN. That's a good thing, and I hope you are not as disappointed as I am about the theater.

JINNY. [*Half laughs.*] Humph!

AUSTIN. I'll celebrate your birthday tomorrow and take you.

JINNY. [*Quickly.*] Why did you go to Brooklyn?

AUSTIN. On the private business of some one else.

JINNY. [*With all her nerves tied tight.*] That's the best answer you will give me?

AUSTIN. My dear girl, it's the only answer I can give you.

JINNY. When you are through I have something for you!

AUSTIN. What?

JINNY. I'll give it to you when you have finished.

AUSTIN. I'm ready. [*He rises. JINNY rises too, and gives him the telegram with the torn tickets on top, and then rings the bell, at Right.*] What are these torn papers?

JINNY. Our theater tickets!

[*He looks at her.*]

AUSTIN. And when did this telegram come?

JINNY. This afternoon.

AUSTIN. Why didn't I get it when I came in?

JINNY. [*Bitingly.*] I kept it to have the pleasure of giving it to you myself; it's from Ruth Chester.

AUSTIN. How do you know?

JINNY. Oh, I haven't opened it! But I

know! When I held it in my hand it burnt my fingers! [*MAGGIE enters Right.*] Take away the tray, please, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Yes'm.

[*She leaves the room with the tray.*]

[JINNY replaces the small table carelessly, almost roughly.]

[AUSTIN opens and reads the telegram; there is a second's pause.]

JINNY. May I read it?

AUSTIN. [*After a moment's hesitation.*] Yes, if you wish.

[*Not handing it to her.*]

JINNY. I do!

AUSTIN. [*Reaches over and hands her the telegram; he speaks quietly.*] When you behave like this it's impossible for me to feel the same toward you.

JINNY. And how do you think I feel when I read this?

[*Reads it, satirically, bitterly.*]

"Arrived safely; please let me see you before the day goes. Ruth." "Ruth" if you please!

AUSTIN. [*Standing over JINNY.*] I want you to be careful to-night. I want you to control yourself. I've been through a great deal to-day, and if you make me angry God knows what I mightn't say and do!

JINNY. And I've been through a great deal for many a day now, and I want the truth about this at last! It's all very well for you to spare her by not telling me what this mysterious trouble is about which you've been hoodwinking me ever since we were married, but now you've got to choose between sparing her and sparing me!

[*She sits determinedly.*]

AUSTIN. Is this your answer to me when I beg you to be very careful to-night to control yourself?

JINNY. It's your turn to be careful! What did you marry me for if you were in love with Ruth?

AUSTIN. Jinny!

JINNY. [*A little frightened, to excuse herself.*] You gave me your word of honor she would stay abroad indefinitely.

AUSTIN. Nonsense! I said I understood she was going to stay some time—indefinitely.

JINNY. It's the same thing, and here she is back practically the moment we are!

AUSTIN. I can't control Miss Chester's movements—I couldn't foresee when she

would come back. In Rome she told me she would stay on.

JINNY. [*Rising and facing him.*] Ah! that's what I wanted to see, if you really *would lie* to me!

AUSTIN. What do you mean?

JINNY. [*Beside herself.*] Liar! [*He only looks at her, with his face hard and set; she is insane with jealousy for the moment.*] You sent for Ruth to come back.

AUSTIN. And if I did?

JINNY. You tried to deceive me about it. And if you'll tell me a lie about one thing, you'll tell me a lie about another, and I don't believe one word of all your explanations about the intrigue between you and Ruth Chester!

AUSTIN. [*Taking her two hands.*] Sit down!

[*She sits in the armchair, half forced by him.*]

JINNY. Why did you send for Ruth Chester to come back?

AUSTIN. I have told you before, I am trying to help Miss Chester.

JINNY. "*Ruth!*"

AUSTIN. I am trying to help her in a great and serious trouble.

JINNY. Why did you send for her to come back? What's the trouble?

AUSTIN. I've told you before I can't tell you.

JINNY. You daren't tell me, and you haven't even the face to tell another lie about it!

AUSTIN. If you say another word, I shall hate you! If you *won't control yourself*, I must make you, as well as keep my own sane balance. You have insulted my love for you to-night as you've never done before; you've struck at my own ideal of *you*; you've almost done, in a word, what I warned you you might do—*kill* the love I have for you!

JINNY. [*Frightened.*] Jack!

AUSTIN. I mean what I say!

JINNY. [*In tears.*] That—that you—you don't love me?

AUSTIN. That is not what I said, but I tell you now that since I first began to care for you, never have I loved you so little as I do to-night.

JINNY. [*With an effort at angry justification.*] And suppose I tell you it is your own fault, because you haven't treated me—

AUSTIN. [*Interrupting her.*] Like a *child*, instead of a *woman*!

JINNY. No, because you've kept part of yourself from me, and that part you've given—

AUSTIN. For God's sake, stop! [*A pause—JINNY is now thoroughly frightened; slowly she comes to her senses.*] Do you *want* a rupture for good between us? [*No answer.*] Can't you see what I tell you is true? That I can't bear any more to-night? That if you keep on you will rob *me* of every bit of love I have for you, just as you've already robbed me of the woman I thought you were?

JINNY. "Already!" No, no, Jack, don't say that. Oh, what have I done!

[*She cries.*]

AUSTIN. You've done something very serious, and before you do more—[*Speaking hardly.*]—I think we'd better not stay in this evening; it would be wiser for both of us if we went out somewhere.

JINNY. No, I couldn't go out feeling this way! I've hurt you, hurt you terribly! Oh, why do I do it? Why can't I help myself?

AUSTIN. I think one more scene to-night would finish things for us. I *warn* you of that, Jinny—

[*He goes to the desk and sits at it, looking blankly before him. She comes slowly, almost timidly, behind his chair.*]

JINNY. No, don't say it! don't say it! Try to forgive me—oh, Jack, I hate myself, and I'm so ashamed of myself! I know I've disappointed you awfully, awfully! You *did* idealize me; I knew it when you married me, but I told you then I wasn't worth your loving me, didn't I? I never pretended to be worthy of you. I always knew I wasn't.

AUSTIN. Hush!

JINNY. It's true! it's only too awfully true. But do you remember how you answered me then when I told you I wasn't worth your loving me?

AUSTIN. [*Coldly and without looking at her.*] No.

JINNY. You took me in your arms and held me so I couldn't have got away if I'd wanted to—which I didn't—and stopped the words on my lips with your *kisses*. [*Her throat fills. He makes no reply. She goes on very pathetically.*] How I wish you'd answer me that way now!

AUSTIN. Whose fault is it?

JINNY. Oh, mine! *mine!* I know it. You don't know it one-half so well as I! I love

you better than anything in the world, love everything of you—the turn of your head, the blessed touch of your hand, the smallest word that comes from your dear lips—the thoughts that your forehead hides, but which my heart guesses when I'm sane! And yet, try as hard as I can, these mad fits take hold of me, and although I'd willingly *die* to save you *pain*, still I, I myself, hurt and wound you past all bearing! It doesn't make any difference that I suffer too! I ought to! I deserve to—you *don't*! Oh, no! I know I'm a disappointment and a failure! [*Her eyes fill up with tears and her voice breaks.*]

AUSTIN. [*He turns to her.*] No, Jinny, not so bad as that, only I thought you were *big*—and you're *so little*, oh, *so small*!

JINNY. Yes, it's true; I'm small—I'm *small*! Oh, I'd like to be big, too! I want to be noble and strong, but I'm not—I'm as weak as water—only it's *boiling* water! I want to be Brunhilde, and I'm only Frou Frou! Yes, I'm little; but I *love* you—I *love* you!

[*She sinks on to a stool beside him. A moment's pause.*]

[*With a trembling voice.*]

You don't mind my sitting here?

AUSTIN. No—

[*Very quietly, he places his arm about her neck, his hand on her shoulder. She quickly steals up her hand to take his, and leaning her head over it, kisses his hand. He draws it away and kisses her hair.*]

JINNY. [*Timidly, very softly.*] You forgive me?

AUSTIN. [*With a long sigh.*] Yes.

JINNY. [*Bursting into tears and burying her face upon his knees.*] Thank you—thank you—I know I don't deserve it—I don't deserve it—I don't deserve it!

AUSTIN. [*Softly.*] Sh!—

[*JINNY half turns and looks up at him.*]

JINNY. [*Very, very quietly.*] You forgive me—but still—yes, I see it in your face, you don't love me the same. You look so tired, dear.

AUSTIN. [*Also very quietly.*] I am, Jinny.

JINNY. And—happy?

AUSTIN. I'm *not* quite happy.

JINNY. I wish I could make you so—make you love me the old way. You used to

smile a little when you looked at me—Jack, you don't any more. But I mean to make you to-night, if I can, and to make you love me as much as ever you did.

AUSTIN. Good luck, dear.

JINNY. [*Brightening.*] What time is it?

AUSTIN. [*Looking at his watch.*] Nearly nine.

JINNY. I suppose it is too late for me to dress and for us to go to the theater?

AUSTIN. Oh, yes,—and I'm too tired.

JINNY. [*Triumphantly.*] Well, then, you shall have your theater at home! If Mahomet won't go to the mountain, the mountain must go to your lordship!

AUSTIN. I don't understand!

JINNY. Well, just wait—[*She blows her nose.*—till I bathe my face and eyes a little; I feel rather bleary! [*Starting to go, she stops and turns.*]] Good-by?

[*Questioningly.*]

AUSTIN. [*Quietly.*] Good-by.

JINNY. [*Who wanted him to call her to him and kiss her.*] Oh, very well! but I'll make you smile yet and *kiss* me of your own accord to-night—you'll see!

[*She goes out Left.*]

[*She is heard singing in her room.* AUSTIN goes to the desk and after a long sigh he begins to write.

AUSTIN. [*Writing.*] Dear Ruth. The satisfaction of the visit to Brooklyn prevents me from being disappointed at having missed your telegram till too late to go to your house to-night. My heart aches for the blow you must have this evening, but please God you will bear it bravely. The man who loves you is not bad, but he has been weak. However, I feel once he can shake off the burden of his present marriage, you will never have cause to complain of him again. And if your future happiness lies truly in his hands, it will be safe there.

JINNY. [*Calls from her room.*] Are you ready?

AUSTIN. Yes.

[*He stops writing.*]

JINNY. In your orchestra chair?

AUSTIN. Yes.

JINNY. What will you have, tragedy or comedy?

AUSTIN. [*Smiling.*] Shall we begin with tragedy?

JINNY. All right.

AUSTIN. [*Continues to write.*] So far I have been able to keep Jinny in absolute ignorance, but I fear the blow must fall upon her soon, and I dread to think of what she, too, will suffer. Help me to keep it from her as long as we can, won't you?

[JINNY comes back; she has changed her dress to a loose negligée gown, with a red turban on her head; she brings two sheets with her.]

JINNY. Excuse me one minute while I set the stage! [*Moving toward each other the big armchair and the sofa, she covers them with the sheets. AUSTIN turns from his letter on the desk, to watch.*] Uncle Tom's Cabin, Act Four! [*She goes out only for a moment, and reënters, wearing a man's overcoat, with a pillow tied in the middle with a silk scarf, eyes, nose, and mouth made on it with a burnt match.*] Eliza crossing the ice! Come, honey darling! [*To the pillow.*] Mammy'll save you from de wicked white man!" [*Jumping up on the sofa, and moving with the springs.*] You ought to do the bloodhounds for me, Jack! Excuse me, but you look the part! [*AUSTIN watches her, not unamused, but without smiling.*] Hold tight to Lize, honey, and don't be afeerd o' dat big black man over dah—dat's Uncle Tom. [*Crossing to the arm-chair.*] Don't be afeerd, honey; it's Lize dat's cuttin' de ice this time. [*She throws the pillow away and drags off the two sheets.*] Oh, I can see this is too serious for you!

[*She starts singing a cakewalk and dances across the room until she reaches him, where she finishes.*]

AUSTIN. Very good, Jinny! I'm sure we couldn't have seen better at the theater.

JINNY. Ah! You're getting yourself again!—Darling! Come!—Come!—come to the pianola and you shall have the sextette! It's in there ready; I heard mother struggling with it. You don't suppose she has designs upon the Casino, do you? Now—ready?

[*He goes to the pianola and starts to play the sextette from "Florodora." She runs to the opposite side of the room and begins to sing and dance, crossing to AUSTIN as he plays.*]

AUSTIN. [*After a few moments.*] But I can't see you and play at the same time; I don't like it!

JINNY. [*Delighted.*] You want to see me, do you?

AUSTIN. Of course I do!

JINNY. Jack! [*Delighted.*] Well, then, turn round!

[JINNY, hurrying the time of the song, turns it into a regular skirt dance. She dances delightfully and AUSTIN cannot resist her charm. His face lightens, he smiles, and love comes into his eyes. JINNY sees and dances and sings all the better till she reaches him.]

AUSTIN. [*Rising, he takes her into his arms.*] You adorable Jinny!

JINNY. Ah, Jack! You're smiling again and—you love me!

[*Clasping her arms about his neck.*]

AUSTIN. Yes! Is the theater finished?

JINNY. No, only the first act. [*He sits in the big armchair, Jinny on his knee.*] I'm tired! [*He kisses her. There is a pause. There is a knock on the door at Right.*] Oh, hang it! [*Knock repeated.*] Don't answer it! We haven't half made up yet!

AUSTIN. But we must answer it, dear.

JINNY. [*As she rises unwillingly.*] I don't see why—I should have let her knock till she went away.

AUSTIN. Come in!

[MAGGIE enters with a letter.]

JINNY. What is it, Maggie?

MAGGIE. A note from Miss Chester, m'm, and she's downstairs herself waiting for an answer.

JINNY. For me?

[*Taking the letter.*]

MAGGIE. No, m'm; I think she said it was for Mr. Austin.

JINNY. Oh!—You may wait outside for the answer, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Yes, m'm. [*She goes out.*]

JINNY. [*Slowly goes to AUSTIN and gives him the letter, lightly.*] I see now why you were so anxious to let Maggie in. Perhaps you were expecting this.

AUSTIN. Jinny! [*Holding her by the hand and trying to pull her over to him.*] Come, I'll give you a kiss for the letter.

JINNY. No, thank you, I don't want kisses that are given by you for letters from Ruth Chester. Yes! do kiss me! [*He kisses her.*] I won't be jealous! I won't be! [*Clinching her teeth.*] See, I'm not jealous a bit! Read your old letter!

[AUSTIN opens the note and reads it. As he does so JINNY has passed on to the desk and sees AUSTIN's unfinished letter to RUTH, which after a little hesitation she picks up and reads. AUSTIN, having read RUTH's note, looks up thoughtfully a second, and then re-reads it. JINNY is furious over what she reads. As she finishes she gives a little cry from the very depths of her heart.]

JINNY. Oh, Jack!

AUSTIN. What is it?

JINNY. Nothing!

[She sinks by the desk, crushing the letter in her hand. She looks over at him, and then down at the letter, and then back at him.]

AUSTIN. Maggie!

JINNY. [Rising suddenly. She speaks with a voice trembling with only half-contained emotion and passion.] I told her to wait in the hall; may I read it?

[Holding out her hand for the letter.]

AUSTIN. Now look here, Jinny,—I always let you read everything, don't I?

JINNY. [Hiding his letter behind her back.] Yes. [Holding out her other hand.] Give it to me!

AUSTIN. Now begin to show that you really are going to turn over a new leaf, and that your love is going to have perfect confidence, and don't ask to see this letter.

JINNY. But I *do* ask to see it!

AUSTIN. Then this time I must refuse you!

JINNY. What! is it even more compromising than your letter to her?

AUSTIN. What letter? [Looking first on the desk, he looks across at her and sees it in her hand. He is angry, but also frightened for fear it has told her her brother's secret.] And you've read it?

JINNY. It lay open on the desk there, and anyway the end justifies me!

AUSTIN. [In an agony.] What does it tell you? I forget what I wrote!

JINNY. It tells me that my jealousy all along has been right, that I've been a fool to let you blind me!

AUSTIN. [With a great sigh of relief.] Is that all?

JINNY. [Beside herself.] "Is that all!" Isn't that enough? Dear God, isn't that enough? That there's an understanding between you and Ruth to get rid of me!

AUSTIN. If it tells you that, the letter lies! Give it to me!

JINNY. No! I'll read it to you! [Reads with bitter emphasis.] "The satisfaction of the visit to Brooklyn prevents me from being disappointed at having missed your telegram till too late to go to your house to-night!" So—you and she went to Brooklyn, did you, and that's why you came back too late to go to the theater with me? You cheat! [She screams in her madness. A pause.] Why don't you answer—why don't you say something?

AUSTIN. Because if I speak as I feel, I'm afraid of saying something I'll regret all my life!

JINNY. You don't deny, then?

AUSTIN. Yes! that is due to Ruth. Whatever you may feel about me, you have no right to insult her!

JINNY. Oh, *there's more* to the letter!

AUSTIN. Jinny, don't you see what you're doing?

JINNY. Yes, I'm getting at the truth at last! [Reads.] "My heart aches for the blow you must have this evening! The man who loves you—"

AUSTIN. You shan't read any more; you're mad now!

[Tearing the letter away from her.]

JINNY. I don't need the letter, the words are burning in here! [Pressing her hands to her forehead.] "The man who loves you isn't bad, only weak. However, I feel once we can shake off the burden of *this present marriage*"—oh! you—you brute to say that!—"you will never have cause to complain of him again! So far I have been able to keep Jinny in perfect ignorance, but I feel the blow must fall upon her now—"

[Interrupted.]

AUSTIN. Shall I tell you the truth?

JINNY. You don't have to; I've found it out for myself!

AUSTIN. [In weariness, in disgust, in utter hopelessness.] No! what's the use. You've done it now—let it go! Let it all go—the whole thing! What's the use!—it's finished! —[A knock on the door at Right.] Come in!

[Maggie enters and closes the door behind her.]

MAGGIE. Please, sir, Miss Chester came upstairs and made me knock again to see if there was an answer and if you will see her now or not.

JINNY. [*Suddenly—afire with her idea.*] Yes! Maggie, show her in!

AUSTIN. No, no! What do you want to do! I'll see Miss Chester to-morrow, Maggie.

[JINNY has crossed to the door, Right.

JINNY. Ruth! Ruth!

RUTH. [*Off stage.*] Yes? May I come?

JINNY. Do come in!

[*She recrosses room; she and AUSTIN face each other for a second.*

AUSTIN. [*In a lowered voice.*] For God's sake, be careful!

[RUTH enters Right.

RUTH. Jinny!

[*Going to her quickly to embrace her.*

[JINNY, without speaking, draws away and stares at her with a look of hatred. RUTH, seeing it, stops short, and looks from JINNY to AUSTIN for explanation—she turns to AUSTIN and gives him her hand, which he takes, presses, and drops; JINNY's shoulders contract at this moment; RUTH immediately turns again to JINNY.

RUTH. What is it, Jinny? [*To AUSTIN.*] Surely she doesn't blame me in any way.

JINNY. Blame you!

AUSTIN. She doesn't know.

JINNY. That's a lie! I know everything, Ruth! I know why you followed my husband to Rome, and why he sent for you to come back here. I know that you and he were in Brooklyn this afternoon, and that you only plan to get rid of me by some divorce, and by hook or crook to marry each other!

RUTH. No!—No!—

JINNY. Oh, you can lie, too, can you? I won't keep you waiting long! You've stolen my husband from me—take him. I won't share him with any woman! He's yours now, and I'll soon be out of your way!

AUSTIN. Jinny!

RUTH. [*To Austin.*] She must be told the truth.

[AUSTIN bows his head.

JINNY. Now you'll make up your story, will you? I tell you it's useless. If he wouldn't let me see your compromising letter, I've seen a letter from him to you to-night that gives the whole thing away.

RUTH. [*Very quietly.*] Your husband went to Brooklyn without me, as your brother will tell you, to see the clergyman who married

me, or thought he married me to Geoffrey Tillman three months ago! [JINNY looks up with a start.] That marriage was illegal because your brother was already married, and Mr. Austin tried and did get the promise of silence this afternoon about the Brooklyn service, to prevent a charge of bigamy against your brother. The first marriage, which still holds good, was with—Maggie, your present servant—

[JINNY stands immovable. There is a silence.

AUSTIN. Geoffrey is not at your house?

RUTH. No, he left when I came on here. As I wrote you in the note I sent upstairs, I was too stunned by what he told me to answer then, and I wanted a word of advice with you. [*She turns to JINNY.*] I knew what I thought was my marriage to your brother must be kept secret, but I could not learn why. This was my trouble, which, after your marriage, I selfishly laid on your husband's shoulders, thinking he might help me! [*No answer from JINNY, who stands as if struck dumb and into stone.*] Mr. Austin only learned the whole truth when we met that day in Rome. I did not learn till to-day that I was not honestly your brother's wife. I had to be told, because divorce proceedings are to be started at once to break—the other—marriage. [*No answer from JINNY.*] To spare me, and above all to spare you the knowledge of your brother's sin, your husband has kept Geoffrey's secret from you. You have well repaid him! [*She turns again to AUSTIN.*] Good-by—I feel to-night I couldn't marry Geoffrey again. He's tumbled so far off his pedestal he has fallen out of my heart. But still—we'll see; I've told him to come to-morrow. Thank you from the bottom of my heart—it's full of gratitude, even if it is broken!

[*She goes out Right.*

[JINNY slowly turns, almost afraid to look at AUSTIN. He stands stern, with set face.

JINNY. [*In a low voice, ashamed to go near him.*] Can you forgive me? Can you—

AUSTIN. Ugh!

[*Crossing room for his coat.*

JINNY. I'm mad! You know I don't know what I do. But I love you—I love you! Forgive me!

AUSTIN. Never!

[*Taking up his coat.*

JINNY. Where are you going?

AUSTIN. Out of this house.

JINNY. If you leave me, I'll not bear it! I'll kill myself! I warn you!

AUSTIN. Bah!—Good-by!

[Going to the door Right.

JINNY. No! Where are you going?

AUSTIN. Out of this house for good!

[At the door he turns and looks at her.

JINNY. [Echoes.] For good?

AUSTIN. For good!

[He goes out, slamming the door behind him.

[JINNY stands a moment motionless. She then cries faintly—"Jack!" She goes to the door and pushes it open, crying out again in loud, strong despair, "Jack!" There is a moment's pause. She cries out again weakly, heartbrokenly, "Jack!"—comes back into the room, and throwing herself down on the floor, her head resting on her arms in the arm-chair, she sobs hysterically, wildly, "What have I done! Dear God, what have I done!" as

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT IV¹

SCENE I

Dawn of the next day. At the rise of the curtain JINNY is by the open window, whose curtains she has thrown aside. The sky is blood-red and streaked with gold the moment before sunrise. JINNY is worn and haggard, with hair disheveled.

JINNY. [Turning and leaning against the window.] Day at last! What a night—what a night—but now it's morning and he hasn't come back! He means it! And it's my own fault—it's my own fault! [She shivers. She closes the window and comes away. After a moment's pause she goes deliberately and looks at the several gas fixtures in the room. She then closes all the doors and locks them. She carefully draws down the shade and closes in the curtains of the window. She hesitates, then pulls aside the curtains and the shade, and takes a long, last look at the dawn. She closes it all in again. She gets Austin's picture from the desk and places it on the table near the center of the room. She then goes to the

gas bracket at the Right and turns on the gas. She lights it to see if the gas is all right; then blows it out. She then crosses to the other bracket and turns that on; she goes to the chandelier at center, and, mounting a chair, turns on its three jets. She then sits down by the table with AUSTIN's picture before her, and looking into its eyes, her elbows on the table, her head in her hands, she waits.] Oh, Jack, my beloved! I couldn't help it—I never for one minute stopped loving you better than everything else in my life, but no more than I could stop loving you could I stop or help being jealous! Once the cruel idea has got hold of me it seems to have to work its way out! Everything gets red before me and I don't seem to know what I say or do! It's no excuse, I know. I've got no excuse, only I love you! You'll forgive me when I'm gone, won't you, Jack? You'll know I loved you!—loved you so I couldn't live without you!—loved you!—loved you! [She kisses the photograph tenderly, adoringly, slowly, in tears.] Loved—you—loved you!—loved—

[Her head drops forward as

THE CURTAIN FALLS

SCENE II

The same morning, three hours later. The curtain rises on the same scene in a dull, cold, early morning light. The lamp has burnt itself out. A tiny ray of sunlight steals through a slip between the curtains. JINNY sits by the table, her arms spread over it and her head on her arms—she is perfectly still. AUSTIN's picture is before her. There is a moment's silence. Voices are heard outside, approaching door, at Right. Gradually what they say is distinguished.

MAGGIE. No, sir. She hasn't been to bed; I've been to her bedroom—that door's not unlocked.

TILLMAN. She's been here all night?

MAGGIE. Yes, sir. But twice in the night, sir, I came to the door and spoke to her and she wouldn't answer me—but I could hear her walking up and down and sometimes talking to herself.

TILLMAN. [Calls softly.] Jinny! [Knocks softly.] It's father! [No answer.] It looks as if she were asleep now.

¹ The scene remains the same as in the preceding act.

AUSTIN. [*At a little distance.*] Father!

TILLMAN. I'm outside the library door.

AUSTIN. [*Nearer.*] I can't wait—have you seen her? Will she see me?

TILLMAN. She's locked herself in here. She's not been to her own room.

AUSTIN. Not been to bed at all! Poor Jinny—God forgive me.

TILLMAN. Maggie says she's walked the floor all night.

[*He knocks on the door Right.*

AUSTIN. [*Outside the door, Right, rather softly.*] Jinny! I'm so sorry! I can't say how sorry! I've thought it out through the night, and I think I understand things better. [*He waits a moment for an answer.*] Jinny,

answer me! you shall be as jealous as you like, and I'll always explain and kiss away those doubts of yours, and I'll have no more secrets from you, dear. Not one! Jinny!

[*As he calls there is a slight movement of one of JINNY's arms. With a note of alarm.*] Father! I can't hear a sound of breathing! [*A moment's pause as they listen.*] She threatened it—she threatened it several times! [*With great determination.*] We must get into this room—do you hear me—we must get in if we have to break the door down! [*They shake the door. He calls a little louder.*]

Jinny, Jinny darling—do you hear me? [*JINNY makes a sort of feeble effort to lift her head, but fails.*] Jinny, for God's sake,

answer me! I love you, Jinny—Jinny! [*Very slowly JINNY lifts her head and, with difficulty, she hears as if in a dream; she is dazed, barely alive.*] She doesn't answer!

TILLMAN. See if the key is in the lock.

AUSTIN. No.

TILLMAN. Get the other keys, Maggie.

AUSTIN. Father! Gas! Don't you smell it?

TILLMAN. What!

AUSTIN. Gas, I tell you! O God! she's killed herself! Jinny! Jinny!

[*Beating the door.*

[*JINNY staggers up, she tries to call "Jack"*

—but the word only comes out in a half-

articulate whisper! She tries again, but fails.

MAGGIE. Here's a key, sir.

[*JINNY tries to go to the door; she staggers a few steps and then falls.*

[*They try one key—it does not unlock the door; they try another.*

[*JINNY half raises herself and makes an effort to crawl, but is unable and sinks back upon the floor.*

AUSTIN. Break the door in, father! We daren't waste any more time!

TILLMAN. No, this has done it!

[*They open the door and rush in. They stop aghast at JINNY and the oppressiveness of the gas in the room.*

TILLMAN. Jinny!

AUSTIN. Quick—the window! [*TILLMAN tears aside the curtains and throws open the window. The sunshine of full morning pours in. He then rushes to the opposite gas burners and turns them off. Kneeling quickly beside her.*] Jinny! My wife! My beloved!

[*He takes her up in his arms and hurries to the window.*

TILLMAN. Are we too late?

AUSTIN. I don't know. No! she's breathing—and see—see!—she knows me!—she knows me! [*JINNY smiles at him pathetically.*] Send Maggie for the doctor!

[*TILLMAN goes out Right.*

AUSTIN. Jinny, forgive me! Forgive me! Forgive me! [*She slips her two arms up and joins them about his neck. AUSTIN kisses her.*] Father! We've saved her! Oh, thank God, we've saved her!

[*Bringing her to big chair and putting her in it, he kneels at her feet.*

JINNY. [*Whispers faintly.*] Dear Jack! You forgive me—all my beastly jealousy?

AUSTIN. There's one thing stronger even than jealousy, my Jinny. And that's LOVE! That's LOVE!

[*He kisses her hands, and*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

STEPHEN CRANE (1871-1900)

Crane, the fourteenth child of a Methodist preacher who had only some nine or ten years more to live, was born in Newark, New Jersey, on 1 November, 1871. He was a delicate child, too much subject to colds and a sore throat from his earliest days. As he grew up he became strong, but in his early manhood he fell a victim to chronic and severe indigestion and the threat of trouble from his lungs never left him;—on the contrary, becoming a reality, it was the immediate cause of his early death on the night of 4 June, 1900. Into his few years he crowded a vast deal not only of varied experience, but also of literary work, despite the fact that, as his wife said, his great difficulty was that he could not write steadily with sustained application. His formal education was fragmentary, and it brought him but the slightest positive benefit. He spent a year and a half in 1887-1888 in the Hudson River Institute, at Claverack, New York, where he became eminent as a baseball player and as a fighter—the fight in which he showed his strength having been started, curiously enough, by Crane's assertion that Tennyson's poetry was "swill." Thence, after a summer of work for his brother, who ran a press bureau at Asbury Park, Crane went to Lafayette College, where he stayed a year (1889-1890). At this time he considered Tolstoy the world's greatest writer and was also reading Flaubert, though with less admiration. The following year was spent at Syracuse University, where he acted as correspondent for the *New York Tribune*, and this was the end of his collegiate life. He had already determined to become a writer, and his mother, who was soon to die, gave her approval, telling him only that he must always be good and independent and honest. Independence and honesty were precisely his aims in his work, and, if he was neither good nor careful, he was at least better than would be supposed from the marvelous and scandalous tales which envious gossipers freely invented or circulated concerning him, as his biographer (Thomas Beer) has made clear.

Crane now became outwardly a journalist. He was not a good reporter, but his startling and colorful writing opened to him the doors of newspapers and periodicals. His real work, however, was the search for the intense and burning core of "reality." He turned in disgust from the sentimentalism and prim decorum characteristic of much popular American fiction in his day, and felt that even the self-confessed realists saw life through blinders. He concluded that the bare, essential truth about life was to be discovered by stripping it of its decoration, of its accretions of culture and respectability. His biographer tells an illuminating story of later days. When Crane and Acton Davies were war-correspondents in Cuba in 1898 the latter "was moaning for his dear Broadway. He wanted such and such dishes at his pet restaurant, such wines and a lustrous lady to sit across from him. Crane cut short the dream by saying, 'Why don't you just say you want a good meal and a girl and be done with it?'" This is the measure of his simplification of life in his search for the "real." In 1891, in New York, he thought the Bowery the center of the human stage, and there sought to know prostitutes and tramps. *Maggie, A Girl of the Streets* (printed at Crane's expense, after unsuccessful efforts to sell it, at the end of 1892) was the outcome, a novel of power which won the admiration of W. D. Howells, who tried in vain to secure recognition for it. Howells did, however, succeed in helping Crane in another direction, for he read to him some of the poems of Emily Dickinson, which aroused Crane's keenest interest and impelled him to his own striking experiments, in a loose unrhymed form of verse, which, both in style and in aim, remarkably anticipated some of the distinctive American poetry of the early twentieth century. Crane's verses are all contained in two thin volumes, *The Black Riders and Other Lines* (1895) and *War is Kind* (1899).

Meanwhile the search for the "real" continued, and Crane began to imagine that it would be rewarded by the study of war, which, he thought, by its cruelties and terrors strips men of their accidental trappings and exposes their essential natures. This interest brought forth *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895), a masterly novel written with true insight which was at once successful and which has been widely read ever since its publication. The same interest continued to excite Crane, and sent him to Florida in the middle 1890's in the hope of witnessing trouble in Cuba, and then as a war-correspondent to Greece, and finally back to Cuba in 1898. Thus material was gathered for a number of short-stories. During the last several years of his life (save for the interval when he was in Cuba) Crane lived in England, latterly near Rye, when he won the cordial friendship of Henry James. He also was a valued friend of Joseph Conrad.

Crane's ideal in both prose and verse was honesty according to his own lights. His vision was one-sided, and it led him towards a brutal naturalism. Despite this limitation, however, his motive was one which demands respect, as does equally his courage in following it against strong currents of contemporary fashion and prejudice. His work was fragmentary, and much of it was carelessly and imperfectly executed, but it signalized a fundamentally wholesome reaction of high significance, and it is now recognized that distinctively modern American prose fiction and verse both have their beginnings in Crane.

His volumes and their dates, other than those already mentioned, are: *George's Mother* (1896), *The Little Regiment and Other Episodes of the American Civil War* (1896), *The Third Violet* (1897), *The Open Boat* (1898; tales), *Active Service* (1899), *The Monster* (1899; tales), *Wounds in the Rain* (1900; tales), *Whilomville Stories* (1900), *Great Battles of the World* (1901), *Last Words* (1902; sketches and tales), and *The O'Ruddy* (1903).

THE BLACK RIDERS AND OTHER LINES¹

I

BLACK riders came from the sea.
There was clang and clang of spear and
shield,
And clash and clash of hoof and heel,
Wild shouts and the wave of hair
In the rush upon the wind:
Thus the ride of sin.

III

IN the desert
I saw a creature, naked, bestial,
Who, squatting upon the ground,
Held his heart in his hands,
And ate of it.
I said, "Is it good, friend?"
"It is bitter—bitter," he answered;
"But I like it
Because it is bitter,
And because it is my heart."

VII

MYSTIC shadow, bending near me,
Who art thou?
Whence come ye?
And—tell me—is it fair
Or is the truth bitter as eaten fire?
Tell me!
Fear not that I should quaver,
For I dare—I dare.
Then, tell me!

IX

I STOOD upon a high place,
And saw, below, many devils
Running, leaping,

And carousing in sin.
One looked up, grinning,
And said, "Comrade! Brother!"

XI

IN a lonely place,
I encountered a sage
Who sat, all still,
Regarding a newspaper.
He accosted me:
"Sir, what is this?"
Then I saw that I was greater,
Aye, greater than this sage.
I answered him at once,
"Old, old man, it is the wisdom of the
age."
The sage looked upon me with admiration.

XVII

THERE were many who went in huddled
procession,
They knew not whither;
But, at any rate, success or calamity
Would attend all in equality.

There was one who sought a new road.
He went into direful thickets,
And ultimately he died thus, alone;
But they said he had courage.

XX

A LEARNED man came to me once.
He said, "I know the way,—come."
And I was overjoyed at this.
Together we hastened.
Soon, too soon, were we
Where my eyes were useless,
And I knew not the ways of my feet.
I clung to the hand of my friend;
But at last he cried, "I am lost."

XXIV

I SAW a man pursuing the horizon;
Round and round they sped.

¹ The poems from *The Black Riders and Other Lines* by Stephen Crane are reprinted with the permission of, and by special arrangement with, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., the authorized publishers.

I was disturbed at this;
I accosted the man.
"It is futile," I said,
"You can never"—

"You lie," he cried,
And ran on.

XXX

SUPPOSING that I should have the courage
To let a red sword of virtue
Plunge into my heart,
Letting to the weeds of the ground
My sinful blood,
What can you offer me?
A gardened castle?
A flowery kingdom?

What? a hope?
Then hence with your red sword of vir-
tue. IO

XLIV

I WAS in the darkness;
I could not see my words
Nor the wishes of my heart.
Then suddenly there was a great light—

"Let me into the darkness again."

XLV

TRADITION, thou art for suckling children,
Thou art the enlivening milk for babes;
But no meat for men is in thee.
Then—
But, alas, we all are babes.

XLVIII

ONCE there was a man,—
Oh, so wise!
In all drink
He detected the bitter,
And in all touch
He found the sting.
At last he cried thus:
"There is nothing,—
No life,
No joy,
No pain,—
There is nothing save opinion,
And opinion be damned."

IO

WAR IS KIND²

I

Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind.
Because your lover threw wild hands toward
the sky
And the affrighted steed ran on alone,
Do not weep.
War is kind.

Hoarse, booming drums of the regiment,
Little souls who thirst for fight,
These men were born to drill and die.
The unexplained glory flies above them,
Great is the battle-god, great, and his
kingdom— IO
A field where a thousand corpses lie.

Do not weep, babe, for war is kind.
Because your father tumbled in the yellow
trenches,
Raged at his breast, gulped and died,
Do not weep.
War is kind.

Swift blazing flag of the regiment,
Eagle with crest of red and gold,
These men were born to drill and die.
Point for them the virtue of slaughter, 20
Make plain to them the excellence of
killing
And a field where a thousand corpses lie.

Mother whose heart hung humble as a button
On the bright splendid shroud of your son,
Do not weep.
War is kind.

IV

A LITTLE ink more or less!
It surely can't matter?
Even the sky and the opulent sea,
The plains and the hills, aloof,
Hear the uproar of all these books.
But it is only a little ink more or less.

XIII

A NEWSPAPER is a collection of half-injustices
Which, bawled by boys from mile to mile,
Spreads its curious opinion
To a million merciful and sneering men,

² The poems from *War is Kind* by Stephen Crane are reprinted with the permission of, and by special arrangement with, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., the authorized publishers.

While families cuddle the joys of the fireside
 When spurred by tale of dire lone agony.
 A newspaper is a court
 Where every one is kindly and unfairly tried
 By a squalor of honest men.
 A newspaper is a market 10
 Where wisdom sells its freedom
 And melons are crowned by the crowd.
 A newspaper is a game
 Where his error scores the player victory
 While another's skill wins death.
 A newspaper is a symbol;
 It is fetless life's chronicle,
 A collection of loud tales
 Concentrating eternal stupidities,
 That in remote ages lived unaltered, 20
 Roaming through a fenceless world.

XIV

THE wayfarer,
 Perceiving the pathway to truth,
 Was struck with astonishment.
 It was thickly grown with weeds.
 "Ha," he said,
 "I see that none has passed here
 In a long time."
 Later he saw that each weed
 Was a singular knife.
 "Well," he mumbled at last, 10
 "Doubtless there are other roads."

XV

A SLANT of sun on dull brown walls,
 A forgotten sky of bashful blue.

Toward God a mighty hymn,
 A song of collisions and cries,
 Rumbling wheels, hoof-beats, bells,
 Welcomes, farewells, love-calls, final moans,
 Voices of joy, idiocy, warning, despair,
 The unknown appeals of brutes,
 The chanting of flowers,
 The screams of cut trees, 10
 The senseless babble of hens and wise men—
 A cluttered incoherency that says at the
 stars:

"O God, save us!"

XXII

A MAN said to the universe:

"Sir, I exist!"

"However," replied the universe,

"The fact has not created in me

A sense of obligation."

A MYSTERY OF HEROISM¹

THE dark uniforms of the men were so coated with dust from the incessant wrestling of the two armies that the regiment almost seemed a part of the clay bank which shielded them from the shells. On the top of the hill a battery was arguing in tremendous roars with some other guns, and to the eye of the infantry, the artillerymen, the guns, the caissons, the horses, were distinctly outlined upon the blue sky. When a piece was fired, a red streak as round as a log flashed low in the heavens, like a monstrous bolt of lightning. The men of the battery wore white duck trousers, which somehow emphasized their legs; and when they ran and crowded in little groups at the bidding of the shouting officers, it was more impressive than usual to the infantry.

Fred Collins, of A company, was saying: "Thunder! I wisht I had a drink. Ain't there any water round here?" Then somebody yelled, "There goes th' bugler!"

As the eyes of half the regiment swept in one machine-like movement there was an instant's picture of a horse in a great convulsive leap of a death wound and a rider leaning back with a crooked arm and spread fingers before his face. On the ground was the crimson terror of an exploding shell, with fibers of flame that seemed like lances. A glittering bugle swung clear of the rider's back as fell headlong the horse and the man. In the air was an odor as from a conflagration.

Sometimes they of the infantry looked down at a fair little meadow which spread at their feet. Its long, green grass was rippling gently in a breeze. Beyond it was the gray form of a house half torn to pieces by shells and by the busy axes of soldiers who had pursued firewood. The line of an old fence was now dimly marked by long weeds and by an occasional post. A shell had blown the well-house to fragments. Little lines of gray smoke ribboning upward from some embers indicated the place where had stood the barn.

¹ Reprinted from *The Little Regiment* by Stephen Crane with the permission of, and by special arrangement with, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., the authorized publishers. This volume of tales was first published in 1896.

From beyond a curtain of green woods there came the sound of some stupendous scuffle, as if two animals of the size of islands were fighting. At a distance there were occasional appearances of swift-moving men, horses, batteries, flags, and, with the crashing of infantry volleys were heard, often, wild and frenzied cheers. In the midst of it all Smith and Ferguson, two privates of A company, were engaged in a heated discussion, which involved the greatest questions of the national existence.

The battery on the hill presently engaged in a frightful duel. The white legs of the gunners scampered this way and that way, and the officers redoubled their shouts. The guns, with their demeanors of stolidity and courage, were typical of something infinitely self-possessed in this clamor of death that swirled around the hill.

One of a "swing" team was suddenly smitten quivering to the ground, and his maddened brethren dragged his torn body in their struggle to escape from this turmoil and danger. A young soldier astride one of the leaders swore and fumed in his saddle, and furiously jerked at the bridle. An officer screamed out an order so violently that his voice broke and ended the sentence in a falsetto shriek.

The leading company of the infantry regiment was somewhat exposed, and the colonel ordered it moved more fully under the shelter of the hill. There was the clank of steel against steel.

A lieutenant of the battery rode down and passed them, holding his right arm carefully in his left hand. And it was as if this arm was not at all a part of him, but belonged to another man. His sober and reflective charger went slowly. The officer's face was grimy and perspiring, and his uniform was tousled as if he had been in direct grapple with an enemy. He smiled grimly when the men stared at him. He turned his horse toward the meadow.

Collins, of A company, said: "I wisht I had a drink. I bet there's water in that there ol' well yonder!"

"Yes; but how you goin' to git it?"

For the little meadow which intervened was now suffering a terrible onslaught of shells. Its green and beautiful calm had vanished utterly. Brown earth was being

flung in monstrous handfuls. And there was a massacre of the young blades of grass. They were being torn, burned, obliterated. Some curious fortune of the battle had made this gentle little meadow the object of the red hate of the shells, and each one as it exploded seemed like an imprecation in the face of a maiden.

The wounded officer who was riding across this expanse said to himself, "Why, they couldn't shoot any harder if the whole army was massed here!"

A shell struck the gray ruins of the house, and as, after the roar, the shattered wall fell in fragments, there was a noise which resembled the flapping of shutters during a wild gale of winter. Indeed, the infantry paused in the shelter of the bank appeared as men standing upon a shore contemplating a madness of the sea. The angel of calamity had under its glance the battery upon the hill. Fewer white-legged men labored about the guns. A shell had smitten one of the pieces, and after the flare, the smoke, the dust, the wrath of this blow were gone, it was possible to see white legs stretched horizontally upon the ground. And at that interval to the rear, where it is the business of battery horses to stand with their noses to the fight awaiting the command to drag their guns out of the destruction or into it or wheresoever these incomprehensible humans demanded with whip and spur—in this line of passive and dumb spectators, whose fluttering hearts yet would not let them forget the iron laws of man's control of them—in this rank of brute-soldiers there had been relentless and hideous carnage. From the ruck of bleeding and prostrate horses, the men of the infantry could see one animal raising its stricken body with its fore legs, and turning its nose with mystic and profound eloquence toward the sky.

Some comrades joked Collins about his thirst. "Well, if yeh want a drink so bad, why don't yeh go git it!"

"Well, I will in a minnet, if yeh don't shut up!"

A lieutenant of artillery floundered his horse straight down the hill with as great concern as if it were level ground. As he galloped past the colonel of the infantry, he threw up his hand in swift salute. "We've

got to get out of that," he roared angrily. He was a black-bearded officer, and his eyes, which resembled beads, sparkled like those of an insane man. His jumping horse sped along the column of infantry.

The fat major, standing carelessly with his sword held horizontally behind him and with his legs far apart, looked after the receding horseman and laughed. "He wants to get back with orders pretty quick, or there'll be no batt'ry left," he observed.

The wise young captain of the second company haphazardly to the lieutenant colonel that the enemy's infantry would probably soon attack the hill, and the lieutenant colonel snubbed him.

A private in one of the rear companies looked out over the meadow, and then turned to a companion and said, "Look there, Jim!" It was the wounded officer from the battery, who some time before had started to ride across the meadow, supporting his right arm carefully with his left hand. This man had encountered a shell apparently at a time when no one perceived him, and he could now be seen lying face downward with a stirruped foot stretched across the body of his dead horse. A leg of the charger extended slantingly upward precisely as stiff as a stake. Around this motionless pair the shells still howled.

There was a quarrel in A company. Collins was shaking his fist in the faces of some laughing comrades. "Dern yeh! I ain't afraid t'go. If yeh say much, I will go!"

"Of course, yeh will! You'll run through that there medder, won't yeh?"

Collins said, in a terrible voice, "You see now!" At this ominous threat his comrades broke into renewed jeers.

Collins gave them a dark scowl and went to find his captain. The latter was conversing with the colonel of the regiment.

"Captain," said Collins, saluting and standing at attention—in those days all trousers bagged at the knees—"Captain, I want t'get permission to go git some water from that there well over yonder!"

The colonel and the captain swung about simultaneously and stared across the meadow. The captain laughed. "You must be pretty thirsty, Collins?"

"Yes, sir, I am."

"Well—ah," said the captain. After a moment, he asked, "Can't you wait?"

"No, sir."

The colonel was watching Collins's face. "Look here, my lad," he said, in a pious sort of a voice—"look here, my lad"—Collins was not a lad—"don't you think that's taking pretty big risks for a little drink of water?"

"I dunno," said Collins uncomfortably. Some of the resentment toward his companions, which perhaps had forced him into this affair, was beginning to fade. "I dunno wether 'tis."

The colonel and the captain contemplated him for a time.

"Well," said the captain finally.

"Well," said the colonel, "if you want to go, why, go."

Collins saluted. "Much obliged t'yeh."

As he moved away the colonel called after him. "Take some of the other boys' canteens with you an' hurry back now."

"Yes, sir, I will."

The colonel and the captain looked at each other then, for it had suddenly occurred to them that they could not for the life of them tell whether Collins wanted to go or whether he did not.

They turned to regard Collins, and as they perceived him surrounded by gesticulating comrades, the colonel said: "Well, by thunder! I guess he's going."

Collins appeared as a man dreaming. In the midst of the questions, the advice, the warnings, all the excited talk of his company mates, he maintained a curious silence.

They were very busy in preparing him for his ordeal. When they inspected him carefully it was somewhat like the examination that grooms give a horse before a race; and they were amazed, staggered by the whole affair. Their astonishment found vent in strange repetitions.

"Are yeh sure a-goin'?" they demanded again and again.

"Certainly I am," cried Collins, at last furiously.

He strode sullenly away from them. He was swinging five or six canteens by their cords. It seemed that his cap would not remain firmly on his head, and often he reached and pulled it down over his brow.

There was a general movement in the

compact column. The long animal-like thing moved slightly. Its four hundred eyes were turned upon the figure of Collins.

"Well, sir, if that ain't th' derndest thing! I never thought Fred Collins had the blood in him for that kind of business."

"What's he goin' to do, anyhow?"

"He's goin' to that well there after water."

"We ain't dyin' of thirst, are we? That's foolishness."

"Well, somebody put him up to it, an' he's doin' it."

"Say, he must be a desperate cuss."

When Collins faced the meadow and walked away from the regiment, he was vaguely conscious that a chasm, the deep valley of all prides, was suddenly between him and his comrades. It was provisional, but the provision was that he return as a victor. He had blindly been led by quaint emotions, and laid himself under an obligation to walk squarely up to the face of death.

But he was not sure that he wished to make a retraction, even if he could do so without shame. As a matter of truth, he was sure of very little. He was mainly surprised.

It seemed to him supernaturally strange that he had allowed his mind to maneuver his body into such a situation. He understood that it might be called dramatically great.

However, he had no full appreciation of anything, excepting that he was actually conscious of being dazed. He could feel his dulled mind groping after the form and color of this incident. He wondered why he did not feel some keen agony of fear cutting his sense like a knife. He wondered at this, because human expression had said loudly for centuries that men should feel afraid of certain things, and that all men who did not feel this fear were phenomena—heroes.

He was, then, a hero. He suffered that disappointment which we would all have if we discovered that we were ourselves capable of those deeds which we most admire in history and legend. This, then, was a hero. After all, heroes were not much.

No, it could not be true. He was not a hero. Heroes had no shames in their lives, and, as for him, he remembered borrowing fifteen dollars from a friend and promising

to pay it back the next day, and then avoiding that friend for ten months. When at home his mother had aroused him for the early labor of his life on the farm, it had often been his fashion to be irritable, childish, diabolical; and his mother had died since he had come to the war.

He saw that, in this matter of the well, the canteens, the shells, he was an intruder in the land of fine deeds.

He was now about thirty paces from his comrades. The regiment had just turned its many faces toward him.

From the forest of terrific noises there suddenly emerged a little uneven line of men. They fired fiercely and rapidly at distant foliage on which appeared little puffs of white smoke. The spatter of skirmish firing was added to the thunder of the guns on the hill. The little line of men ran forward. A color sergeant fell flat with his flag as if he had slipped on ice. There was hoarse cheering from this distant field.

Collins suddenly felt that two demon fingers were pressed into his ears. He could see nothing but flying arrows, flaming red. He lurched from the shock of this explosion, but he made a mad rush for the house, which he viewed as a man submerged to the neck in a boiling surf might view the shore. In the air, little pieces of shell howled and the earthquake explosions drove him insane with the menace of their roar. As he ran, the canteens knocked together with a rhythmical tinkling.

As he neared the house, each detail of the scene became vivid to him. He was aware of some bricks of the vanished chimney lying on the sod. There was a door which hung by one hinge.

Rifle bullets called forth by the insistent skirmishers came from the far-off bank of foliage. They mingled with the shells and the pieces of shells until the air was torn in all directions by hootings, yells, howls. The sky was full of fiends who directed all their wild rage at his head.

When he came to the well, he flung himself face downward and peered into its darkness. There were furtive silver glintings some feet from the surface. He grabbed one of the canteens and, unfastening its cap, swung it down by the cord. The water flowed slowly in with an indolent gurgle.

And now as he lay with his face turned away he was suddenly smitten with the terror. It came upon his heart like the grasp of claws. All the power faded from his muscles. For an instant he was no more than a dead man.

The canteen filled with a maddening slowness, in the manner of all bottles. Presently he recovered his strength and addressed a screaming oath to it. He leaned over until it seemed as if he intended to try to push water into it with his hands. His eyes as he gazed down into the well shone like two pieces of metal and in their expression was a great appeal and a great curse. The stupid water derided him.

There was the blaring thunder of a shell. Crimson light shone through the swift-boiling smoke and made a pink reflection on part of the wall of the well. Collins jerked out his arm and canteen with the same motion that a man would use in withdrawing his head from a furnace.

He scrambled erect and glared and hesitated. On the ground near him lay the old well bucket, with a length of rusty chain. He lowered it swiftly into the well. The bucket struck the water and then, turning lazily over, sank. When, with hand reaching tremblingly over hand, he hauled it out, it knocked often against the walls of the well and spilled some of its contents.

In running with a filled bucket, a man can adopt but one kind of gait. So through this terrible field over which screamed practical angels of death Collins ran in the manner of a farmer chased out of a dairy by a bull.

His face went staring white with anticipation—anticipation of a blow that would whirl him around and down. He would fall as he had seen other men fall, the life knocked out of them so suddenly that their knees were no more quick to touch the ground than their heads. He saw the long blue line of the regiment, but his comrades were standing looking at him from the edge of an impossible star. He was aware of some deep wheel ruts and hoofprints in the sod beneath his feet.

The artillery officer who had fallen in this meadow had been making groans in the teeth of the tempest of sound. These futile cries, wrenched from him by his agony, were heard

only by shells, bullets. When wild-eyed Collins came running, this officer raised himself. His face contorted and blanched from pain, he was about to utter some great beseeching cry. But suddenly his face straightened and he called: "Say, young man, give me a drink of water, will you?"

Collins had no room amid his emotions for surprise. He was mad from the threats of destruction.

"I can't!" he screamed, and in his reply was a full description of his quaking apprehension. His cap was gone and his hair was riotous. His clothes made it appear that he had been dragged over the ground by the heels. He ran on.

The officer's head sank down and one elbow crooked. His foot in its brass-bound stirrup still stretched over the body of his horse and the other leg was under the steed.

But Collins turned. He came dashing back. His face had now turned gray and in his eyes was all terror. "Here it is! here it is!"

The officer was as a man gone in drink. His arm bent like a twig. His head drooped as if his neck were of willow. He was sinking to the ground, to lie face downward.

Collins grabbed him by the shoulder. "Here it is. Here's your drink. Turn over. Turn over, man, for God's sake!"

With Collins hauling at his shoulder, the officer twisted his body and fell with his face turned toward that region where lived the unspeakable noises of the swirling missiles. There was the faintest shadow of a smile on his lips as he looked at Collins. He gave a sigh, a little primitive breath like that from a child.

Collins tried to hold the bucket steadily, but his shaking hands caused the water to splash all over the face of the dying man. Then he jerked it away and ran on.

The regiment gave him a welcoming roar. The grimed faces were wrinkled in laughter.

His captain waved the bucket away. "Give it to the men!"

The two genial, skylarking young lieutenants were the first to gain possession of it. They played over it in their fashion.

When one tried to drink the other teasingly knocked his elbow. "Don't, Billie! You'll make me spill it" said the one. The other laughed.

Suddenly there was an oath, the thud of wood on the ground, and a swift murmur of astonishment among the ranks. The two lieutenants glared at each other. The bucket lay on the ground empty.

PASSAGE FROM A GRAY SLEEVE¹

ALONG the rear of the brigade of infantry a column of cavalry was sweeping at a hard gallop. A lieutenant, riding some yards to the right of the column, bawled furiously at the four troopers just at the rear of the colors. They had lost distance and made a little gap, but at the shouts of the lieutenant they urged their horses forward. The bugler, careering along behind the captain of the troop, fought and tugged like a wrestler to keep his frantic animal from bolting far ahead of the column.

On the springy turf the innumerable hoofs thundered in a swift storm of sound. In the brown faces of the troopers their eyes were set like bits of flashing steel.

The long line of the infantry regiments standing at ease underwent a sudden movement at the rush of the passing squadron. The foot soldiers turned their heads to gaze at the torrent of horses and men.

The yellow folds of the flag fluttered back in silken, shuddering waves as if it were a reluctant thing. Occasionally a giant spring of a charger would rear the firm and sturdy figure of a soldier suddenly head and shoulders above his comrades. Over the noise of the scudding hoofs could be heard the creaking of leather trappings, the jingle and clank of steel, and the tense, low-toned commands or appeals of the men to their horses. And the horses were mad with the headlong sweep of this movement. Powerful underjaws bent back and straightened so that the bits were clamped as rigidly as vices upon the teeth, and glistening necks arched in desperate resistance to the hands at the bridles. Swinging their heads in rage at the granite laws of their lives, which compelled even their angers and their

ardors to chosen directions and chosen faces, their flight was as a flight of harnessed demons.

The captain's bay kept its pace at the head of the squadron with the lithe bounds of a thoroughbred, and this horse was proud as a chief at the roaring trample of his fellows behind him. The captain's glance was calmly upon the grove of maples whence the sharpshooters of the enemy had been picking at the blue line. He seemed to be reflecting. He stolidly rose and fell with the plunges of his horse in all the indifference of a deacon's figure seated plumply in church. And it occurred to many of the watching infantry to wonder why this officer could remain imperturbable and reflective when his squadron was thundering and swarming behind him like the rushing of a flood.

The column swung in a saber-curve toward a break in a fence, and dashed into a roadway. Once a little plank bridge was encountered, and the sound of the hoofs upon it was like the long roll of many drums. An old captain in the infantry turned to his first lieutenant and made a remark which was a compound of bitter disparagement of cavalry in general and soldierly admiration of this particular troop.

Suddenly the bugle sounded, and the column halted with a jolting upheaval amid sharp, brief cries. A moment later the men had tumbled from their horses, and, carbines in hand, were running in a swarm toward the grove of maples. In the road one of every four of the troopers was standing with braced legs, and pulling and hauling at the bridles of four frenzied horses.

The captain was running awkwardly in his boots. He held his saber low so that the point often threatened to catch in the turf. His yellow hair ruffled out from under his faded cap. "Go in hard now!" he roared, in a voice of hoarse fury. His face was violently red.

The troopers threw themselves upon the grove like wolves upon a great animal. Along the whole front of woods there was the dry, crackling of musketry, with bitter, swift flashes and smoke that writhed like stung phantoms. The troopers yelled shrilly and spanged bullets low into the foliage.

For a moment, when near the woods, the line almost halted. The men struggled and fought for a time like swimmers encountering

¹ Reprinted from *The Little Regiment* by Stephen Crane with the permission of, and by special arrangement with, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., the authorized publishers.

a powerful current. Then with a supreme effort they went on again. They dashed madly at the grove, whose foliage from the high light of the field was as inscrutable as a wall.

Then suddenly each detail of the calm trees became apparent, and with a few more frantic leaps the men were in the cool gloom of the woods. There was a heavy odor as from burned paper. Wisps of gray smoke wound upward. The men halted and, grimy, perspiring, and puffing, they searched the recesses of the woods with eager, fierce glances. Figures could be seen flitting afar

off. A dozen carbines rattled at them in an angry volley.

During this pause the captain strode along the line, his face lit with a broad smile of contentment. "When he sends this crowd to do anything, I guess he'll find we do it pretty sharp," he said to the grinning lieutenant.

"Say, they didn't stand that rush a minute, did they?" said the subaltern. Both officers were profoundly dusty in their uniforms, and their faces were soiled like those of two urchins.

Out in the grass behind them were three tumbled and silent forms.

WILLIAM CRARY BROWNELL (1851-)

Mr. Brownell was born in New York on 30 August, 1851. He was graduated from Amherst College in 1871, and since then has received two honorary degrees from that institution, as well as another from Columbia University. He is also a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1879 he joined the staff of the *New York Nation*, and remained in that position for several years. Shortly thereafter he became a literary adviser of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, and has continued since to hold this post. Mr. Brownell has devoted himself wholly to criticism, and has published a number of volumes each of which is a weighty and valuable contribution to this field of literature. Their titles and dates of publication are: *French Traits, An Essay in Comparative Criticism* (1889), *French Art, Classic and Contemporary Painting and Sculpture* (1892), *Victorian Prose Masters* (1901; essays on Thackeray, Carlyle, George Eliot, Matthew Arnold, Ruskin, and George Meredith), *American Prose Masters* (1909; essays on Cooper, Hawthorne, Emerson, Poe, Lowell, and Henry James), *Criticism* (1914), *Standards* (1917), and *The Genius of Style* (1924).

Depreciation of criticism has doubtless flourished among disappointed writers and artists since the dawn of history, but it was an unfortunate aspect of the romantic movement of the first years of the nineteenth century that it tended to encourage such depreciation on the part of the whole reading public. For the reading public in immediately following years was being rapidly enlarged, thanks to cheap printing and popular education, while the new members' bumptious self-confidence, born of ignorance, was also being encouraged from another quarter by the spread of equalitarian political doctrine. The result was a chaos of mediocrity and vulgarity masquerading as literature, accompanied by a stubborn contempt for criticism and, of course, for critics. It was not realized that, as Mr. Brownell has observed, "some standard is a necessary postulate, not only of all criticism, but of all discussion or even discourse." It was not realized—is perhaps not yet sufficiently realized—that criticism is really an important division of literature, essential to its fruitful development and likewise essential to the growth of culture and even, indeed, to the continuance of a high level of civilization. Despite misunderstanding and opposition, however, significant criticism early made its appearance in America, in the work of Emerson and Poe; and it is one of the most encouraging signs of the present day, full of meaning for the future of literature and art and culture in the United States, that in recent years criticism has had a great development, in the hands of a few contemporaries attaining a classic strength and weight and depth which enable it to court and survive comparison with the best criticism of any other age or country. This recent development of a fully informed, mature, reflective criticism is, in fact, one of the most significant aspects of American literature since, let us say, 1890.

Mr. Brownell's contributions to this difficult art are of a very distinguished order, and he has himself clearly stated his conception of its function: "Criticism . . . may not inexactly be described as the statement of the concrete in terms of the abstract. It is its function to discern and characterize the abstract qualities informing the concrete expression of the artist. Every important piece of literature, as every important work of plastic art, is the expression of a personality, and it is not the material of it, but the mind behind it, that invites critical interpretation. Materially speaking, it is its own interpretation. The concrete absorbs the constructive artist whose endeavor is to give substance to his idea, which until expressed is an abstraction. The concern of criticism is to measure his success by the correspondence of his expression to the idea it suggests and by the value of the idea itself." "The true objects of" the critic's "contemplation are the multifarious elements of truth, beauty, goodness, and their approximations and antipodes, underlying the various phenomena which express them, rather than the laws and rules peculiar to each form of phenomenal expression; which, beyond acquiring the familiarity needful for adequate appreciation, he may leave to the professional didacticism of each. And in thus confining itself to the art and eschewing the science of whatever forms its subject—mindful mainly of no science, indeed, except its own—criticism is enabled to extend its field while restricting its function, and to form a distinct province of literature, while relinquishing encroachments upon the territory of more exclusively constructive art." (*Criticism*, pp. 16-17, 18.)

COOPER¹

I

THE literary standard of his countrymen is undoubtedly far higher than it was in Cooper's own day. No writer at present with a tenth of his ability would commit his literary faults—faults for which the standard of his day is largely responsible, since it was oblivious to them and since they are precisely those which any widely accepted standard would automatically correct. In other words, Cooper wrote as well as, and builded better than, any one required of him—and though genius, *ex hypothesi*, escapes the operation of evolutionary law, literary or any other artistic expression is almost as much a matter of supply and demand as railroads or any other means of communication; the demand, that is, produces, controls, and gives its character to the supply. The theory that art is due to artists leaves the origin of artists unexplained.

But it is a depressing phenomenon in current American letters that our standard, though satisfactorily higher, should be applied with so little intelligence and elasticity, so mechanically. It is widely held, and the puniest whipsters flourish it like a falchion when they play at soldiers—our popular literary game at present, it sometimes seems. It is not to deny that this diversion has its uses to assert that it has its limitations. To have popularized a high literary standard is an accomplishment of which American letters may well be proud. Indeed it is, perhaps, the result of which hitherto—a few eminent names excepted—it has most reason to be proud. And no doubt there is still reason to hope that our high popular standard may become even higher and more popular than it is! Meantime one would like to see its application more elastic, less mechanical. The way in which it has been applied to the detriment of Cooper's fame, has been not merely unintelligent but thoroughly discreditable. For Cooper, from any point of view, is one of the most distinguished of our literary assets, and there is something ludicrous in being before all the world—as, assuredly, we sometimes are—in recognizing

our own merit where it is contestable and in neglecting it where it is not.

It is only superficially remarkable that Cooper should have been over thirty when he wrote his first story. Had he possessed the native temperament of the literary artist, he certainly would not have deferred experimentation so long. Nor would he, probably, if he had had to cast about for a livelihood, or if his environment had been other than it was. But to determine the literary vocation of a man of literary genius, yet nevertheless a man who had been occupied in wholly unliterary pursuits until so ripe a maturity as his, the accident of a whim was not only an appropriate but altogether the most natural cause. *Precaution* was the result of such an accident. It has no other merit, but it established the fact, which apparently he had never suspected, that he had the gift of improvisation; and when he found his material, in his next book, he produced a work that established his reputation as a writer of romance. He did much better, as he did far worse, afterward, but *The Spy* is eminently characteristic. It betrays his faults—very nearly all of them, I think—and most of his virtues. It signaled the entrance into the field of romance, in the fullness of untried but uncommon powers, of a born story-teller. This he was first of all. Some of his stories are dull, but they are never not stories. He belongs, accordingly, in the same category with Scott and Dumas and George Sand, and in general the writers whose improvising imagination is a conspicuous if not their preponderant faculty—a faculty which, though it may sometimes weary others, seems itself never to tire.

To be one of the great romancers of the world is, in itself, a distinction. But there is more than one kind of romance, and Cooper's has the additional interest of reality. It is based on very solid substance. It is needless to say that it has no interest of literary form—such as distinguishes, though it may not preserve, the exhilarating sophistication of Stevenson. It quite lacks the spiritual fancy of Hawthorne, the inventive extravagance of Poe, the *verve* of Dumas's opulent irresponsibility, the reach and scope of Scott's massive imaginativeness, the richness and beauty of George Sand's poetic improvisation. It has,

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however, on its side a certain advantage in being absolutely native to its material. More than any other writer of "tales" Cooper fused romance and realism. His books are flights of the imagination, strictly so-called, and at the same time the human documents which it has been left to a later age thus to label. There is not a character, not an incident, in Cooper that could be accused of exaggeration from the standpoint of rationality. And yet the breeze of adventure blows through his pages as if he had no care whatever for truth and fact. Second, no doubt, to Scott in romantic imaginativeness, he is even his superior in the illusion which gives his books an unpretentious and convincing air of relating rather than of inventing, of keeping within bounds and essaying no literary flights—of, as Arnold said in eulogy of German poetry, "going near the ground."

II

THE circumstances of his life explain the characteristics of his books with even more completeness than circumstances—as has now become a commonplace—explain everything, and constitute as well as alter cases. He had little systematic education. His character was developed and affirmed before his mind was either trained or stored. His taste naturally suffered. Taste is the product of tradition, and of tradition he was quite independent, quite ignorant. Fortunately, he was also ignorant of its value, and when at thirty he began to produce literature his energy was unhampered by diffidence. But it was inevitable that the literature he produced should be extremely unliterary, and noticeably so in proportion to its power. The fact that he was thirty before he took up his pen is proof enough that he was not a literary genius, proof enough, indeed, that his talent was not distinctively a literary talent. He had not even a tincture of bookishness. Of the *art* of literature he had perhaps never heard. It was quite possible in his day—singular as it may seem in ours—not to hear of it. He indulged in no youthful experimentation in it, unlike Irving. He left school early and was a sailor, a man of business, a gentleman of more or less leisure—enough, at all events, to encourage a temperament

that was aristocratic and critical, and not in the least speculative, adventurous, and æsthetic.

What encouragement the literary temperament could find, too, in the America of his youth is well known. The conditions drove Irving abroad, and made a recluse of Hawthorne. Cooper thrived under them. They suited his genius, and when he had once started he worked freely in them. He was personally interested in life, in people, in social and political phenomena, in American history and promise, American traits as already determined, American ideas and "institutions," in the country itself, its lakes and woods and plains and seashore, its mountains and rivers, as well as its cities and "settlements"—as Leatherstocking calls them. At least until he began *The Spy* he had never thought of all this as "material," if, indeed, he ever did afterward—in the express and æsthetic sense in which, for example, Stevenson would have regarded it. He was its historian, its critic, its painter, in his own view. He classed his books as works of the imagination in the rather conventional and limited sense in virtue of which fiction is necessarily, and by definition, imaginative. His "art" was for him the art of story-telling, in which the characters and incidents are imagined instead of being real. That his fiction was imaginative rather than merely imagined, I mean, probably never occurred to him. He never philosophized about it at all, and as he began it by conscious imitation of convention, continued it conventionally, so far as his procedure was conscious. As he wrote *Precaution* to determine whether or no he "could write a novel," he wrote *The Pilot* to prove that he could write a more seamanlike tale than *The Pirate* of Scott. He continued to write story after story, because he had made a success of story-telling, and demonstrated it to be his vocation.

But story-telling did not absorb his interests. He wrote other things, too. He has decided rank as a publicist. And he spoiled some of his novels by his preoccupations of that kind—although, indeed, he gave value and solidity to others of them in the same way; *The Bravo* is, for example, as strong a story as *The Ways of the Hour* is weak. Distinctly what we should call "unliterary,"

however, his point of view remained, as it had been at the outset. Without the poetic or artistic temperament—at least in sufficiently controlling force to stimulate self-expression before almost middle life—he subsisted in an environment, both personal and national, so hostile to the æsthetic and academic as to color what manifestations of these it suffered at all with a decidedly provincial tinge. The conjunction was fortunate. If it was responsible for a long list of the most unliterary works by any writer of eminence in any literature—as I suppose Cooper's may be called—it nevertheless produced an author of acknowledged power and indisputable originality, whose force and vitality are as markedly native and personal as their various manifestations are at times superficial, careless, and conventional. In a word, Cooper was, if not a great writer, a man of conspicuously large mental and moral stature, of broad vision, of wide horizon, of independent philosophy.

His prolixity is perhaps his worst fault; it is, at all events, the source of the worst fault his novels have, the heaviest handicap a novel can have—namely, their tedium. To begin with, hardly one of them is without its tiresome character. Not a few have more than one. Few of his best characters avoid tedium at times; at times even *Leatherstocking* is a bore. Cooper must himself, in actual life, have been fond of bores. Perhaps his irascibility was soothed by studying this particular foible of his fellows. The trait is to be suspected in other writers of fiction; Scott, for example. For my own part, I recall no character in Cooper as tiresome as some of "Scott's bores," as they are proverbially called. Cooper, however, in this respect is, in general, unsurpassed. The Scotch doctor in *The Spy*, the Dutch father in *The Water-Witch*, the Italian disputants in *Wing-and-Wing*, the crack-brained psalmist in *The Last of the Mohicans*—but it is idle to specify, the list is too long.

It is true that to represent a bore adequately a novelist can hardly avoid making him tiresome. That is his *raison d'être*, and for a novelist *nihil humani* can be *alienum*. But Terence himself would have modified his maxim if he could have foreseen Cooper's addiction to this especial genius. And, as

I say, some of the best and most interesting of his personages prose at times interminably; the Pathfinder talking about his own and Killdeer's merits at the prize-shooting, not a few, indeed, of the deliverances of this star character of Cooper's entire company are hard to bear. And both the bores who are—so explicitly and, thus, exhaustively—exhibited as such and the non-bores who nevertheless so frequently bore us have the painful and monotonous family resemblance of all being tiresome in one way—in prolixity. They are really not studied very closely as bores or as occasionally tiresome personages, but are extremely simplified by being represented merely as long-winded. No shades of character, no particular and individual weaknesses are illustrated by their prolixity. Their prolixity is itself the trait that distinguishes them.

The conclusion is inevitable that his characters are often so prolix and often such prolix characters because—which also we know to be the fact—Cooper himself was. Speaking of the unreadable *Mercedes of Castile*, Professor Lounsbury truly says that the author is as long getting under way with his story as Columbus himself was in arranging for his voyage. And though this inexplicable novel is probably his dullest, there are few others that do not contain long passages whose redundancy is remorseless. He has no standards. He feels no responsibility. He never thinks of the reader. He follows his own inclination completely, quite without concern for company, one must conclude. There was no tribunal whose judgments he had to consider; there was no censure to be dreaded, no praise he had to try to earn by being other than his own disposition prompted, by being more simple, more concise, more respectful of the reader's intelligence—no ideal of perfection, in short, at which the pressure of current criticism constrained him to aim. And of technical perfection in any but its broadest details—such as general composition and construction—he had no notion. His pace was leisurely, because such was his habit of mind, and there was nothing extraneous to hasten it. He lingered because he liked to, and his public was not impatient. He repeated because he enjoyed repetition, and there was no one to wince at it. He was as elaborate in

commonplace as the dilettante can be in paradox because novelty as such did not attract nor familiarity repel either himself or his public. As to literary standards, the times have certainly changed since his day. In literary performance there is perhaps an occasional reminder that the tendency to prolixity still subsists. And in actual life!—but, of course, changes in the macrocosm are naturally more gradual.

Yet even our own time may profitably inquire how it is that Cooper's popularity has triumphed so completely over so grave a fault. Largely, I think, it is due to the fact that the fault is a "literary"—that is to say, a technical—defect, and is counterbalanced by the vitality and largeness of the work of which it, too, is a characteristic. It is far from negligible. On the contrary, it is, however accounted for, the chief obstacle that prevents Cooper from attaining truly classic rank—the rank never quite attained by any one destitute of the sense of form, the feeling for perfection which is what makes art artistic, however inane or insubstantial it may be. But Cooper's technical blemishes are in no danger of being neglected. As Thackeray said impatiently of Macaulay's, "What critic can't point them out?" To point out Cooper's is so easy that his critics are singularly apt to sag into caricature in the process. Nevertheless, though it is indubitable that his prolixity is a grave defect, it is important to remember that it is a formal rather than a substantial one, and that in popular esteem it has been more than counterbalanced by compensations of substance. What is less evident, but what is still more worth indicating, is that there is, speaking somewhat loosely, a certain artistic fitness in his diffuseness, and that this is probably the main reason why it has so slightly diminished not only his popularity, but his legitimate fame. It is, in a word, and except in its excess, an element of his illusion. And in a sense, thus, it is rather a quality than a defect of his work. His illusion is incontestable. No writer of romance has more. It is simply impossible to praise him too highly here. And where the effect is so plainly secured one may properly divine some native felicity in the cause, however, abstractly considered, inadequate to anything such a cause may seem.

III

COOPER is usually called the American Scott in a sense that implies his indebtedness to Scott as a model and a master. His romances are esteemed imitations of the Waverley Novels, differing from their originals as all imitations do in having less energy, less spontaneity—of necessity, therefore, less originality. This is to consider mere surface resemblance. How much or how little Cooper owed to Scott is a question for the literary historian rather than the critic. Doubtless he copied Scott in various practical ways. Romance had received a stamp, a *cachet*, from Scott that, devoted to the same *genre*, it was impossible to ignore. Scott's own derivation may be defined quite as clearly, and the record of it is, like similar studies, one that has its uses. But for other than didactic purposes it is the contrast rather than the resemblance, even, between him and Cooper that is pertinent. It is misleading to compare them—in any sense which implies that Cooper's originality is in any way inferior. It is idle to characterize so voluminous a writer as imitative. Whatever its initial impetus imitation will not furnish the momentum for forty volumes. Cooper's inspiration is as genuine, his zest as great, his genius as individual, as Scott's own. He was less of an artist. He was nothing at all of a poet—at least, in any constructional sense. It is simply impossible to fancy him essaying verse. Even balladry, even rhyming, is beyond him.

Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His life-blood stains the spotless shield;

—there is not a note like that in his equipment. For a writer of romance the defect is grave. Nor did he know the world of society as Scott knew it. Any one who can take literally Scott's generous compliment to Miss Austen must never have read *St. Ronan's Well*. Neither did he inhabit the same world of the imagination. If he had far less temperament he had also far less culture. His environment forbade it; and he lived in the present. His conservatism was a rationalized liberalism—nothing akin to the instinctive toryism that made it natural for Scott to poetize history. And consequently his environment and his genius combined to confine him in the main

to a field which, however interesting in itself, is incontestably inferior to the grandiose theater of Scott's fiction. A splendid historical pageant winds its way through the Waverley Novels, with which nothing that the pioneer America of Cooper's day furnished could compare.

It is, indeed, in his material that Cooper presents the greatest possible contrast to Scott. It is vain, I think, for American chauvinism itself to deny that our civilization is less romantic than an older one, than that of Europe. To begin with, it has less background, and, as Stevenson pointed out, romanticism in literature largely consists in consciousness of the background. Nothing, it is true, is more romantic than nature, except nature plus man. But the exception is prodigious. Nature in Cooper counts as romantically as she does in Scott, but it is nature without memories, without monuments, without associations. Man, too, with him, though counting on the whole as romantically, does not count as background. His figures are necessarily foreground figures. They are not relieved against the wonderful tapestry of the past. In a word, there is necessarily little *history* in Cooper. Of course, there is *The Bravo*, as admirable a tale as *Mercedes of Castile* is an unprofitable one. But the mass of Cooper's most admirable accomplishment is thoroughly and fortunately American, and compared with Europe America has no history. Scott's material in itself, thus, constitutes an incontestable romantic superiority. For fiction history provides offhand a whole world for the exercise of the imagination.

It may undoubtedly be urged that a romantic situation is such in virtue of its elements and not of its associations; that the escape of Uncas from the Hurons in *The Last of the Mohicans* is as romantic as Edward Waverley's visit to the cave of Donald Bean Lean. Or to consider more profoundly, it may be said that, looking within, Hawthorne found in the spiritual drama of New England Puritanism the very quintessence of the romantic, thrown into all the sharper relief by its excessively austere and arid environment—that is to say, by a featureless and thoroughly *unromantic* background. Still, in considering the mass of a writer's work its romantic interest is not to be admeasured

mainly by its situations, or its psychology, but by the texture of its entire fabric. And owing to its wealth of imaginative association, the romance of the Waverley Novels is indubitably deeper, richer, more *important* than that of the Leatherstocking Tales. Bernardin de Saint Pierre passes for the father of French literary romanticism, for instance, but it can be only in a purely poetic or very technical sense that *Paul et Virginie* can be called as romantically important as *The Cloister and the Hearth*.

There is a quality in Cooper's romance, however, that gives it as romance an almost unique distinction. I mean its solid alliance with reality. It is thoroughly romantic, and yet—very likely owing to his imaginative deficiency, if anything can be so owing—it produces, for romance, an almost unequaled illusion of life itself. This writer, one says to one's self, who was completely unconscious of either the jargon or the philosophy of "art," and who had but a primitively romantic civilization to deal with, has, nevertheless, in this way produced the rarest, the happiest, artistic result. He looked at his material as so much life; it interested him because of the human elements it contained. Scott viewed his through an incontestably more artistic temperament, as romantic material. *Quentin Durward* is, it is true, a masterpiece and, to take an analogous novel of Cooper's, *The Bravo* is not; the presentation of the latter's substance is not masterly enough to answer the requirements of a masterpiece; the substance itself is far less important than the splendid historical picture, with its famous historical portraits, that Scott has painted in his monumental work. But Scott was inspired, precisely, by the epic potentialities for painting and portraiture of the struggle between Louis and Charles and its extraordinarily picturesque accessories. Cooper's theme was the effect of oligarchical tyranny on the social and political life of Venice at the acme of her fame and glory. Humanly speaking, *The Bravo* has more meaning. Historical portraiture aside, I do not think there is in *Quentin Durward* the sense of actual life and its significance that one gets from the tragedy of Jacopo Frontoni's heroic story and the picture of the vicious Venetian state whose sway corrupted "alike the ruler and the ruled" and where

"each lived for himself." The gist of the latter book is more serious; it is conceived more in the modern manner; it is not a mere panorama of medieval panoply and performance, but a romance with a thesis—at least so much of a thesis as any highly concentrated epoch must suggest to a thinking and reflective, instead of a merely seeing and feeling, student of its phenomena.

Cooper's genius was a thinking and reflective one. He was certainly not a meditative philosopher, but it was life that interested him and not story-telling as such, even if he might at times get less life and more convention into his books than a romancer *pur sang*. The essence of his romance is that there is no routine in his substance—only in its presentation. His central theme, his main substance, is, like Scott's, his native land. As a romancer his whole attitude toward the pioneer civilization he depicted was one of sympathetic and intelligent interest. He was an observer, a spectator, sufficiently detached to view his subject in the requisite perspective. Some of it he caricatured, and he was oppressively didactic in some of his poorer books. But that proceeded from his constitutional limitations as an artist. On the whole his general and personal interest in the life he depicted makes his account of it solid art, gives his romance even, as I said, more substance and meaning than Scott's historiography. It is more nearly "criticism of life" than the result of a romantic temperament dealing in a purely romantic way with purely romantic elements can be. It is true that Tory as he was, Scott held the balance very true in his pictures of the Cavalier and Roundhead, the Stuart and Hanoverian, contests. But there is more of the philosophy of the latter struggle in *The Two Admirals* than there is in *Waverley* itself.

In *Waverley* the romantic element of the struggle between the legitimist and the legitimate parties, as we may say, is powerfully set forth, the passionate ardor of the one and the practical good sense of the other effectively contrasted, though largely by indirection and in an accessory way. In *Wyandotté* the antagonism between Tory and patriot, between the British and the American partisan, is given far more relief. It is not used merely as a romantic element, tragically

dividing a household as it does, but exhibited as a clash of states of mind, of feeling, of conscience, of tradition. It is the subject, or at least a part of the subject, not mainly a contribution to its color. The reader notes the reasons that made Major Willoughby a loyalist and Captain Beekman a patriot. The book is a picture of the times, as well as a story, in presenting not only the action but the thinking of the times. One remarks in it that there were "issues" then as well as events. And, of course, with Cooper's noteworthy largeness they are presented with due impartiality, and in this way, too, acquire a sense of verisimilitude and a value that treatment of them as solely romantic elements could not secure.

And in the way of pure romance—romance quite independent of any associations of time and place—there are novels of Cooper that are unsurpassed. For an example of this element, in virtue of which, after all, Cooper's tales have made the tour of the world, take the introductory book of the famous Leatherstocking Tales. *The Deerslayer* is, indeed, a delightful romance, full of imaginative interest, redolent of the woods, compact of incident, and alive with suspense. How many times has the genuine lover of Cooper paid it the tribute of a rereading? For such a reader every small lake in the woods is a Glimmerglass; around its points might at any moment appear one of old Hutter's canoes; at any moment down on yonder sand-spit Le Loup Cervier might issue from the underbrush; in a clearing beyond the nearer tree-tops the Deerslayer might so easily be bound to the stake, be looking into the rifle barrel of his torturer—reassured by his expert knowledge and *sang-froid* to note its ever so slight deflection from a fatal aim! *Treasure Island*? A literary *tour de force*, not only suspiciously clever (aside from the admirable beginning), but so rigorously romantic, so little illusory! *La Dame de Monsoreau*? Pure melodrama, impossible of realization even on the stage, its unreality certain of exposure even by the friendly histrionic test. Quite without the aid of a "literary" presentation, quite without the supplement of historic suggestion and a monumental background, the romance of *The Deerslayer* is, nevertheless, so intrinsic, so essential, and so pervasive as to give the

work commanding rank in its class. No tinsel, literary or other, accentuates its simplicity, and no footlight illumination colors its freshness. Cooper is hardly to be called a poet, as I have said. Yet *The Deerslayer's* romance is, in the net impression it leaves, in the resultant effect of its extraordinary visualization of wild and lovely material, as poetic as Chateaubriand's, and fully as effective as that of any work of Scott.

IV

THE verisimilitude of Cooper's Indians has been the main point of attack of his caricaturing critics. None of them has failed to have his fling at this. It is extraordinary what a convention his assumed idealization of the Indian has become. I say extraordinary, because it is the fact that the so-called "noble red man," whom he is popularly supposed to have invented, does not exist in his books at all. Successful or not, his Indians, like his other characters, belong to the realm of attempted portraiture of racial types, and are, in intention, at all events, in no wise purely romantic creations.

If they were they would, of course, be superabundantly justified. Ethnology might be reminded that fiction is, to some extent, at least, outside its jurisdiction. The claims of history are far higher, but only a pedant sneers at *Ivanhoe*, in which Freeman asserted there was an error on every page, though this is undeniably regrettable; and, in recent times, certainly, the great Dumas is not asked to be otherwise, though a reader here and there may be found who would give him higher rank had he been something other. The introduction into literature of the North American Indian, considered merely as a romantic element, was an important event in the history of fiction. He was an unprecedented and a unique figure—at least on the scale and with the vividness with which he is depicted in Cooper, for the Indians of Mrs. Behn and Voltaire and Chateaubriand can in comparison hardly be said to count at all. They are incarnated abstractions didactically inspired for the most part; L'Ingénu, the virtuous, for example, being no more than an expedient for the contrasted exhibition of civilized vices. But Cooper's Indians, whatever their warrant in truth,

were notable actors in the picturesque drama of pioneer storm and stress. They stand out in individual as well as racial relief, like his other personages, American, English, French, and Italian, and discharge their rôles in idiosyncratic, as well as in energetic, fashion. To object to them on the ground that, like Don Quixote and Athos, the Black Knight and Saladin, Uncle Toby and Dalgetty, they are ideal types without actual analogues would be singularly ungracious.

However, they are not ideal types, but depend for their validity in large degree on their reality of portraiture as well as on their romantic interest. As I say, they stand on the same ground as Cooper's other characters, and share with them the seriousness a close correspondence to life gives to fiction that has a realistic basis, however great its romantic interest may also be. They are not in the least "ideal" personages. Cooper does not, to be sure, take quite the cowboy view of the Indian, and people with a smattering of pioneering who regard the cowboy as an expert in Indians and echo his opinion that "the only good Indian is a dead one," may find him unduly discriminating. Still, the cowboy's ethnological experience is, after all, limited, and the frontiersman of recent years has had to deal not with the Indian of the time of Cooper's tales, but with his descendants demoralized by contact with his censors, to say nothing of the "century of dishonor." Cooper's view is certainly that the Indian is human. But the fact which is so generally lost sight of is that the "noble red man"—the fictitious character he is charged with inventing—is a stranger to his pages. In general he endows the Indian with traits that would be approved as authentic even by the ranchman, the rustler, or the army officer. His Indians are in the main epitomized in Magua. And in the mass the race is depicted pretty much as Hawkeye conceived the Mingoes of the Mohawk Valley and Leatherstocking the Sioux of the prairies—"varmints" one and all. The exceptions are few. There are the Delawares, Chingachgook and Uncas, Conanchet, and the Pawnee Hardheart—hardly any others of importance. And the "goodness" of these is always carefully characterized as *sui generis*. The difference between their moral "gifts," as Leatherstocking often enough

points out, and those of the white man is always made to appear as radical. The most "idealized" of them is shown as possessing passions and governed by a code that sharply distinguish him from a white of analogous superiority to his fellows. Nor is his ability exaggerated. In spite of his special senses, developed by his life in peace and war, his woodcraft and physical prowess, when it comes to the pinch in any case his inferiority to the white man is generally marked. So far from being untruthful idealizations Cooper's little group of "good Indians" is in both quality and importance considerably below what a writer not actuated by the truly realistic purpose that was always his would be justified in depicting as representative of the best specimens of the Indian race. The history of this country abounds in figures from Massasoit to Brant, from Osceola to Joseph, of moral and mental stature hardly emulated by any of Cooper's aborigines. The only approach to them is in the sage Tamenund of the Lenni Lenape, who is introduced at a great age, and with failing faculties almost extinct. Chingachgook dies a drunkard as old Indian John. Uncas is slain when a mere youth, before his character is thoroughly developed. Conanchet proves untamable by the best of white influences. Wyandotte preserves his fundamental treachery and vengefulness through years of faithful service to the family to which he is attached. Catlin, who passed his life among the Indians, took a far more favorable view of them.

The truth is that not only is Indian character not misrepresented by Cooper, at least in being idealized, but his Indian characters are as carefully studied and as successfully portrayed as his white ones. Their psychology even is set forth with as much definition. They are as much personalities and differ from each other as much. Representatives of a single tribe have their marked individual differences. The Hurons Rivenoak and Le Renard Subtil have but a family resemblance. With the naturally greater simplicity of the savage they are, nevertheless, not represented without the complexities that constitute and characterize the individual. The Tuscarora who enters the room where a mortal struggle is taking place, extinguishes the light, and, one against a

dozen, slays the enemies of the white household he serves, in a fray as dramatic as, and far more credible than, the famous fatal fight of the Chevalier de Bussy, is a genuine hero. Yet he is the same man who, for injustice long since forgotten by all but himself, murders his benefactor in absolute cold blood. And the inconsistency is not an anomaly. It is an Indian trait. In short, Cooper's Indians are at once Indians to the core, and thoroughly individualized as well. The "stock" Indian is no more to be found in his books than the "ideal" primitive hero. He has added to the traditional material of romance an entire race of human beings, possessing in common the romantic elements of strangeness and savagery, but also illustrating a distinctive and coherent racial character.

V

"If Cooper," said Balzac, "had succeeded in the painting of character as well as he did in the painting of the phenomena of nature he would have uttered the last word of our art." The phenomena of nature considered as material for literary art probably seem less important, less apt, at any rate, nowadays than they did in Balzac's time. In France especially the generation to which Chateaubriand remained an inspiration esteemed them in a degree that appears to us exaggerated. They were much more of a novelty, to begin with. The eighteenth century, even in England, had certainly little minded them. And certainly they are well handled by Cooper. Nowhere else has prose rendered the woods and the sea so vividly, so splendidly, so adequately—and so simply. Too much can hardly be said of this element of the sea stories and the Leatherstocking Tales. But there is a peculiarity in Cooper's view and treatment of nature. Nature was to him a grandiose manifestation of the Creator's benevolence and power, a vision of beauty and force unrolled by Omnipotence, but a panorama, not a presence. There was nothing Wordsworthian, nothing pantheistic in his feeling for her—for "it" he would have said. No flower ever gave him thoughts that lay too deep for tears. He was at one with nature as Dr. Johnson was with London. There is something extremely tonic and natural in the simplicity of such an

attitude, and as a romancer the reality and soundness of it stood Cooper in good stead. It is due to it that nature in his books is an environment, an actual medium, in which his personages live and move rather than a background against which they are relieved, or a rival to which their interest yields. It is the theater of their action. It simply never occurs to Cooper to "paint the phenomena of nature" except as thus related to his people or their story—though generally more closely related than an accessory, and never less so than an atmosphere. But he knew the sea and the woods, and felt them as no other romancer has ever done, and he made such distinguished use of them as abundantly to merit Balzac's eulogy.

To say, however, that he did not succeed in the painting of character as in a domain wherein he was unrivaled is not to depreciate his portraiture. And certainly Balzac's meaning is merely that in the one field his excellence was unique and in the other it was not. Balzac, moreover, exaggerated, as I have intimated, the value for fiction of painting the phenomena of nature; he meant his praise to be very high praise indeed, and it would greatly have surprised him, we may be sure, to have had any one, as has since been done, take his reference to Cooper's powers of portraiture as depreciatory, as a putting of his finger on Cooper's weak point. He adored Cooper. His admiration of him was not indiscriminating—any more than any other of his admirations. But his enthusiasm for him at his best—even at his second best—was unbounded. *The Pathfinder*, says his latest biographer, M. André Le Breton, "*lui arrachait de véritables rugissements de plaisir et d'admiration.*"¹ It is idle to refer Balzac's "*rugissements de plaisir*"—at any rate as late as 1840—altogether to the "painting of the phenomena of nature." It is true that what captivated him especially perhaps was the *life* in general that Cooper depicted—the wild, free, savage life of the frontier, easily paradisaic (in idea!) to a Parisian. "Oh," he says in a letter of 1830, "to lead the life of a Mohican, to run over the rocks, to swim the sea, to breathe the free air, the sun! Oh, how I have conceived the savage! Oh, how admirably I have under-

stood the pirates, the adventurers, their lives of opposition and outlawry! There, I said to myself, life is courage, good rifles, the art of navigating in the wide ocean, and the hatred of men." And ten years later his enthusiasm was quite as great. But it is naïve to suppose that what made this "life" so attractive to Balzac was in the last analysis anything else than the people who lived it. In *Jack Tier*, for example, the phenomena of nature are as effectively depicted as in the somewhat analogous *Red Rover*. What makes the book itself less effective? Mainly the comparative inferiority of the characters, though the story, it is true, is less heroic and though some of the characters are very good indeed. However, here is Balzac's own estimate of Leatherstocking: "*Je ne sais pas si l'œuvre de Walter Scott fournit une création aussi grandiose que celle de ce héros des savanes et des forêts.*"² And though, in speaking of Cooper and Scott, he says "*l'un est l'historien de la nature, l'autre de l'humanité,*"³ the antithesis is doubtless due to the greater prominence of nature in Cooper's works as in his material, to Cooper's artistic inferiority and to the vaster stage of the Waverley drama—to say nothing of the charms for Balzac of antithesis in itself. Cooper, continues M. Le Breton, after citing the above phrase, is not less than Scott "a great painter of manners," and "I fear," he says, later, "that the usurers of Balzac, his lawyers, bankers, and notaries, owe too much to the sojourn his imagination had made in the cabin of Leatherstocking or the wigwam of Chingachgook, and that there are in the *Comédie Humaine* too many Mohicans in spencers or Hurons in frock-coats."

The criticism of Balzac is sound enough, but the compliment to Cooper is equally clear. To have shared with Scott the derivation of "the master of us all," as Mr. Henry James calls Balzac (who has other titles to fame, but in the light of a provenience from Cooper none so piquant), of itself constitutes a position in the hierarchy of fiction. And in so far as Balzac does derive from Cooper, he does so in virtue of Cooper's

² I do not know whether the work of Walter Scott affords a creation of such grandeur as that of this hero of the plains and the forests.

³ The one is the historian of nature, the other of humanity.

¹ Roused him to veritable roars of pleasure and of admiration.

realism. His Mohicans in spencers and Hurons in frock-coats really testify to the vivid reality of Cooper's characters, which so impressed the great French realist as to lead him to transfer to the boulevards in unconscious caricature the types which in their native environment possessed a vitality energetic enough to impose imitation even on a romancer of whose greatness originality is a conspicuous trait.

Interesting testimony, however, to the force and truth of Cooper's characters as Balzac's authoritative approval and their influence on his own are, it is interesting only in an authoritative way, and as counterbalancing the judgment of critics of less weight. The characters are there to speak for themselves—to any reader, as they spoke to Balzac. Sainte-Beuve praises them without reserve. In reviewing an early work he speaks enthusiastically of Cooper's "*faculté créatrice qui enfante et met au monde des caractères nouveaux, et en vertu de laquelle Rabelais a produit Panurge, Le Sage Gil Blas, et Richardson Clarissa.*"¹ They certainly differ in value and solidity, and not only because the types they represent or the conceptions they incarnate so differ, but in what for the sake of clearness may be called the un-Shakespearean way of being characterized with varying effectiveness. Balzac notes the inferiority of his secondary personages to those of Scott—which is true only of his *conventional* secondary personages, I think. For these he had not the zest that the true *artist* has in all his creations. His personages interested him personally or not at all. And when he has no interest he is the last word of the perfunctory. But it is certainly true that he is nowhere less perfunctory than in the creation of character, and that as a rule even his secondary characters adequately fill the rôle assigned to them. Even if they are not made much of, even if he does not, as the French expression is, *les faire valoir*, they are real enough. They are the exact analogues of the negligible folk one meets in life.

There are, however, those who, appreciating Cooper's success with Leatherstocking, with Long Tom Coffin, with Betty Flanagan,

and others, have maintained that it is with low life only that he is successful, and that he fails when he attempts to depict the higher social types. The view is a superficial one. It is in general a superficial or else an insignificant view when taken of a writer of conspicuous distinction in character portrayal. Character is character. There are not two kinds of it, high and low, except in the sense in which youth and old age, for example, may be said to differ in character. There is as much and as little of it at one end of the social scale as at the other. What types a writer with an eye for it and a faculty for effectively embodying his conception of it will best succeed in depends upon his experience. When Cooper wrote his experimental English novel *Precaution* he was writing of something he knew nothing about. In *The Spy* and *The Pioneer*, which followed it, the gentry are as good as the humble folk. Leatherstocking and Betty Flanagan are effective largely because they are picturesque, and it is in the lower walks of life that the picturesque is especially to be found. And romance deals largely in the picturesque.

Of course temperament is to some extent a factor in determining the types that an author treats most successfully. So great a writer as Dickens, it is true, has sometimes been said to have succeeded best with characters from low life. If one contrasts Lord Frederick Verisopht with Sam Weller one perceives that the author's genius is most at home in the society of the latter. And whatever Dickens's experience his temperament, undoubtedly, led him to depict the lower, with more zest than the upper, ten. He depicted them, however, for the benefit of the upper. And, whatever his feeling for character, his high spirits irresistibly impelled him toward caricature. Naturally a novelist producing caricature for the benefit of the reading classes finds the material readiest to his hand in another class. Naturally, too, a writer of romance and adventure finds most effective what is, except in its outlines and salencies, least familiar. Stevenson's readers would find John Silver rather flat if he were a titular gentleman. Readers aside, moreover, the more civilized, the higher in the social scale, the character is, the less accentuated it is, externally. For romantic purposes, at least for the purposes

¹ Creative power which brings forth and gives to the world new characters, the power by virtue of which Rabelais created *Panurge*, *Le Sage Gil Blas*, and *Richardson Clarissa*.

of realistic romance such as Cooper's, it is normally of inferior interest, for less is apt normally to happen to it. In ideal romance, of course, neither this nor any similar consideration matters. No one expects a character in Dumas or in Disraeli to be *in* character otherwise than to be consistent with itself. The ends of realistic romance are better served by the more elemental natures that have not been smoothed and polished into conformity and are independent of convention. The passions that agitate aristocratic bosoms are more sophisticated and their dramatic result is in the domain rather of the novelist of manners or of the psychological novelist than of the realistic romancer.

Any preponderance of low over high life personages, therefore, among Cooper's successful characters might very well be accounted for by the kind of fiction he wrote. Certainly beyond such as may be thus accounted for no such preponderance exists. He had simply no talent at all for caricature. His failures when he attempted it are grotesque. For example, the vulgar American journalist in *Homeward Bound*. He could no more have invented a Dick Swiveller than he could have imagined Hamlet. But within his range of experience and imagination, one of his characters is as good as another, so far as the class to which they belong is concerned. The "blue" admiral in *The Two Admirals* is quite as fine in his way as Long Tom Coffin is in his. His type is simply less picturesque. Perhaps, indeed, a fo'castle reader, were there such, would think him equally picturesque. In all the nautical novels, in fact, the quarter-deck people are quite as well done as the able seamen. Lord Geoffrey Cleveland, the midshipman favorite of Admiral Bluewater, is a charming character. There are a score of lieutenants, most of them of gentle birth and breeding, that are extraordinarily good, each one of them an individual and no more mere types than the actual people of one's acquaintance. Griffith, Barnstable, Winchester, Yelverton, Griffin—I have my own idea, I confess, of how each of them looks. When *The Pilot* appeared Miss Mitford wrote: "No one but Smollett has ever attempted to delineate the naval character; and then his are so coarse and hard. Now this has the same truth and

power with a deep, grand feeling. . . . Imagine the author's boldness in taking Paul Jones for a hero, and his power in making one care for him." This is very true. Cooper does on occasion combine truth, power, and a deep, grand feeling. He was the manliest of men himself and he had a sympathetic sense for what is noble and elevated in character. He found it, to be sure, in the humbler social types, but I think not disproportionately. His patricians are, on the whole, as good as his plebs, so far as verisimilitude is concerned. To find him exclusively or mainly successful in the characters belonging to "low life" is, I think, to miss his chief distinction—that is to say, his genius for the portrayal of character as character, within the limits of his experience and the types his observation suggested to his imagination.

If he had imagined no other character than Leatherstocking, this creation alone would set him in the front rank of the novelists of the world. It is singular that this feat, as it may in justice be called, has brought him so little purely literary recognition. Perhaps it is because every one makes Leatherstocking's acquaintance in childhood, and acceptance of him is accordingly perfunctory and unthinking, like that of Robinson Crusoe, for example. No one seems really to reflect on the extraordinary nature of Cooper's accomplishment. Merit in American literature is the last thing, one would say, that escapes notice—at least at home. We have apparently a national disposition to create our geniuses out of hand. Our criticism is geniality itself. It assigns us great writers—poets, historians, novelists, critics—with the utmost imperturbability, and on the slightest provocation. Certainly in no country, at any epoch, has appreciation of its own men of letters been as ready or, as one may say, so energetic. The predisposition in their favor is perhaps the most persistent survival from days—pungently depicted by Cooper, who seems, in this respect, too, to have few successors—in which it was a wide-spread belief that on any battlefield we could "lick allcreation." Yet here is an American literary possession that really ranks with all but the greatest, who is never thought of when our literary auctioneers are extolling and exalting our stock. Not long ago one of our acutest

and most careful critics was coupling Leatherstocking with Irving's Knickerbocker and speculating about the ideal or mythical character of both. *They* were this and not that, *et cætera*.

Thackeray wrote literary criticism lightly and had an instinctive repugnance to curbing his prejudices. But in the matter of fiction his authority is unimpeachable. No one ever—and others have tried—parodied Cooper so well. His "Leatherlegs" is an amusing figure. His serious judgment, however, is as follows: "I have to own," he says, "that I think the heroes of another writer, *viz.*, Leatherstocking, Uncas, Hardheart, Tom Coffin, are quite the equals of Scott's men; perhaps Leatherstocking is better than any one in 'Scott's lot.' *La Longue Carabine* is one of the great prize men of fiction. He ranks with your Uncle Toby, Sir Roger de Coverley, Falstaff—heroic figures all, American or British—and the artist has deserved well of his country who devised them." He has indeed.

From the point of view of literature the drama itself is finally assayed for character rather than action. This is true even of Greek tragedy, where everything revolves about the action, where the action is altogether the overwhelming *motif*. The Greeks were nothing if not didactic, one may say, and the gospel of art for art's sake would be understood no more on Parnassus than on Olympus, would seem equally aloof from the vital interests of man to the audiences of Menander and to the pupils of the Platonic Academy, where no one entered who was ignorant of geometry, and where the basis of æsthetics was assumed to be ethical and utilitarian. Even in a drama which—in the best of taste, of course, and in the most serious artistic sense—preached, as we may be sure *The Cœphori* preached to the trembling Felixes of its day, a drama of which the thesis is so tremendously concrete as to make the characters seem abstract, the vigor of the presentation is due to the force with which the characters, however traditional, are conceived and portrayed. And the same thing is true of romance. What gives the story vital rather than transient interest is the personages to whom the events happen. It is the human nature in the *Arabian Nights*, in the *Decameron*, in *Gil Blas*, that

secures their perennial interest. Just as this element in Balzac usually counteracts the effect of his occasional melodrama, and in Dumas often palliates his essential levity, and in Hugo endues with grandeur what else would be insipid. An example of romance deprived of this element is Stevenson's *Prince Otto*. Story, style, everything is there but character. The personages are the toys of the dilettante. *The Prisoner of Zenda* is a more considerable performance precisely because, inferior in other respects, its characters are felt and rendered with more energy. It is far less "literary," it is true, but so far as it goes it is solider literature. What is it that gives such a romance as *Ivanhoe* its value as literature—in other words, its enduring interest? Not the tourney, the attack on Front de Bœuf's castle, the bout between Friar Tuck and the Black Knight, the archery exhibition of Locksley, but the character of Rebecca of York and the warfare between good and evil in the passionate soul of the Templar, as truly the protagonist of the book as Lucifer is of *Paradise Lost*, or Hector—who has infinitely more *character* than Achilles—of the *Iliad*. What would the ultra-romantic *Rob Roy* be without Di Vernon and Rashleigh Osbaldistone? What would *Robinson Crusoe* be without the autobiographer's account of his interior experiences as well as his adventures? Could anything more insipid be imagined than the mere adventures of Don Quixote recounted by a Dumas or a Stevenson? Gautier's *Le Capitaine Fracasse* is a delightful imaginative work, but the defect that has probably prevented its ever being reread is that its figures are feeble. On the other hand, the character interest of *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, for example, is so overwhelming as to obscure for most readers, probably, the splendidly romantic setting in which it is fixed. But the point is too obvious to dwell upon. The most inveterate lover of the story for the story's sake must admit that what makes literature of romance is the element that distinguishes its classic examples from the excellent stories of Horace Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe—the element of character, namely. On any other theory that now forgotten masterpiece, *The Three Spaniards*, a veritable marvel of purely narrative romance, should still be in every one's hands.

Even in romance, therefore, the play being not so much the thing after all as the players, it may be said that the function of the most romantic events is largely to elucidate the actors in them. A main excellence of romance as a literary form is that it elucidates a range of character with which only the imagination can adequately deal, traits and personalities which lie outside the realm of the novel of manners. Its environment has thus its own peculiar advantages, but when it exalts its environment at the expense of its figures it proportionately loses value as literature. What, accordingly, sets Cooper by the side of Scott is his instinct and practice in precisely this respect. He always has a story and always tells it well. Whatever its defects it moves, and it never lacks incident. No tedium of disquisition or digression, no awkwardness of construction, prevents it from being a series of events, a succession of pictures organically interrelated and tending cumulatively toward a climax. He accepted the story quite unconsciously as the essential condition of his production, and developed it not only loyally but enthusiastically with all the energy of remarkable powers of invention and an attentive conformity to what he conceived to be its general character and import. This is why the young will always read him. He is, in fact, one of the great story-tellers of literature—so much so, indeed, that the narrative probably absorbed most of his conscious effort in all his books. He thought of these, and often described them on his title-pages as “tales.” In his day the narrative had not become “a slender thread.” Things happened in it. Whether it followed the most commonplace traditions of the novel, and continued the practice of slipshod contradictions and inherent improbabilities, or whether it exhibited a nice sense of constructive propriety and singleness of effect (as in *Wing-and-Wing*, or *The Deerslayer*), it was invariably his preoccupation.

But if his characters, on the other hand, show no particular care, it is because they are the direct products of his genius. They probably “came to him in his sleep.” They are not “studied” from life or worked out from a central imaginative conception. They are thoroughly realistic and yet imaginatively typical simply because Cooper had a re-

markable instinct for character. He could read it and divine it in life, and when he came to create it and put it in situations of his own imagining he knew how it would act and what traits it would develop. For the time being he undoubtedly lived with his creations as if they were actual people. His acquaintance with actual people was very large. He alludes in *The Two Admirals* to “the course of a checkered life in which we have been brought in collision with as great a diversity of rank, profession, and character, as often falls to the lot of any one individual,” and the multifarious variety of personages with which his novels are peopled proceeds from this circumstance—plus, of course, his genius in transmuting through his imagination his experience into his creation. And not only was his experience wide—both in his native pioneer civilization and in the more highly developed European world—but he was conspicuously endowed with the philosophic temperament. On what he saw he reflected. The individuals he met did not merely impress him with their peculiarities, they taught him human nature. He had the great advantage, associated with his deficiency of not being a writer from the first, of having been first a man. No writer of romance has been, as indisputably Cooper was, distinctly a publicist also. Scott’s politics, for example, are negligible; Cooper’s are rational, discriminating, and suggestive. He knew men as Lincoln knew them—which is to say, very differently from Dumas and Stevenson.

Consequently, the world of his creation is above all a solid one. Romantic as it is in form, its substance is of the reality secured by confining the form, the story, to its office of creating the illusion and not constituting the *primum mobile*. Slipshod as his story is now and then in disregarding probability and consistency so far as incident is concerned, the characters are never compromised by this carelessness, and where they are concerned he always checks his romance by the law of the situation, so to speak. They never share the occasional improbability or inconsistency of the events in which they participate, and the latter, accordingly, in any large sense, count no more than a self-correcting misprint. The consistency of Leatherstocking’s character, for example, is hardly affected by his

being represented as eighty years old on one page of *The Prairie* and eighty-odd on another. In *The Deerslayer* a single set of chessmen is provided with five castles. But such carelessness does not destroy the illusion of the story sufficiently to impair the integrity of the characters. These surely triumph over even a superfluity of chess castles, and like their congeners in all, or nearly all, the other books, establish the solidity of the world they inhabit by the definiteness, completeness, and comprehension with which they are portrayed.

No writer, not even the latest so-called psychological novelist, ever better understood the central and cardinal principle of enduing a character with life and reality—namely, the portrayal of its moral complexity. The equal in this vital respect of the New Hampshire man, Ithuel Bolt, in *Wing-and-Wing*, hardly exists in Scott, and must be sought in Thackeray or George Eliot. An essay could be written on him as on a character of history. As a New England type, too, he is a masterpiece of great representative value. Having him end his days as a deacon of his religious denomination, after a lifetime of chicane and deceit, notably self-deception, was an inspiration, which must have been appreciated, even, or perhaps particularly, in New Hampshire itself. Spike in *Jack Tier* is a scoundrel, but he has, nevertheless, a side in virtue of which his wife clings to him—far otherwise explicably than Nancy to Bill Sikes, for example. The struggle between good and evil impulses in the breast of the Red Rover is a truly heroic portrayal. The internal conflict that paralyzes the will of the “blue” admiral in *The Two Admirals* is treated with truly psychologic insight. To open any of the more important “tales” is to enter a company of personages in each of whom coexist—in virtue of the subtle law that constitutes character by unifying moral complexity—foibles, capacities, qualities, defects, weakness and strength, good and bad, and the inveterate heterogeneity of the human heart is fused into a single personality. And the variety, the multifariousness of the populous world that these personages, thus constituted, compose, is an analogue on a larger scale of their own individual differentiation. Cooper’s world is a microcosm quite

worthy to be set by the side of those of the great masters of fiction and, quite as effectively as theirs, mirroring a synthesis of the actual world to which it corresponds, based on a range of experience and framed with imaginative powers equaled by them alone.

VI

COOPER’S women are generally believed, I suppose, especially to illustrate his limitations as a novelist of character. They are usually decried if not derided. His heroines are deemed the woodenest of conventional types, and their sisters the most mechanical of foils. Their creator’s practice of referring to them as “females” is found amusing, for though it was a common enough practice of his day it has certainly become so obsolete as to seem singular to the reader of current books exclusively. Professor Lounsbury, who is the wittiest of writers, and in consequence a little at the mercy of a master faculty, has a good deal of fun with these “females” in his model biography. He pictures for them all “the same dreary and rather inane future,” as members of Dorcas societies, as “carrying to the poor bundles of tracts and packages of tea,” as haling ragged children into the Sunday-school and making slippers for the rector. He says that “in fiction at least one longs for a ruddier life than flows in the veins of these pale bleached-out personifications of the proprieties,” though “they may possibly be far more agreeable to live with” than the “women for whom men are willing or anxious to die.” As regards not by any means all but a certain class of Cooper’s “females,” one can but “feel what he means.” Tastes differ, and in the quiet scholastic closes of New Haven no doubt they like a little more ginger, “in fiction at least,” than palates more accustomed to it demand. In the dustier and more driving world at large the simplicity and sweetness of these natures may be considered to make in an equivalent way the same appeal of novelty. However, what “one longs for, in fiction at least,” is not the measure of a novelist’s success in character portraiture. To say that his characters are conventional is, if they are, a just reproach. To say that they are insipid is not. Professor Lounsbury may very explicably sigh for “the stormier char-

acters of fiction that"—as he conceives—"are dear to the carnal-minded," and the carnal-minded may in turn perversely delight in Arcadian innocence; but the business of the novelist, and of the realistic romance writer such as Cooper, is to "pander" to the desires of neither, but to "feel" his characters as individuals, whatever their nature, and to depict them with personal zest and attention.

It would, of course, be idle to deny that some of Cooper's "females" are conventional, but I think they are far fewer than is popularly imagined. Some, at all events, of those gentle and placid beings that he was fond of creating are very real. It is possibly because they are measured by the standard provided by more modern fiction rather than by actual life that they are found conventional. They would appear truer according to this paradoxical standard if they were more exceptional. But the very definite forecast that Professor Lounsbury makes for them shows how real they seem to him, after all. The reader, he says, "is as sure as if their career had been actually unrolled before his eyes of the part they will play in life." They are types of a kind of woman probably far more persistent in life than in fiction and more persistent in life than is generally suspected at the present perhaps transitional crisis in mankind's view of woman. In fiction we have, for the moment at least, and except in such rare instances as the fiction of Mr. Howells, lost sight of that side of the "female" in virtue of which she used to be called "the weaker vessel." The rise and education, the enormous increase and differentiation of the activities of woman at the present time, have in life also somewhat obscured this side of her nature. It is, however, too essential and integral a side to be more than temporarily forgotten, and it would not be surprising if, in the not remote future, some disquietude at woman's failure to take very significant advantage of her very signal opportunities should qualify the current conviction that her insignificance hitherto has been wholly due to her subjection. "Educate them as much as you please and give them all the privileges they want," observed an empirical philosopher once, "you will still have to take care of them." Woman herself would prob-

ably still agree that when pain and anguish wring *her* brow the male of her species is called upon to be a ministering angel of extremely energetic efficiency. Cooper's women certainly have to be taken care of, but this fact does not demonstrate them to be wooden and conventional, and is apparently not inconsistent with the nature of the *ewig Weibliches*, however tame the resultant fiction, as fiction, may be found.

At any rate, these types existed in abundance in Cooper's day, and were not perfunctorily adopted by him from the characterless religious and other contemporary novel. It is in range rather than in quality that his portraiture of women is deficient. He portrayed the types he knew as realistically as he did his men, but his knowledge of women was not wide. He was eminently a man's man. The domestic affections probably taught him most of what he knew of woman, and of women in general he probably met comparatively few. And of these, of course, he "studied" none, that particular exercise of the literary artist's faculties being in his day but imperfectly developed. His clinging weaklings are as good as Scott's, I think. But he had nothing like Scott's social experience, and his women are less varied in consequence. Possibly, also, they are less varied because he had less ideality; for Scott was a poet and Cooper was not; though I think he shows a very charming ideality in his treatment of his women—not only is not one of them brutally limned, but there is a marked chivalry in his treatment of all of them. Moreover, in some of them there is a spiritual strength that qualifies their softness very nobly as well as very truly. There is scarcely in all Scott the equal in this respect of Ghita Caraccioli, in *Wing-and-Wing*—a tale which, aside from its adventurous interest and the admirable art that makes it exceptional among Cooper's works, is a particularly moving love story.

And the range of Cooper's female characters is far wider than is commonly appreciated or than is common in romance. Romance in general does not very insistently demand the feminine element—except, of course, the romance that demands nothing else—such as *Paul et Virginie*. In the romance of adventure, woman, almost of necessity, plays a subordinate part. She is

almost inevitably reduced to the type, in order to count as a dramatic factor. The realism of Cooper's romance appears here as elsewhere. There are few of his women who are purely lay figures even among the insipid ones, as I have said, at least if we except the inferior novels—novels which, in Cooper's case, ought not to be considered at all; he wrote enough good ones to earn negligibility for such books as *Mercedes of Castile* and *The Ways of the Hour*. Even such effaced characters as Alice Munro in *The Last of the Mohicans* are real enough. In almost every case, however insignificant and insipid they may be, they have the effect of being thoroughly alive—of having been felt and definitely visualized by their author. To this extent and in this way they bear, perhaps, even more striking witness to his master faculty, the faculty of creating character, than their more accentuated sisters.

But these latter are, for romance, as distinguished from the novel of character and manners pure and simple (which Cooper essayed, to be sure, but in which certainly his success was not notable), unusually numerous and varied. Compare the women of *Ivanhoe* and *Waverley*, for example, with those of *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Deerslayer*. The background of the two former books has more dignity and importance than the woods of America in the middle of the eighteenth century could possibly provide. But the characters of the four American "females" and the contrast between the members of each couple of them are at least as firmly drawn, as vivid, and as effective; they do not so markedly function merely as antagonistic influences on the heart of the hero or the action of the tale. Cora Munro, with her strain of negro blood appealing so strongly to both of her redskin admirers, her inevitably hopeless passion for Heyward and her truly tragic predestination, is an original and admirable creation. The two girls in *The Deerslayer* are masterpieces. Judith Hutter particularly is a character worthy of a place among the important figures of fiction. Her beauty, her worldliness, her exotic refinement, set off against the rude and vulgar background of her family environment and blending exquisitely with the wild beauty of her lacustrine surroundings, her sensibility to

such simple elevation as she finds in the Deerslayer's character, the delicacy of her wooing of him and acquiescence in his rejection of her, and her final acceptance of her inevitable fate, compose a portrait with accessories rare in fiction of any kind and particularly rare in romance.

The feeble-minded Hetty, who serves superficially as her foil, is portrayed with equal attentiveness and great delicacy. There is something very gentle and attaching in the art with which Cooper, quite without the consciousness of doing anything unusual, and as simply as if it were the most natural thing in the world, achieves the difficult task of making convincing and interesting a character whose rectitude and fearlessness of nature enable her to play a rôle of pathetic dignity hardly hampered by a clouded mind. Here his touch, so heavy in generalization, in humor, and in broader portraiture often, is lightness itself. Some sympathetic strain in his nature endued him, too, with an analogous felicity in portraying such Ariel-like women as the masquerading mistresses of the Red Rover and the Skimmer of the Seas. These characters with him are the very converse of conventional, both in conception and in presentation, and they are at the same time perfectly embodied and realized with a definiteness and verisimilitude such as Scott in vain labored to impute to his tricky Fenella in *Peveril of the Peak*. They have the touch of fancy and the magic of strangeness, but they are understood as women in a way quite beyond the reach of a writer to whom the sex is the sealed book it is sometimes asserted to have been for Cooper.

Katharine Plowden in *The Pilot* is a breezy and even a brilliant girl. The heroine of *The Bravo* is extremely winning and pathetic. Mildred Dutton in *The Two Admirals* has as much dignity and resource as gentleness. *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* is a unique study, or at least sketch, of a white girl with an Indian soul. Maud Willoughby in *Wyandotté* is a charming beauty with a reserve of force such as Kingsley might have conceived. And of Betty Flanagan in *The Spy* it is perhaps enough to record Miss Edgeworth's testimony in a letter to the author asserting that no Irish pen could have drawn her better. In fine, to my own sense, at least, Cooper drew well in the main such women

as he drew. Of some of them he made memorable successes. That he drew no great variety of them and essentially duplicated his "females" now and then was very largely due, as I have already said, to the limitedness of his experience, so generally confined to his own sex save for a circle probably without much variety. The wide experience of people he speaks of in *The Two Admirals* in the passage I have already cited refers exclusively to men. Of course if he had been a sufficiently imaginative writer, if rather his imagination had not been less spiritual than romantic, he would have been less dependent on experience. But the romantic writer with a spiritual imagination is apt to be as insubstantial as he is rare, and in his portraits of women, as elsewhere, Cooper's romanticism is thoroughly realistic, and with whatever modification due to the sex of its subjects, thoroughly substantial and robust.

VII

THERE is one aspect of his contribution to literature that makes American neglect of Cooper's merits and his fame incomprehensible on any creditable grounds. That aspect is as varied as it is salient, but from its every facet is reflected *the rational aggrandizement of America*. Quite aside from the service to his country involved in the fact itself of his foreign literary popularity—greater than that of all other American authors combined—it is to be remarked that the patriotic is as prominent as any other element of his work. To him, to be sure, we owe it that immediately on his discovery, the European world set an American author among the classics of its own imaginative literature; through him to this world not only American native treasures of romance, but distinctively American traits, ideas and habits, moral, social, and political, were made known and familiar. He first painted for Europe the portrait of America. And the fact that it is in this likeness that the country is still so generally conceived there eloquently attests the power with which it was executed. The great changes that time has wrought in its lineaments have found no hand to depict them vigorously enough—at least in fiction—to secure the substitution of a later presentment for

Cooper's. But in speaking of the patriotic element in his work, I refer only indirectly to its service in exalting American literature in European eyes and acquainting European minds with American character. Mainly I wish to signalize—what indirectly this proceeds from—the truth that in a large sense the subject of Cooper's entire work is America, nothing more, nothing less.

The substance of it, of course, is, materially speaking, preponderantly American. But what I mean is that even when he was writing such books as *The Bravo*, *The Headsman*, and *The Heidenmauer*, he was distinctly thinking about his own country as well as his more immediate theme. In each of these novels the theme is really democracy. The fact has been made a reproach to him, and charged with the assumed "inartistic" intrusion of preachment into his romance. Doubtless a picture of Venice, at the time when her sinister oligarchy was most despotic, painted by a pure literary artist like Théophile Gautier, for example, might be spectacularly more "fetching." Cooper's, however, has the merit of being significant. One gets a little tired of the fetich of art, which is, nowadays, brought out of its shrine on so many occasions and venerated with such articulate inveteracy. Art in any other sense than that of a sound and agreeable way of doing things in accordance with their own law might sometimes, one impatiently reflects, be left to itself, to its practitioners, and to the metaphysicians. One may wish incidentally there were more of it! But to reproach such a work as *The Bravo* with a quality that secures its effectiveness is not at all credibly to assert that it would have been a masterpiece of pure beauty had it lacked this quality. As it is, it is an extremely good story made an extremely effective one by the fact that Cooper's democracy gave him a point of view from which the mockery styled the Republic of Venice appeared in a particularly striking light. These novels show at any rate how good a democrat Cooper was, how firmly grounded were his democratic principles, how sincere were his democratic convictions. They show him also as an American democrat—believing in law as well as liberty, that is to say—and not in the least a visionary. The preface alone of *The Headsman* demon-

strates the intelligent enthusiasm with which he held his social and political creed. Europe, which nevertheless he thoroughly appreciated, did not disorient him. Nor on his return, whatever may superficially be inferred from his splenetic expressions of disgust with its defects, did his own country disillusionize him.

The undoubted aristocratic blend of his temperament and his traditions did not in the least conflict with his democracy, his Americanism. There is nothing *a priori* inconsistent in the holding of democratic convictions by the most aristocratic natures. The history of all religions, for example, is conclusive as to this; and from Pericles to the Gracchi, from Montaigne to Emerson, the phenomenon is common enough in politics and philosophy as well. Nor are Cooper's later American books *a posteriori* evidence of his defection. The excesses and perversions, the faults, and even the eccentricities of democracy, and the way in which these were illustrated by the democracy of his day, are certainly castigated—caricatured on occasion—with vigor, with zest, with temper, indeed. But the wounds are the faithful ones of a friend—an extremely candid friend, of course—in a period of American evolution when candor of the kind was apt to be confounded with censure. His candor, however, was merely the measure of his discrimination. His censure is always delivered from a patriotic standpoint. The things, the traits, he satirizes and denounces are in his view the excrescences of democracy, and infuriate him as perversions, not as inherent evils. There is not the remotest trace of the snob in him. His often trivial and sometimes absurd excursions into the fields of etiquette and etymology, his rating of his countrymen for their minor crudities and fatuities, are the naïve and sometimes elephantine endeavors of a patriotic censor conscious of the value of elegance to precisely such civilization as our own. We can see readily enough to-day that it is calumny to attribute his democracy in Europe to pure idealism, and his disgust with demagoguery after his return to an irascibility that changed his conviction. The discriminating American—Lowell, for a prominent example—is naturally an advocate of democracy abroad and a critic of it at home. And Cooper's

temperament was not more irascible than his mind was judicial. There is, apparently, a native relation between irascibility and the judicial quality. Breadth of view, unless it is combined with the indifference of the dilettante, is naturally impatient of narrowness.

Defects of temper, at all events, which were conspicuous in Cooper, certainly co-existed with a fair-mindedness equally characteristic. Not a great, he was distinctly a large, man in all intellectual respects. Professor Trent in his *History of American Literature* recurs to this central trait again and again, one is glad to note, in his exceptionally appreciative characterization. He was peppery, but not petulant, iracund without truculence. His quarrels with his encroaching Cooperstown neighbors, and with the unspeakable press of his day, undoubtedly lacked dignity, but in all cases he was in the right, and his outraged sense of justice was at the bottom of his violence. And his fair-mindedness so penetrated his patriotism as to render it notably intelligent, and therefore beneficent. In his day intelligent patriotism was not thoroughgoing enough to be popular. Partisanship was exacted. The detachment which Cooper owed to his experience and judicial-mindedness was simply not understood. It seemed necessarily inconsistent with patriotic feeling. Such skepticism is, in fact, not unknown in our own time! But in Cooper's, appreciation of foreign, and criticism of native, traits was in itself almost universally suspect. Yet such candor as his in noting excellence in men and things of other nations and civilizations is even nowadays rarely to be encountered. France, Italy, England, the Irish, Swiss, Germans—every nationality, in fact, that figures in his pages—are depicted with absolute sympathy and lack of prejudice. In *Jack Tier*, written during the Mexican War, the Mexican character at its best is incarnated in the most polished and high-minded, the most refined and least vulgar of personalities. In the matter of national traits it is still more or less true that, as Stendhal observed, "*la différence fait la haine*";¹ but to no writer of the English tongue at all events, even since his time,

¹ Dissimilarity creates dislike.

could the reproach be addressed with less reason than to Cooper. *Wing-and-Wing* is a text-book of true cosmopolitanism, and *Wyandotté* a lesson in non-partisanship at home.

No doubt it is only logical to be cosmopolitan and liberal when one is lecturing one's countrymen on their narrowness and provinciality. But the disposition to lecture them on this particular theme itself witnesses Cooper's genuine fair-mindedness and his desire to communicate it to his readers. Moreover, the quality appears in his writings quite as often instinctively as expressly; it pervades their purely artistic as well as their didactic portions. And there are two manifestations of it that are particularly piquant and certainly to be reckoned among Cooper's patriotic services. One is his treatment of New England, and the other that of the Protestant "sects" as distinguished from the Episcopal "Church."

Upon the New England of his day Cooper turned the vision of a writer who was also a man of the world—a product of civilization at that time extremely rare within its borders. He was himself an eminent example of what used to be called in somewhat esoteric eulogy by those who admired the type, a conservative, and New England was the paradise of the radical, the visionary, the doctrinaire. He had no disposition, accordingly, to view it with a friendly eye or to pass by any of its imperfections. The narrowness, the fanaticism, the absurd self-sufficiency and shallowness, the contempt for the rest of the country, the defects of the great New England qualities of thrift and self-reliance characteristic of the section, were particularly salient to him, and to signalize them was irresistible to an emancipated observer who could contemplate them from a detached standpoint. It would be idle to pretend that he interpreted New England types with the intimate appreciation of Hawthorne. On the other hand, his detachment being more complete, his portrayal of them often gives them the relief which can only be brought out by the colorless white light of cold impartiality. Occasionally, without doubt, he satirizes rather than depicts them—though more rarely than his heavy touch leads the reader to imagine. But from *Wing-and-Wing* to *Satanstoe* the New England contingent of

his company of characters is portrayed with a searching and self-justifying veracity, at least as to its essential features; and, as was his habit, discriminatingly portrayed. Ithuel Bolt is certainly one of the notable characters of fiction, and yet he could no more have been born and developed outside of New England than Leatherstocking could have hailed from Massachusetts. If the Rev. Meek Wolfe in *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* is a caricature, he is fully offset by the fine portrait of the Puritan head of the household.

It is difficult now to recall the New England of Cooper's day. Never, perhaps, in the world's history was so much and so widespread mental activity so intimately associated with such extreme provinciality. For a miniature portrait of it consult the first pages of Lowell's essay on Thoreau. At present we need to have the eminence of the section recalled to us. Professor Barrett Wendell's engaging *Literary History*, in which he not only limits American literature of much value to New England, but even tucks it into the confines of Harvard College, is an interesting reminder of days that seem curiously distant. Between 1825 and 1850, at all events, New England, always the apex, had become also the incubus of our civilization, and called loudly for the note-taking of a chiel from beyond its borders. Cooper performed that service. And, as I say, it is to be counted to him for patriotism. To him we owe it that not only American authorship but American literature has been from his day of national rather than sectional character. The world he represented to the Europe of his day was a comprehensively American world, and the country as a whole, with the theretofore false proportion of its different sections duly rectified, first appeared in effective presentation in the domain of art.

His analogous hostility to ecclesiastical sectarianism was, perhaps, a corollary of his view of the New England whence largely this sectarianism came. English non-conformity transplanted added to its own defects those inseparable from an establishment, which practically it enjoyed. Its contentiousness became tyrannous, and its virtual establishment, destitute of traditions, served mainly to crystallize its crudities. Cooper's episcopalianism was in a doctrinal

sense, no doubt, equally narrow. And his piety was strongly tinctured with dogma. Some of his polemic is absurd, and when he is absurd he is so to a degree only accounted for by his absolute indifference to appearing ridiculous. *The Crater* is an extraordinary exhibition of denominational fatuity. But in his day his churchmanship gave him in religious matters the same advantage of detachment that his treatment of New England enjoyed. It gave him a standard of taste, of measure, of decorum, of deference to tradition and custom, and made him a useful and unsparing critic of the rawness and irresponsibility so rife around him, in a field of considerably more important mundane concern to the community of that time than—owing largely to its own transformation—it has since become. He knew the difference in the ecclesiastical field, as few in his day did, between “a reading from Milton and a reading from Eliza Cook.” The intellectual mediocrity of the Episcopal pulpit did not blind him, as it did others, to “the Church’s” distinctive superiorities, secular and religious. A ritual, a clergy (however triturate as a hierarchy), a sense of historic continuity, the possession of traditions, the spirit of conformity in lieu of self-assertion (a spirit so necessary to “the communion of saints”), set off the “Churchmen” of that day somewhat sharply from the immensely larger part of their respective societies. And Cooper’s criticism of the more unlovely traits of the descendants of the Puritans and the Scotch-Irish immigration on the whole made for an ideal which, socially considered, must be regarded as superior to that he found defective. His “conservative” spirit, in a word, enabled him to perform a genuine and patriotic service to our civilization in this respect, as it did in the case of its portrayal of New England types of character. And as in the latter case he is not to be charged with a

provinciality equivalent to that which he exposed, but really judges it from an open-minded and cosmopolitan standpoint, so, too—though naturally in a distinctly lesser degree, in consequence of his own ecclesiastical and theological rigidities—he exhibits the defectiveness of American non-conformity from a distinctly higher plane than its own. The proof of this and of his large tolerance in religious matters—where his controversial spirit is not aroused—is the fact that Catholicism and Catholics always receive just and appreciative treatment at his hands. Even atheism itself he treats with perfect and comprehending appreciation. In this respect the scene in *Wing-and-Wing* where Raoul Yvard is about to be executed as a spy forms a striking contrast to the somewhat analogous one in *Quentin Durward*, where Scott uses the death of the unbelieving Hayraddin Mograbin to point a series of perfunctory commonplaces.

I come back in conclusion to Professor Trent’s epithet. Cooper’s was above all a *large* nature. Even his littlenesses were those of a large nature. Let us refine and scrutinize, hesitate and distinguish, when we have appropriate material to consider. But in considering Cooper’s massive and opulent work it is inexcusable to obscure one’s vision of the forest by a study of the trees. His work is in no sense a *jardin des plantes*; it is like the woods and sea that mainly form its subject and substance. Only critical myopia can be blind to the magnificent forest, with its pioneer clearings, its fringe of “settlements,” its wood-embosomed lakes, its neighboring prairie on the one side, and on the other the distant ocean with the cities of its farther shore—the splendid panorama of man, of nature, and of human life unrolled for us by this large intelligence and noble imagination, this manly and patriotic American representative in the literary parliament of the world.

WILLIAM VAUGHN MOODY (1869-1910)

Moody was born at Spencer, Indiana, on 8 July, 1869. His father had gone West from the state of New York, and was for some years a steamboat captain. He died in 1886, and Moody's mother had died two years earlier. Thus at seventeen Moody was left without parents, and also without resources. Nevertheless, he managed, while earning a living by teaching, to prepare himself for Harvard College, which he entered in 1889 with, it is said, about \$25 in his possession. He continued to support himself at Harvard by doing every kind of work that offered, and yet, at the same time, he succeeded within three years in completing the studies necessary for his degree. He was graduated with the class of 1893, but spent his senior year in Europe, earning his way by acting as a tutor. In Europe he traveled in Germany and Switzerland, spent the winter in Florence, and made his first visit to Greece. During the following year he was a graduate student at Harvard, and in 1894-1895 a member of the Department of English there. From 1895 until 1903 he was a teacher at the University of Chicago, at first an instructor in English and later an assistant professor. He was a successful lecturer, and by 1903 was considered so valuable to the University that he was offered the rank and salary of a professor if he would continue to lecture during only one-quarter of each year. He, however, had from an early time resolved to devote himself to poetry, and he loathed teaching and unhesitatingly abandoned it as soon as he managed to secure another source of income—the *History of English Literature* (1902) which he wrote for money in collaboration with R. M. Lovett.

Meanwhile Moody had in his vacations from teaching done a good deal of traveling—which included a second visit to Greece in 1902—and had published a poetic drama, *The Masque of Judgment* (1900) and a volume of poems (entitled simply *Poems*, 1901). *The Masque of Judgment*, though earliest in order of composition, was logically the second member of a trilogy of dramas which he hoped to write, in ambitious emulation of the masters of Greek tragedy. The logically first member of the trilogy, dealing with the Prometheus myth, was published in 1904, under the title of *The Fire-Bringer*. The third member, *The Death of Eve*, Moody never succeeded in completing, leaving at his death only its first act. In the circumstances, it is impossible to judge how great his achievement would have been, had he succeeded in completing his large plan. His theme was the relation between God and mankind, and his effort was to embody his conviction that God and his creatures are essentially one, in the sense that the existence of each involves that of the other, so that Prometheus's effort to separate man from God was a tragic mistake, while God, were He to destroy man because of his rebellion, would inevitably also destroy Himself. *The Death of Eve* was to have exhibited the final reconciliation of God and man on the basis of a common understanding of the situation. It is evident that this is a theme of the greatest difficulty, and it is not surprising that Moody was unable to grasp it very closely or handle it rigorously and clearly. The poetic dramas remain notable rather for the splendor and elevation of isolated passages than as wholes.

The Fire-Bringer was published just as Moody was leaving for a visit to Arizona, where he received the impressions which he presently put to use in the earlier of his two prose plays, *The Great Divide*. This is a realistic study of the conflict between the Eastern and Western elements in American civilization or, more accurately, between the New England conscience and New England culture on the one side and the "rough-and-ready" but honest frontiersman on the other. The general theme was one which Moody had discovered through his own experience as a Westerner at Harvard, and one to which he gave much thought. The play was put on the stage in 1906 (first published in 1909) and was an immediate and great success, but, though it was a real advance upon the popular plays of its day both in form and in substance, it showed promise rather than full-grown dramatic power, and it already seems a little shallow in its treatment of its theme. The second of Moody's prose plays, *The Faith Healer*, whose theme is sufficiently indicated by its title, was one which he had begun thinking of at some time earlier than 1898, planning at first to write it in verse. It was performed in 1909 (published in 1910), but was not successful, and it is generally regarded as inferior to *The Great Divide*. The year before the performance of *The Faith Healer*, in the spring of 1908, Moody was stricken by typhoid fever, and from this attack he never fully recovered. In 1909 he married Mrs. Harriet Brainerd, of Chicago, who had long been his closest friend, but the period of their union was destined to be brief, for he died on 17 October, 1910.

Moody's life was cut short just when he had given every ground for the confident expectation that he was about to enter into a great period of high achievement. He was richly endowed by nature with passionate, sensuous feeling, with imagination, and, at the same time, with spiritual insight and with ideal purposes. He was also widely and thoroughly acquainted with the best in ancient and modern literatures, and his culture and scholarship did not—as happens with lesser men—dull his independence, but, on the contrary, stimulated him to attempt the synthesis of a fresh, "modern," and individual criticism of life with traditional modes of expression. His power of self-criticism developed slowly, but was constantly growing, with the result that, though the greater part of the work he left shows high promise rather than fulfillment, still, he also left a few poems which adequately embody his difficult attempt to combine a naturalistic view of life with older ideals of truth, justice, and honor.

I AM THE WOMAN¹

I AM the Woman, ark of the law and its
breaker,
Who chastened her step and taught her knees
to be meek,
Bridled and bitted her heart and humbled
her cheek,
Parceled her will, and cried, "Take more!"
to the taker,
Shunned what they told her to shun, sought
what they bade her seek,
Locked up her mouth from scornful speak-
ing: now it is open to speak.

I am she that is terribly fashioned, the
creature
Wrought in God's perilous mood, in His
unsafe hour.
The morning star was mute, beholding my
feature,
Seeing the rapture I was, the shame, and the
power, 10
Scared at my manifold meaning; he heard me
call,
"O fairest among ten thousand, acceptable
brother!"
And he answered not, for doubt; till he saw
me crawl
And whisper down to the secret worm, "O
mother,
Be not wroth in the ancient house; thy
daughter forgets not at all!"

I am the Woman, flee away,
Soft withdrawer back from the maddened
mate,
Lurer inward and down to the gates of day
And crier there in the gate,
"What shall I give for thee, wild one,
say! 20

The long, slow rapture and patient anguish
of life,
Or art thou minded a swifter way?
Ask if thou canst, the gold, but O, if thou
must,
Good is the shining dross, lovely the dust!
Look at me, I am the Woman, harlot and
heavenly wife;
Tell me thy price, be unashamed; I will
assuredly pay!"

I am also the Mother: of two that I bore
I comfort and feed the slayer, feed and com-
fort the slain.
Did they number my daughters and sons?
I am mother of more!
Many a head they marked not, here in my
bosom has lain, 30
Babbling with unborn lips in a tongue to be,
Far, incredible matters, all familiar to me.
Still would the man come whispering,
"Wife!" but many a time my breast
Took him not as a husband: I soothed him
and laid him to rest
Even as the babe of my body, and knew him
for such.
My mouth is open to speak, that was dumb
too much!
I say to you I am the Mother; and under the
sword
Which flamed each way to harry us forth
from the Lord,
I saw Him young at the portal, weeping
and staying the rod,
And I, even I was His mother, and I yearned
as the mother of God. 40

I am also the Spirit. The Sisters laughed
When I sat with them dumb in the portals,
over my lamp,—
Half asleep in the doors: for my gown was
raught
Off at the shoulder to shield from the wind
and the rain

¹ This and the following poem here reprinted are used by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

The wick I tended against the mysterious
hour
When the silent City of Being should ring
with song,
As the Lord came in with Life to the marriage
bower.
"Look!" laughed the elder Sisters; and
crimson with shame
I hid my breast away from the rosy flame.
"Ah!" cried the leaning Sisters, pointing,
doing me wrong; 50
"Do you see?" laughed the wanton Sisters.
"She will get her a lover ere long!"
And it was but a little while till unto my
need
He was given, indeed,
And we walked where waxing world after
world went by;
And I said to my lover, "Let us begone,
O, let us begone, and try
Which of them all the fairest to dwell in is,
Which is the place for us, our desirable
clime!"
But he said, "They are only the huts and
the little villages,
Pleasant to go and lodge in rudely over the
vintage-time!" 60
Scornfully spake he, being unwise,
Being flushed at heart because of our walking
together.
But I was mute with passionate prophecies;
My heart went veiled and faint in the golden
weather,
While universe drifted by after still universe.
Then I cried, "Alas, we must hasten and
lodge therein,
One after one, and in every star that they
shed!
A dark and a weary thing is come on our
head—
To search obedience out in the bosom of
sin,
To listen deep for love when thunders the
curse; 70
For O my love, behold where the Lord hath
planted
In every star in the midst his dangerous
Tree!
Still I must pluck thereof and bring unto
thee,
Saying, "The coolness for which all night we
have panted;
Taste of the goodly thing, I have tasted
first!"

Bringing us noway coolness, but burning
thirst,
Giving us noway peace, but implacable
strife,
Loosing upon us the wounding joy and the
wasting sorrow of life!

I am the Woman, ark of the Law and sacred
arm to upbear it,
Heathen trumpet to overthrow and idola-
trous sword to shear it: 80
Yea, she whose arm was round the neck
of the morning star at song,
Is she who kneeleth now in the dust and
cries at the secret door,
"Open to me, O sleeping mother! The gate
is heavy and strong.
Open to me, I am come at last; be wroth
with thy child no more.
Let me lie down with thee there in the dark,
and be slothful with thee as before!"

THE DEATH OF EVE

I

At dawn they came to the stream Hiddekel,
Old Eve and her red first-born, who was
now
Grayer than she, and bowed with more than
years.
Then Cain beneath his level palm looked
hard
Across the desert, and turned with out-
spread hand
As one who says, "Thou seest; we are
fooled."
But Eve, with clutching fingers on his arm,
And pointing eastward where the risen sun
Made a low mist of light, said, "It is there!"

II

For, many, many months, in the great
tent 10
Of Enoch, Eve had pined, and dared not
tell
Her longing: not to Irad, Enoch's son,
Masterful like his father, who had held
Harsh rule, and named the tent-place with
his name;
Not to mild Seth, given her in Abel's stead;
Not unto angry Lamech, nor his wives,
Usurpers of her honor in the house;

Not to young Jubal, songs-man of the tribe,
 Who touched his harp at twilight by her
 door;
 And not to bed-rid Adam, most of all 20
 Not unto Adam. Yet at last, the spring
 Being at end, and evening with warm stars
 Falling upon them by the camel kraal,
 Weary with long desire she spoke to Seth,
 Touching her meaning faintly and far off
 To try him. With still scrutiny awhile
 He looked at her; then, lifting doubtful
 hands
 Of prayer, he led her homeward to the
 tent,
 With tremulous speech of small and week-
 day things.
 Next, as she lay by Adam before dawn, 30
 His big and wasted hand groping for hers
 Suddenly made her half-awakened heart
 Break back and back across the shadowy
 years
 To Eden, and God calling in the dew,
 And all that song of Paradise foredone
 Which Jubal made in secret, fearing her
 The storied mother; but in secret, too,
 Herself had listened, while the maids at
 toil
 Or by the well at evening sang of her
 Untruthful things, which, when she once
 had heard, 40
 Seemed truthful. Now, bowed upon Adam's
 breast,
 In the deep hush that comes before the
 dawn,
 She whispered hints and fragments of her
 will;
 And when the shaggy forehead made no
 sign,
 And the blind face searched still as quietly
 In the tent-roof for what, these many
 months,
 It seemed to seek for there, she held him
 close
 And poured her whole wild meaning in his
 ear.
 But as a man upon his death-bed dreams
 That he should know a matter, and knows it
 not, 50
 Nor who they are who fain would have him
 know,
 He turned to hers his dim, disastrous eyes,
 Wherein the knowledge of her and the long
 love
 Glimmered through veil on veil of vacancy.

That evening little Jubal, coming home
 Singing behind his flock, saw ancient Eve
 Crouched by the ruined altar in the glade,
 The accursèd place, sown deep each early
 spring
 With stones and salt—the Valley of the
 Blood;
 And that same night Eve fled under the
 stars 60
 Eastward to Nod, the land of violence,
 To Cain, and the strong city he had built
 Against all men who hunted for his soul.

III

She gave her message darkly in the gates,
 And waited trembling. At day-fall he came.
 She knew him not beneath his whitened
 hair;
 But when at length she knew him, and was
 known,
 The whitened hair, the bent and listening
 frame,
 The savage misery of the sidelong eyes,
 Fell on her heart with strangling. So it
 was 70
 That now for many days she held her
 peace,
 Abiding with him till he seemed again
 The babe she bare first in the wilderness,
 Her maiden fruits to Adam, the new joy
 The desert bloomed with, which the desert
 stars
 Whispered concerning. Yet she held her
 peace,
 Until he seemed a young man in the house,
 A gold frontlet of pride and a green cedar; 1
 Then, leading him apart, Eve told her wish,
 Not faltering now nor uttering it far off, 80
 But as a sovereign mother to her son
 Speaks simple destiny. He looked at her
 Dimly, as if he saw her not; then stooped,
 Sharpening his brows upon her. With a
 cry
 She laid fierce, shaken hands about his
 breast,
 Drew down his neck, and harshly from his
 brow
 Pushing the head-band and the matted
 locks,
 Baring the livid flesh with violence,
 She kissed him on the Sign. Cain bowed his
 head
 Upon her shoulder, saying, "I will go!" 90

IV

Now they had come to the stream Hiddekel,
 And passed beyond the stream. There, full
 in face,
 Where the low morning made a mist of
 light,
 The Garden and its gates lay like a flower
 Afloat on the still waters of the dawn.
 The clicking leap of bright-mailed grass-
 hoppers,
 The dropping of sage-beetles from their
 perch
 On the gnawed cactus, even the pulsing
 drum
 Of blood-beats in their ears, merged suddenly
 Into ethereal hush. Then Cain made
 halt, 100
 Held her, and muttered, "'Tis enough.
 Thou sawest!
 His Angel stood and threatened in the sun!"
 And Eve said, "Yea, and though the day
 were set
 With sworded angels, thou would'st wait
 for me
 Yonder, before the gates; which, look you,
 child,
 Lie open to me as the gates to him,
 Thy father, when he entered in his rage,
 Calling thee from the dark, where of old
 days
 I kept thee folded, hidden, till he called."
 So gray Cain by the unguarded portal
 sat, 110
 His arms crossed o'er his forehead, and his
 face
 Hid in his meager knees; but ancient Eve
 Passed on into the vales of Paradise.

V

Trancèd in lonely radiance stood the Tree,
 As Eve put back the glimmering ferns and
 vines;
 And crept into the place. Awhile she
 stooped,
 And as a wild thing by the drinking-pool
 Peers ere it drinks, she peered. Then,
 laughing low,
 Her frame of grief and body of her years
 She lifted proudly to its virgin height, 120
 Flung her lean arms into the pouring day,
 And circling with slow paces round the
 Tree,
 She sang her stifled meaning out to God.

EVE'S SONG

*Behold, against thy will, against thy word,
 Against the wrath and warning of thy sword,
 Eve has been Eve, O Lord!
 A pitcher filled, she comes back from the brook,
 A wain she comes, laden with mellow ears;
 She is a roll inscribed, a prophet's book
 Writ strong with characters. 130
 Behold, Eve willed it so; look, if it be so, look!*

*Early at dawn, while yet thy watchers slept,
 Lightly her untamed spirit over-leapt
 The walls where she was kept.
 As a young comely leopardess she stood:
 Her lustrous fell, her sullen grace, her fleetness,
 They gave her foretaste, in thy tangled wood,
 Of many a savage sweetness,
 Good to fore-gloat upon; being tasted, sweet
 and good.*

*O swayer in the sunlit tops of trees, 140
 O comer up with cloud out of the seas,
 O laughter at thine ease
 Over thine everlasting dream of mirth,
 O lord of savage pleasures, savage pains,
 Knew'st Thou not Eve, who broughtest her to
 birth?
 Searcher of breast and reins,
 Thou should'st have searched thy Woman, the
 seed-pod of thine earth!*

*Herself hath searched her softly through and
 through;
 Singing she lifts her full soul up to view;
 Lord, do Thou praise it, too! 150
 Look, as she turns it, how it dartles free
 Its gathered meanings: woman, mother, wife,
 Spirit that was and is and waits to be,
 Worm of the dust of life,
 Child, sister—ghostly rays! What lights are
 these, Lord, see!*

*Look where Eve lifts her storied soul on high,
 And turns it as a ball, she knows not why,
 Save that she could not die
 Till she had shown Thee all the secret sphere—
 The bright rays and the dim, and these that
 run 160
 Bright-darkling, making Thee to doubt and
 fear,—
 Oh, love them every one!
 Eve pardons Thee not one, not one, Lord;
 dost Thou hear?*

*Lovely to Eve was Adam's praising breath;
His face averted bitter was as death;
Abel, her son, and Seth
Lifted her heart to heaven, praising her;
Cain with a little frown darkened the stars;
And when the strings of Jubal's harp would
stir,*

Like honey in cool jars 170
*The words he praised her with, like rain his
praises were.*

*Still, still with prayer and ecstasy she strove
To be the woman they did well approve,
That, narrowed to their love,
She might have done with bitterness and blame;
But still along the yonder edge of prayer
A spirit in a fiery whirlwind came—
Eve's spirit, wild and fair—
Crying with Eve's own voice the number of her
name.*

Yea, turning in the whirlwind and the fire, 180
*Eve saw her own proud being all entire
Made perfect by desire;
And from the rounded gladness of that sphere
Came bridal songs and harpings and fresh
laughter;
"Glory unto the faithful!" sounded clear,
And then, a little after,
"Whoso denyeth aught, let him depart from
here!"*

*Now, therefore, Eve, with mystic years o'er-
scored,
Danceth and doeth pleasure to Thee, Lord,
According to the word* 190
*That Thou hast spoken to her by her dream.
Singing a song she dimly understands,
She lifts her soul to let the splendor stream.
Lord, take away thy hands!
Let this beam pierce thy heart, and this most
piercing beam!*

*Far off, rebelliously, yet for thy sake,
She gathered them, O Thou who lovest to break
A thousand souls, and shake*

*Their dust along the wind, but sleeplessly
Searchest the Bride fulfilled in limb and
feature,* 200
*Ready and boon to be fulfilled of Thee,
Thine ample, tameless creature,—
Against thy will and word, behold, Lord, this
is She!*

VI

*From carven plinth and thousand-galleried
green
Cedars, and all close boughs that over-tower,
The shadows lengthened eastward from the
gates,
And still Cain hid his forehead in his knees,
Nor dared to look abroad lest he might find
More watchers in the portals: for he heard
What seemed the rush of wings; from while
to while* 210
*A pallor grew and faded in his brain,
As if a great light passed him near at hand.
But when above the darkening desert swales
The moon came, shedding white, unlikely
day,
Cain rose, and with his back against the
stones,
As a keen fighter at the desperate odds,
Glared round him. Cool and silent lay the
night,
Empty of any foe. Then, as a man
Who has a thing to do, and makes his fear
An icy wind to freeze his purpose firm, 220
He stole in through the pillars of the gate,
Down aisles of shadow windowed with the
moon,
By meads with the still stars communicant,
Past heaven-bosoming pool and poolèd
stream,
Until he saw, through tangled fern and vine,
The Tree, where God had made its habi-
tation:
And crouched above the shape that had
been Eve,
With savage, listening frame and sidelong
eyes,
Cain waited for the coming of the dawn.*

O. HENRY (1862-1910)

William Sidney Porter was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, on 11 September, 1862. His mother died when he was three years old. His father, a physician, lived until 1888, but was not very useful to William Sidney. He fell a victim to the notion that he could invent a perpetual-motion machine, and passed with increasing absorption to other inventions, intrinsically less absurd, but equally impracticable. The boy was not left quite without care, for he had an aunt who kept a private school, and who was evidently an effective teacher. To her school he went until he was fifteen years old, when all schooling ceased. He was early inclined to reading, but the books he read, in vast numbers, were dime novels. His aunt led him to better things. He himself said that he read more before he was twenty than during the remainder of his life, and that his taste in reading was at its best during the period when practically all of it was done, from his thirteenth year to his twentieth. At the same time he mentioned two examples, Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and Lane's translation of *The Arabian Nights*. But he also read Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Charles Reade, Bulwer Lytton, Wilkie Collins, Auerbach, Victor Hugo, and Alexander Dumas. (C. Alphonso Smith, *O. Henry Biography*, 90.) When he was fifteen he began working in his uncle's drug store, where he remained until 1882, becoming a registered pharmacist. In the latter year his health was suffering from confinement, and a family friend took him to Texas, and there he lived until 1898. He spent two years on a ranch, and then moved to Austin, where his life was varied. He was an "occasional clerk in a tobacco store and later in a drug store, bookkeeper for a real estate firm, draftsman in a land office, paying and receiving teller in a bank, member of a military company, singer in the choirs of the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Episcopal churches, actor in private theatricals, editor of a humorous paper, serenader and cartoonist." His biographer adds that the only segment of the town's life "that he seems not to have touched was the University."

In 1887 Porter married Athol Estes, of Austin, and after this apparently made his first efforts to supplement his earnings by writing. He wrote humorous paragraphs, anecdotes, and the like odds and ends, and found a market for them. In the fall of 1895 he moved to Houston, where he conducted a daily column in a newspaper. This work suddenly ceased in the summer of 1896 when he received word that he had been charged with embezzlement while employed by an Austin bank. He started for Austin to answer the charge, which was not a complete surprise, but on the way, seized by fear of the possible outcome, he changed his mind and went instead to New Orleans and thence to Central America. He was brought back early in 1897 by the news that his wife was dying of tuberculosis (she died on 25 July), surrendered himself, and stood his trial. His flight had seemed a confession of guilt, he was convicted (1898), and was sentenced to serve five years in the penitentiary at Columbus, Ohio. He always asserted that he had been innocent, and there would seem to be every reason to believe that he was really the victim of incredible carelessness in the management of the bank. He felt his disgrace keenly, was a model prisoner, and was consequently released after he had served only three years and three months of his sentence. He had begun writing short stories at least as early as 1897, when he first sold one, and during his imprisonment he wrote steadily, soon showing "a range of imagination, a directness of style, and a deftness of craftsmanship to which little was to be added." Immediately after his conviction he adopted the name Sydney Porter, as a first step towards a disguise, and while he was a prisoner he began to use, in connection with the stories he then sold, the name O. Henry. There can be little doubt that his imprisonment had the effect of sobering O. Henry and making him determine to master his highly artificial and deliberate craft. He came out of prison a more purposeful man than he had hitherto been, and one capable of sustained and masterly work. He first went to Pittsburgh, and was soon writing so acceptably to New York editors that he was urged to come to New York. He did so, and lived there, save for certain periods spent in North Carolina—during one of which, in 1907, he was married a second time—until his death on 5 June, 1910.

New York was endlessly stimulating to O. Henry, and he became so identified with the city that he could work nowhere else. His period of most rapid and successful work, from which dates the beginning of his fame, commenced in December, 1903, when he contracted with the New York *World* to contribute to that newspaper a story each week, to be paid for at the rate of \$100 the story. Dur-

ing 1904 and 1905 he wrote 115 stories, 94 of which appeared in the *World*, and 99 of which deal with the New York scene. A number of his stories deal also with the far West, with the South, and with Latin America; and, though it is true that O. Henry discovered and profited by the vast field of the life of average New Yorkers (the "four million" as opposed to the smart "four hundred"), still, it is clear that his real discovery was not a new field for fiction so much as a new method of exploiting the humor, the pathos, and the romance of average, commonplace human beings. It has illuminatingly been remarked that his readers are likely to remember the points of his stories, but not their characters, and the reason is simply that O. Henry did not aim to delineate character. He has most frequently been compared with Poe and de Maupassant, and with justice, though there are also striking differences to be noted. Like Poe, O. Henry thought first of a particular impression he wished to create, and then selected and arranged his material to that end, with the utmost directness and economy, concealed in the latter's case beneath a careless manner. The lack of genuine human interest in O. Henry's tales is less obvious than in Poe's, because Poe aimed prevailingly at exciting terror, whereas O. Henry aimed at comedy heightened by pathos and, appropriately to this end, laid his scenes on such familiar ground as to mislead even competent critics, who have spoken of his tales as "an amazing transcript of American life." O. Henry's careless manner is another point of difference which makes his calculated artifice less obvious, though it is no less real. It is, however, equally true of both that they aimed not at the exploration of human nature, but at the exploitation of human appearances for their own ends. Tennyson was O. Henry's favorite poet, but he was saved from cloying sentimentalism by his vigorous comic sense. And that sense had the freer play because all of his ideas were conventional, safe—so eminently safe that he could joke about them without fear, and without arousing fear in the minds of the hundred million readers whose minds were exactly like his own. And doubtless O. Henry's freedom from the weight of profound intellectual and moral problems aided him in concentrating himself—as he did with so much success—upon the aim of becoming a consummate master of artifice.

The earliest of O. Henry's volumes of tales was *Cabbages and Kings* (1904). The second was *The Four Million* (1906). Others followed rapidly: *The Trimmed Lamp* (1907), *Heart of the West* (1907), *The Voice of the City* (1908), *The Gentle Grafter* (1908), *Roads of Destiny* (1909), *Options* (1909), *Strictly Business* (1910), *Whirligigs* (1910), *Sixes and Sevens* (1911), *Rolling Stones* (1913), and *Waifs and Strays* (1919).

A LICKPENNY LOVER ¹

THERE were 3,000 girls in the Biggest Store. Masie was one of them. She was eighteen and a saleslady in the gents' gloves. Here she became versed in two varieties of human beings—the kind of gents who buy their gloves in department stores and the kind of women who buy gloves for unfortunate gents. Besides this wide knowledge of the human species, Masie had acquired other information. She had listened to the promulgated wisdom of the 2,999 other girls and had stored it in a brain that was as secretive and wary as that of a Maltese cat. Perhaps nature, foreseeing that she would lack wise counselors, had mingled the saving ingredient of shrewdness along with her beauty, as she has endowed the silver fox of the priceless fur above the other animals with cunning.

For Masie was beautiful. She was a deep-tinted blonde, with the calm poise of a lady who cooks butter cakes in a window. She stood behind her counter in the Biggest Store; and as you closed your hand over the tape-line for your glove measure you thought of Hebe; and as you looked again you wondered how she had come by Minerva's eyes.

When the floorwalker was not looking Masie chewed tutti frutti; when he was looking she gazed up as if at the clouds and smiled wistfully.

That is the shop-girl smile, and I enjoin you to shun it unless you are well fortified with callosity of the heart, caramels, and a congeniality for the capers of Cupid. This smile belonged to Masie's recreation hours and not to the store; but the floorwalker must have his own. He is the Shylock of the stores. When he comes nosing around, the bridge of his nose is a toll-bridge. It is goo-goo eyes or "git" when he looks toward a pretty girl. Of course not all floorwalkers are thus. Only a few days ago the papers printed news of one over eighty years of age.

¹This and the two following stories are reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Doubleday, Page, and Company. The present story was first printed in the *New York World*, 29 May, 1904, and was republished in *The Voice of the City*.

One day Irving Carter, painter, millionaire, traveler, poet, automobilist, happened to enter the Biggest Store. It is due to him to add that his visit was not voluntary. Filial duty took him by the collar and dragged him inside, while his mother philtered among the bronze and terra-cotta statuettes.

Carter strolled across to the glove counter in order to shoot a few minutes on the wing. His need for gloves was genuine; he had forgotten to bring a pair with him. But his action hardly calls for apology, because he had never heard of glove-counter flirtations.

As he neared the vicinity of his fate he hesitated, suddenly conscious of this unknown phase of Cupid's less worthy profession.

Three or four cheap fellows, sonorous garbed, were leaning over the counters, wrestling with the mediatorial hand-coverings, while giggling girls played vivacious seconds to their lead upon the strident string of coquetry. Carter would have retreated, but he had gone too far. Masie confronted him behind her counter with a questioning look in eyes as coldly, beautifully, warmly blue as the glint of summer sunshine on an iceberg drifting in Southern seas.

And then Irving Carter, painter, millionaire, *etc.*, felt a warm flush rise to his aristocratically pale face. But not from diffidence. The blush was intellectual in origin. He knew in a moment that he stood in the ranks of the ready-made youths who wooed the giggling girls at other counters. Himself leaned against the oaken trysting place of a cockney Cupid with a desire in his heart for the favor of a glove salesgirl. He was no more than Bill and Jack and Mickey. And then he felt a sudden tolerance for them, and an elating, courageous contempt for the conventions upon which he had fed, and an unhesitating determination to have this perfect creature for his own.

When the gloves were paid for and wrapped Carter lingered for a moment. The dimples at the corners of Masie's damask mouth deepened. All gentlemen who bought gloves lingered in just that way. She curved an arm, showing like Psyche's through her shirt-waist sleeve, and rested an elbow upon the show-case edge.

Carter had never before encountered a situation of which he had not been perfect master. But now he stood far more awkward than Bill or Jack or Mickey. He had no chance of meeting this beautiful girl socially. His mind struggled to recall the nature and habits of shop-girls as he had read or heard of them. Somehow he had received the idea that they sometimes did not insist too strictly upon the regular channels of introduction. His heart beat loudly at the thought of proposing an unconventional meeting with this lovely and virginal being. But the tumult in his heart gave him courage.

After a few friendly and well-received remarks on general subjects, he laid his card by her hand on the counter.

"Will you please pardon me," he said, "if I seem too bold; but I earnestly hope you will allow me the pleasure of seeing you again. There is my name; I assure you that it is with the greatest respect that I ask the favor of becoming one of your friends—acquaintances. May I not hope for the privilege?"

Masie knew men—especially men who buy gloves. Without hesitation she looked him frankly and smilingly in the eyes, and said:

"Sure. I guess you're all right. I don't usually go out with strange gentlemen, though. It ain't quite ladylike. When should you want to see me again?"

"As soon as I may," said Carter. "If you would allow me to call at your home, I——"

Masie laughed musically. "Oh, gee, no!" she said, emphatically. "If you could see our flat once! There's five of us in three rooms. I'd just like to see ma's face if I was to bring a gentleman friend there!"

"Anywhere, then," said the enamored Carter, "that will be convenient to you."

"Say," suggested Masie, with a bright-idea look in her peach-blow face; "I guess Thursday night will about suit me. Suppose you come to the corner of Eighth Avenue and Forty-eighth Street at 7:30. I live right near the corner. But I've got to be back home by eleven. Ma never lets me stay out after eleven."

Carter promised gratefully to keep the tryst, and then hastened to his mother, who was looking about for him to ratify her purchase of a bronze Diana.

A salesgirl, with small eyes and an obtuse nose, strolled near Masie, with a friendly leer.

"Did you make a hit with his nobbs, Masie?" she asked, familiarly.

"The gentleman asked permission to call," answered Masie, with the grand air, as she slipped Carter's card into the bosom of her waist.

"Permission to call!" echoed small eyes, with a snigger. "Did he say anything about dinner in the Waldorf and a spin in his auto afterward?"

"Oh, cheese it!" said Masie, wearily. "You've been used to swell things, I don't think. You've had a swelled head ever since that hose-cart driver took you out to a chop suey joint. No, he never mentioned the Waldorf; but there's a Fifth Avenue address on his card, and if he buys the supper you can bet your life there won't be no pigtail on the waiter what takes the order."

As Carter glided away from the Biggest Store with his mother in his electric run-about, he bit his lip with a dull pain at his heart. He knew that love had come to him for the first time in all the twenty-nine years of his life. And that the object of it should make so readily an appointment with him at a street corner, though it was a step toward his desires, tortured him with misgivings.

Carter did not know the shop-girl. He did not know that her home is often either a scarcely habitable tiny room or a domicile filled to overflowing with kith and kin. The street-corner is her parlor; the park is her drawing-room; the avenue is her garden walk; yet for the most part she is as inviolate mistress of herself in them as is my lady inside her tapestried chamber.

One evening at dusk, two weeks after their first meeting, Carter and Masie strolled arm-in-arm into a little, dimly-lit park. They found a bench, tree-shadowed and secluded, and sat there.

For the first time his arm stole gently around her. Her golden-bronze head slid restfully against his shoulder.

"Gee!" sighed Masie, thankfully. "Why didn't you ever think of that before?"

"Masie," said Carter, earnestly, "you surely know that I love you. I ask you sincerely to marry me. You know me well enough by this time to have no doubts of me. I want you, and I must have you. I

care nothing for the difference in our stations."

"What is the difference?" asked Masie, curiously.

"Well, there isn't any," said Carter, quickly, "except in the minds of foolish people. It is in my power to give you a life of luxury. My social position is beyond dispute, and my means are ample."

"They all say that," remarked Masie. "It's the kid they all give you. I suppose you really work in a delicatessen or follow the races. I ain't as green as I look."

"I can furnish you all the proofs you want," said Carter, gently. "And I want you, Masie. I loved you the first day I saw you."

"They all do," said Masie, with an amused laugh, "to hear 'em talk. If I could meet a man that got stuck on me the third time he'd seen me I think I'd get mashed on him."

"Please don't say such things," pleaded Carter. "Listen to me, dear. Ever since I first looked into your eyes you have been the only woman in the world for me."

"Oh, ain't you the kiddier!" smiled Masie. "How many other girls did you ever tell that?"

But Carter persisted. And at length he reached the flimsy, fluttering little soul of the shop-girl that existed somewhere deep down in her lovely bosom. His words penetrated the heart whose very lightness was its safest armor. She looked up at him with eyes that saw. And a warm glow visited her cool cheeks. Tremblingly, awfully, her moth wings closed, and she seemed about to settle upon the flower of love. Some faint glimmer of life and its possibilities on the other side of her glove counter dawned upon her. Carter felt the change and crowded the opportunity.

"Marry me, Masie," he whispered softly, "and we will go away from this ugly city to beautiful ones. We will forget work and business, and life will be one long holiday. I know where I should take you—I have been there often. Just think of a shore where summer is eternal, where the waves are always rippling on the lovely beach and the people are happy and free as children. We will sail to those shores and remain there as long as you please. In one of those far-away cities there are grand and lovely

palaces and towers full of beautiful pictures and statues. The streets of the city are water, and one travels about in——"

"I know," said Masie, sitting up suddenly. "Gondolas."

"Yes," smiled Carter.

"I thought so," said Masie.

"And then," continued Carter, "we will travel on and see whatever we wish in the world. After the European cities we will visit India and the ancient cities there, and ride on elephants and see the wonderful temples of the Hindoos and Brahmins and the Japanese gardens and the camel trains and chariot races in Persia, and all the queer sights of foreign countries. Don't you think you would like it, Masie?"

Masie rose to her feet.

"I think we had better be going home," she said, coolly. "It's getting late."

Carter humored her. He had come to know her varying, thistle-down moods, and that it was useless to combat them. But he felt a certain happy triumph. He had held for a moment, though but by a silken thread, the soul of his wild Psyche, and hope was stronger within him. Once she had folded her wings and her cool hand had closed about his own.

At the Biggest Store the next day Masie's chum, Lulu, waylaid her in an angle of the counter.

"How are you and your swell friend making it?" she asked.

"Oh, him?" said Masie, patting her side curls. "He ain't in it any more. Say, Lu, what do you think that fellow wanted me to do?"

"Go on the stage?" guessed Lulu, breathlessly.

"Nit; he's too cheap a guy for that. He wanted me to marry him and go down to Coney Island for a wedding tour!"

THE ROADS WE TAKE ¹

TWENTY miles west of Tucson the "Sunset Express" stopped at a tank to take on water. Besides the aqueous addition the engine of that famous flyer acquired some other things that were not good for it.

While the fireman was lowering the feed-

ing hose, Bob Tidball, "Shark" Dodson, and a quarter-bred Creek Indian called John Big Dog climbed on the engine and showed the engineer three round orifices in pieces of ordnance that they carried. These orifices so impressed the engineer with their possibilities that he raised both hands in a gesture such as accompanies the ejaculation "Do tell!"

At the crisp command of Shark Dodson, who was leader of the attacking force, the engineer descended to the ground and uncoupled the engine and tender. Then John Big Dog, perched upon the coal, sportively held two guns upon the engine driver and the fireman, and suggested that they run the engine fifty yards away and there await further orders.

Shark Dodson and Bob Tidball, scorning to put such low-grade ore as the passengers through the mill, struck out for the rich pocket of the express car. They found the messenger serene in the belief that the "Sunset Express" was taking on nothing more stimulating and dangerous than *aqua pura*. While Bob was knocking this idea out of his head with the butt-end of his six-shooter, Shark Dodson was already dosing the express-car safe with dynamite.

The safe exploded to the tune of \$30,000, all gold and currency. The passengers thrust their heads casually out of the windows to look for the thunder-cloud. The conductor jerked at the bell-rope, which sagged down loose and unresisting, at his tug. Shark Dodson and Bob Tidball, with their booty in a stout canvas bag, tumbled out of the express car and ran awkwardly in their high-heeled boots to the engine.

The engineer, sullenly angry but wise, ran the engine, according to orders, rapidly away from the inert train. But before this was accomplished the express messenger, recovered from Bob Tidball's persuader to neutrality, jumped out of his car with a Winchester rifle and took a trick in the game. Mr. John Big Dog, sitting on the coal tender, unwittingly made a wrong lead by giving an imitation of a target, and the messenger trumped him. With a ball exactly between his shoulder blades the Creek chevalier of industry rolled off to the ground, thus increasing the share of his comrades in the loot by one sixth each.

¹ First printed in the *New York World*, 7 August, 1904; republished in *Whirligigs*.

Two miles from the tank the engineer was ordered to stop.

The robbers waved a defiant adieu and plunged down the steep slope into the thick woods that lined the track. Five minutes of crashing through a thicket of chaparral brought them to open woods, where three horses were tied to low-hanging branches. One was waiting for John Big Dog, who would never ride by night or day again. This animal the robbers divested of saddle and bridle and set free. They mounted the other two with the bag across one pommel, and rode fast and with discretion through the forest and up a primeval, lonely gorge. Here the animal that bore Bob Tidball slipped on a mossy boulder and broke a foreleg. They shot him through the head at once and sat down to hold a council of flight. Made secure for the present by the tortuous trail they had traveled, the question of time was no longer so big. Many miles and hours lay between them and the spryest posse that could follow. Shark Dodson's horse, with trailing rope and dropped bridle, panted and cropped thankfully of the grass along the stream in the gorge. Bob Tidball opened the sack, drew out double handfuls of the neat packages of currency and the one sack of gold, and chuckled with the glee of a child.

"Say, you old double-decked pirate," he called joyfully to Dodson, "you said we could do it—you got a head for financing that knocks the horns off of anything in Arizona."

"What are we going to do about a hoss for you, Bob? We ain't got long to wait here. They'll be on our trail before daylight in the mornin'."

"Oh, I guess that cayuse of yourn'll carry double for a while," answered the sanguine Bob. "We'll annex the first animal we come across. By jingoes, we made a haul, didn't we? Accordin' to the marks on this money there's \$30,000—\$15,000 apiece!"

"It's short of what I expected," said Shark Dodson, kicking softly at the packages with the toe of his boot. And then he looked pensively at the wet sides of his tired horse.

"Old Bolivar's mighty nigh played out," he said, slowly. "I wish that sorrel of yours hadn't got hurt."

"So do I," said Bob, heartily, "but it can't be helped. Bolivar's got plenty of bottom—he'll get us both far enough to get fresh mounts. Dang it, Shark, I can't help thinkin' how funny it is that an Easterner like you can come out here and give us Western fellows cards and spades in the desperado business. What part of the East was you from, anyway?"

"New York State," said Shark Dodson, sitting down on a boulder and chewing a twig. "I was born on a farm in Ulster County. I ran away from home when I was seventeen. It was an accident my comin' West. I was walkin' along the road with my clothes in a bundle, makin' for New York City. I had an idea of goin' there and makin' lots of money. I always felt like I could do it. I came to a place one evenin' where the road forked and I didn't know which fork to take. I studied about it for half an hour, and then I took the left-hand. That night I run into the camp of a Wild West show that was travelin' among the little towns, and I went West with it. I've often wondered if I wouldn't have turned out different if I'd took the other road."

"Oh, I reckon you'd have ended up about the same," said Bob Tidball, cheerfully philosophical. "It ain't the roads we take; it's what's inside of us that makes us turn out the way we do."

Shark Dodson got up and leaned against a tree.

"I'd a good deal rather that sorrel of yourn hadn't hurt himself, Bob," he said again, almost pathetically.

"Same here," agreed Bob; "he was sure a first-rate kind of a crowbait. But Bolivar, he'll pull us through all right. Reckon we'd better be movin' on, hadn't we, Shark? I'll bag this boodle ag'in and we'll hit the trail for higher timber."

Bob Tidball replaced the spoil in the bag and tied the mouth of it tightly with a cord. When he looked up the most prominent object that he saw was the muzzle of Shark Dodson's .45 held upon him without a waver.

"Stop your funnin'," said Bob, with a grin. "We got to be hittin' the breeze."

"Set still," said Shark. "You ain't goin' to hit no breeze, Bob. I hate to tell you, but there ain't any chance for but one of us.

Bolivar, he's plenty tired, and he can't carry double."

"We been pards, me and you, Shark Dodson, for three year," Bob said quietly. "We've risked our lives together time and again. I've always give you a square deal, and I thought you was a man. I've heard some queer stories about you shootin' one or two men in a peculiar way, but I never believed 'em. Now if you're just havin' a little fun with me, Shark, put your gun up, and we'll get on Bolivar and vamose. If you mean to shoot—shoot, you blackhearted son of a tarantula!"

Shark Dodson's face bore a deeply sorrowful look.

"You don't know how bad I feel," he sighed, "about that sorrel of yourn breakin' his leg, Bob."

The expression on Dodson's face changed in an instant to one of cold ferocity mingled with inexorable cupidity. The soul of the man showed itself for a moment like an evil face in the window of a reputable house.

Truly Bob Tidball was never to "hit the breeze" again. The deadly .45 of the false friend cracked and filled the gorge with a roar that the walls hurled back with indignant echoes. And Bolivar, unconscious accomplice, swiftly bore away the last of the holders-up of the "Sunset Express," not put to the stress of "carrying double."

But as Shark Dodson galloped away the woods seemed to fade from his view; the revolver in his right hand turned to the curved arm of a mahogany chair; his saddle was strangely upholstered, and he opened his eyes and saw his feet, not in stirrups, but resting quietly on the edge of a quartered-oak desk.

I am telling you that Dodson, of the firm of Dodson & Decker, Wall Street brokers, opened his eyes. Peabody, the confidential clerk, was standing by his chair, hesitating to speak. There was a confused hum of wheels below, and the sedative buzz of an electric fan.

"Ahem! Peabody," said Dodson, blinking. "I must have fallen asleep. I had a most remarkable dream. What is it, Peabody?"

"Mr. Williams, sir, of Tracy & Williams, is outside. He has come to settle his deal in

X. Y. Z. The market caught him short, sir, if you remember."

"Yes, I remember. What is X. Y. Z. quoted at to-day, Peabody?"

"One eighty-five, sir."

"Then that's his price."

"Excuse me," said Peabody, rather nervously, "for speaking of it, but I've been talking to Williams. He's an old friend of yours, Mr. Dodson, and you practically have a corner in X. Y. Z. I thought you might—that is, I thought you might not remember that he sold you the stock at 98. If he settles at the market price it will take every cent he has in the world and his home too to deliver the shares."

The expression on Dodson's face changed in an instant to one of cold ferocity mingled with inexorable cupidity. The soul of the man showed itself for a moment like an evil face in the window of a reputable house.

"He will settle at one eighty-five," said Dodson. "Bolivar cannot carry double."

THE FURNISHED ROOM¹

RESTLESS, shifting, fugacious as time itself is a certain vast bulk of the population of the red brick district of the lower West Side. Homeless, they have a hundred homes. They flit from furnished room to furnished room, transients forever—transients in abode, transients in heart and mind. They sing "Home, Sweet Home" in ragtime; they carry their *lares et penates* in a bandbox; their vine is entwined about a picture hat; a rubber plant is their fig tree.

Hence the houses of this district, having had a thousand dwellers, should have a thousand tales to tell, mostly dull ones, no doubt; but it would be strange if there could not be found a ghost or two in the wake of all these vagrant guests.

One evening after dark a young man prowled among these crumbling red mansions, ringing their bells. At the twelfth he rested his lean hand-baggage upon the step and wiped the dust from his hat-band and forehead. The bell sounded faint and far away in some remote, hollow depths.

To the door of this, the twelfth house whose bell he had rung, came a housekeeper

¹ First printed in the *New York World*, 14 August, 1904; republished in *The Four Million*.

who made him think of an unwholesome, surfeited worm that had eaten its nut to a hollow shell and now sought to fill the vacancy with edible lodgers.

He asked if there was a room to let.

"Come in," said the housekeeper. Her voice came from her throat; her throat seemed lined with fur. "I have the third floor back, vacant since a week back. Should you wish to look at it?"

The young man followed her up the stairs. A faint light from no particular source mitigated the shadows of the halls. They trod noiselessly upon a stair carpet that its own loom would have forsworn. It seemed to have become vegetable; to have degenerated in that rank, sunless air to lush lichen or spreading moss that grew in patches to the stair-case and was viscid under the foot like organic matter. At each turn of the stairs were vacant niches in the wall. Perhaps plants had once been set within them. If so they had died in that foul and tainted air. It may be that statues of the saints had stood there, but it was not difficult to conceive that imps and devils had dragged them forth in the darkness and down to the unholy depths of some furnished pit below.

"This is the room," said the housekeeper, from her furry throat. "It's a nice room. It ain't often vacant. I had some most elegant people in it last summer—no trouble at all, and paid in advance to the minute. The water's at the end of the hall. Sprowls and Mooney kept it three months. They done a vaudeville sketch. Miss B'retta Sprowls—you may have heard of her—Oh, that was just the stage names—right there over the dresser is where the marriage certificate hung, framed. The gas is here, and you see there is plenty of closet room. It's a room everybody likes. It never stays idle long."

"Do you have many theatrical people rooming here?" asked the young man.

"They comes and goes. A good proportion of my lodgers is connected with the theaters. Yes, sir, this is the theatrical district. Actor people never stays long anywhere. I get my share. Yes, they comes and they goes."

He engaged the room, paying for a week in advance. He was tired, he said, and would take possession at once. He counted out the money. The room had been made ready,

she said, even to towels and water. As the housekeeper moved away he put, for the thousandth time, the question that he carried at the end of his tongue.

"A young girl—Miss Vashner—Miss Eloise Vashner—do you remember such a one among your lodgers? She would be singing on the stage, most likely. A fair girl, of medium height and slender, with reddish, gold hair and a dark mole near her left eyebrow."

"No, I don't remember the name. Them stage people has names they change as often as their rooms. They comes and they goes. No, I don't call that one to mind."

No. Always no. Five months of ceaseless interrogation and the inevitable negative. So much time spent by day in questioning managers, agents, schools, and choruses; by night among the audiences of theaters from all-star casts down to music halls so low that he dreaded to find what he most hoped for. He who had loved her best had tried to find her. He was sure that since her disappearance from home this great, water-girt city held her somewhere, but it was like a monstrous quicksand, shifting its particles constantly, with no foundation, its upper granules of to-day buried to-morrow in ooze and slime.

The furnished room received its latest guest with a first glow of pseudo-hospitality, a hectic, haggard, perfunctory welcome like the specious smile of a demirep. The sophisticated comfort came in reflected gleams from the decayed furniture, the ragged brocade upholstery of a couch and two chairs, a foot-wide cheap pier glass between the two windows, from one or two gilt picture frames and a brass bedstead in a corner.

The guest reclined, inert, upon a chair, while the room, confused in speech as though it were an apartment in Babel, tried to discourse to him of its divers tenantry.

A polychromatic rug like some brilliant-flowered rectangular, tropical islet lay surrounded by a billowy sea of soiled matting. Upon the gay-papered wall were those pictures that pursue the homeless one from house to house—The Huguenot Lovers, The First Quarrel, The Wedding Breakfast, Psyche at the Fountain. The mantel's chastely severe outline was ingloriously

veiled behind some pert drapery drawn rakishly askew like the sashes of the Amazonian ballet. Upon it was some desolate flotsam cast aside by the room's marooned when a lucky sail had borne them to a fresh port—a trifling vase or two, pictures of actresses, a medicine bottle, some stray cards out of a deck.

One by one, as the characters of a cryptograph become explicit, the little signs left by the furnished room's procession of guests developed a significance. The threadbare space in the rug in front of the dresser told that lovely woman had marched in the throng. The tiny finger prints on the wall spoke of little prisoners trying to feel their way to sun and air. A splattered stain, raying like the shadow of a bursting bomb, witnessed where a hurled glass or bottle had splintered with its contents against the wall. Across the pier glass had been scrawled with a diamond in staggering letters the name "Marie." It seemed that the succession of dwellers in the furnished room had turned in fury—perhaps tempted beyond forbearance by its garish coldness—and wreaked upon it their passions. The furniture was chipped and bruised; the couch, distorted by bursting springs, seemed a horrible monster that had been slain during the stress of some grotesque convulsion. Some more potent upheaval had cloven a great slice from the marble mantel. Each plank in the floor owned its particular cant and shriek as from a separate and individual agony. It seemed incredible that all this malice and injury had been wrought upon the room by those who had called it for a time their home; and yet it may have been the cheated home instinct surviving blindly, the resentful rage at false household gods that had kindled their wrath. A hut that is our own we can sweep and adorn and cherish.

The young tenant in the chair allowed these thoughts to file, soft-shod, through his mind, while there drifted into the room furnished sounds and furnished scents. He heard in one room a tittering and incontinent, slack laughter; in others the monologue of a scold, the rattling of dice, a lullaby, and one crying dully; above him a banjo tinkled with spirit. Doors banged somewhere; the elevated trains roared inter-

mittently; a cat yowled miserably upon a back fence. And he breathed the breath of the house—a dank savor rather than a smell—a cold, musty effluvium as from underground vaults mingled with the reeking exhalations of linoleum and mildewed and rotten woodwork.

Then, suddenly, as he rested there, the room was filled with the strong, sweet odor of mignonette. It came as upon a single buffet of wind with such sureness and fragrance and emphasis that it almost seemed a living visitant. And the man cried aloud: "What, dear?" as if he had been called, and sprang up and faced about. The rich odor clung to him and wrapped him around. He reached out his arms for it, all his senses for the time confused and commingled. How could one be peremptorily called by an odor? Surely it must have been a sound. But, was it not the sound that had touched, that had caressed him?

"She has been in this room," he cried, and he sprang to wrest from it a token, for he knew he would recognize the smallest thing that had belonged to her or that she had touched. This enveloping scent of mignonette, the odor that she had loved and made her own—whence came it?

The room had been but carelessly set in order. Scattered upon the flimsy dresser scarf were half a dozen hairpins—those discreet, indistinguishable friends of woman-kind, feminine of gender, infinite of mood, and uncommunicative of tense. These he ignored, conscious of their triumphant lack of identity. Ransacking the drawers of the dresser he came upon a discarded, tiny, ragged handkerchief. He pressed it to his face. It was racy and insolent with heliotrope; he hurled it to the floor. In another drawer he found odd buttons, a theater programme, a pawnbroker's card, two lost marshmallows, a book on the divination of dreams. In the last was a woman's black satin hair bow, which halted him, poised between ice and fire. But the black satin hair bow also is femininity's demure, impersonal, common ornament and tells no tales.

And then he traversed the room like a hound on the scent, skimming the walls, considering the corners of the bulging matting on his hands and knees, rummaging

mantel and tables, the curtains and hangings, the drunken cabinet in the corner, for a visible sign, unable to perceive that she was there beside, around, against, within, above him, clinging to him, wooing him, calling him so poignantly through the finer senses that even his grosser ones became cognizant of the call. Once again he answered loudly: "Yes, dear!" and turned, wild-eyed, to gaze on vacancy, for he could not yet discern form and color and love and outstretched arms in the odor of mignonette. Oh, God, whence that odor, and since when have odors had a voice to call? Thus he groped.

He burrowed in crevices and corners, and found corks and cigarettes. These he passed in passive contempt. But once he found in a fold of the matting a half-smoked cigar, and this he ground beneath his heel with a green and trenchant oath. He sifted the room from end to end. He found dreary and ignoble small records of many a peripatetic tenant; but of her whom he sought, and who may have lodged there, and whose spirit seemed to hover there, he found no trace.

And then he thought of the housekeeper.

He ran from the haunted room downstairs and to a door that showed a crack of light. She came out to his knock. He smothered his excitement as best he could.

"Will you tell me, madam," he besought her, "who occupied the room I have before I came?"

"Yes, sir. I can tell you again. 'Twas Sprowls and Mooney, as I said. Miss B'retta Sprowls it was in the theaters, but Missis Mooney she was. My house is well known for respectability. The marriage certificate hung, framed, on a nail over——"

"What kind of a lady was Miss Sprowls—in looks, I mean?"

"Why, black-haired, sir, short, and stout, with a comical face. They left a week ago Tuesday."

"And before they occupied it?"

"Why, there was a single gentleman connected with the draying business. He left owing me a week. Before him was Missis Crowder and her two children, that stayed four months; and back of them was old Mr. Doyle, whose sons paid for him. He kept the room six months. That goes back a year, sir, and further I do not remember."

He thanked her and crept back to his room. The room was dead. The essence that had vivified it was gone. The perfume of mignonette had departed. In its place was the old, stale odor of moldy house furniture, of atmosphere in storage.

The ebbing of his hope drained his faith. He sat staring at the yellow, singing gaslight. Soon he walked to the bed and began to tear the sheets into strips. With the blade of his knife he drove them tightly into every crevice around windows and door. When all was snug and taut he turned out the light, turned the gas full on again, and laid himself gratefully upon the bed.

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It was Mrs. McCool's night to go with the can for beer. So she fetched it and sat with Mrs. Purdy in one of those subterranean retreats where housekeepers foregather and the worm dieth seldom.

"I rented out my third floor, back, this evening," said Mrs. Purdy, across a fine circle of foam. "A young man took it. He went up to bed two hours ago."

"Now, did ye, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am?" said Mrs. McCool, with intense admiration. "You do be a wonder for rentin' rooms of that kind. And did ye tell him, then?" she concluded in a husky whisper laden with mystery.

"Rooms," said Mrs. Purdy, in her furriest tones, "are furnished for to rent. I did not tell him, Mrs. McCool."

"'Tis right ye are, ma'am; 'tis by renting rooms we kape alive. Ye have the rale sense for business, ma'am. There be many people will rayjict the rentin' of a room if they be tould a suicide has been after dyin' in the bed of it."

"As you say, we has our living to be making," remarked Mrs. Purdy.

"Yis, ma'am; 'tis true. 'Tis just one wake ago this day I helped ye lay out the third floor, back. A pretty slip of a colleen she was to be killin' herself wid the gas—a swate little face she had, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am."

"She'd a-been called handsome, as you say," said Mrs. Purdy, assenting but critical, "but for that mole she had a-growin' by her left eyebrow. Do fill up your glass again, Mrs. McCool."

EDITH WHARTON (1862-)

Edith Newbold Jones was born in New York in 1862. She was educated by private tutors, by travel abroad, and by her own wide reading. In 1885 she married Edward Wharton, of Boston. She has lived in New York, in Massachusetts, and in France, latterly spending all of her time there. She became acquainted with Henry James in the early years of the twentieth century, and they were close friends until his death. He, before he knew her, had read with interest her earliest books and had written to her sister-in-law (in 1902): "I take to her very kindly as regards her diabolical little cleverness, the quantity of intention and intelligence in her style, and her sharp eye for an interesting *kind* of subject." Indeed, he saw in her work so much promise that he wanted to "pump the pure essence of his wisdom and experience into her," and in particular he thought, after reading her Italian historical novel, *The Valley of Decision* (1902), that "she *must* be tethered in native pastures, even if it reduce her to a backyard in New York." Mrs. Wharton became in some sense a disciple of James—which may help to account for the fine polish of her work, and her perfection of manner, and also for her use of so-called "psychological" methods—though her mind is of markedly different quality and she has preserved her independence.

Mrs. Wharton's earliest book, *The Greater Inclination* (1899), was a volume of tales which unmistakably announced the appearance of a significant and accomplished writer and, at the same time, also announced both the social class whose life chiefly has interested her and the ironical method of treatment which has been characteristic of her in her later work. She has written chiefly of New Yorkers whose social position is so amply assured that they form an impenetrable circle practically unknown to their contemporaries of the world at large, and she has been interested, in contemplating these members of a group in which she herself was born and brought up, in exploring the conventions, the standards of propriety, which hold them together. Social compulsions, illuminated by conflicts within or on the edge of the group—as in *The Age of Innocence* (1920) and *The House of Mirth* (1905)—form her theme. And when she has departed from fashionable New York for her setting, as in *Ethan Frome* (1911), perhaps the highest of her achievements, in which the scene is laid in rural New England, the theme is still the same. And whatever the group she deals with, her method is strictly objective and her irony impartial, the object of her satire being indifferently the group or the individuals in conflict with it. She undoubtedly prefers well-bred people, and can forgive them much, even rather ugly traits if these do not manifest themselves in a too unpleasant or obvious way. But she gives her favor wholeheartedly to those who unite good breeding with intelligence, integrity, and straightforward purpose. Her satire is reserved for the group or the individual who is stupid, confused, without positive character. Thus she is on the side of the angels of this world, and her appeal is primarily to the well-bred and intelligent minority.

The titles of some of her books, other than those already mentioned, are: *Crucial Instances* (1901), *The Descent of Man, and Other Stories* (1904), *Madame de Treymes* (1907), *The Fruit of the Tree* (1907), *The Hermit and the Wild Woman* (1908), *The Custom of the Country* (1913), *Xingu and Other Stories* (1916), *Glimpses of the Moon* (1922), *A Son at the Front* (1923), *Old New York* (4 tales in 4 vols., 1924), and *The Writing of Fiction* (essays, 1925).

THE PELICAN ¹

SHE was very pretty when I first knew her, with the sweet straight nose and short upper lip of the cameo-brooch divinity, humanized by a dimple that flowered in her cheek whenever anything was said possessing the outward attributes of humor without its

intrinsic quality. For the dear lady was providentially deficient in humor; the least hint of the real thing clouded her lovely eye like the hovering shadow of an algebraic problem.

I don't think nature had meant her to be "intellectual"; but what can a poor thing do, whose husband has died of drink when her baby is hardly six months old, and who finds her coral necklace and her grand-

¹ Reprinted from *The Greater Inclination* (1899) with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

father's edition of the British Dramatists inadequate to the demands of the creditors?

Her mother, the celebrated Irene Astarte Pratt, had written a poem in blank verse on *The Fall of Man*; one of her aunts was dean of a girls' college; another had translated Euripides—with such a family, the poor child's fate was sealed in advance. The only way of paying her husband's debts and keeping the baby clothed was to be intellectual; and, after some hesitation as to the form her mental activity was to take, it was unanimously decided that she was to give lectures.

They began by being drawing-room lectures. The first time I saw her she was standing by the piano, against a flippant background of Dresden china and photographs, telling a roomful of women preoccupied with their spring bonnets all she thought she knew about Greek art. The ladies assembled to hear her had given me to understand that she was "doing it for the baby," and this fact, together with the shortness of her upper lip and the bewildering co-operation of her dimple, disposed me to listen leniently to her dissertation. Happily, at that time Greek art was still, if I may use the phrase, easily handled: it was as simple as walking down a museum-gallery lined with pleasant familiar Venuses and Apollos. All the later complications—the archaic and archaistic conundrums; the influences of Assyria and Asia Minor; the conflicting attributions and the wrangles of the erudite—still slumbered in the bosom of the future "scientific critic." Greek art in those days began with Phidias and ended with the Apollo Belvedere; and a child could travel from one to the other without danger of losing his way.

Mrs. Amyot had two fatal gifts: a capacious but inaccurate memory, and an extraordinary fluency of speech. There was nothing she did not remember—wrongly; but her halting facts were swathed in so many layers of rhetoric that their infirmities were imperceptible to her friendly critics. Besides, she had been taught Greek by the aunt who had translated Euripides; and the mere sound of the *αἰς* and *οἰς* that she now and then not unskilfully let slip (correcting herself, of course, with a start, and indulgently mistranslating the phrase), struck

awe to the hearts of ladies whose only "accomplishment" was French—if you didn't speak too quickly.

I had then but a momentary glimpse of Mrs. Amyot, but a few months later I came upon her again in the New England university town where the celebrated Irene Astarte Pratt lived on the summit of a local Parnassus, with lesser muses and college professors respectfully grouped on the lower ledges of the sacred declivity. Mrs. Amyot, who, after her husband's death, had returned to the maternal roof (even during her father's lifetime the roof had been distinctively maternal), Mrs. Amyot, thanks to her upper lip, her dimple and her Greek, was already esconced in a snug hollow of the Parnassian slope.

After the lecture was over it happened that I walked home with Mrs. Amyot. From the incensed glances of two or three learned gentlemen who were hovering on the door-step when we emerged, I inferred that Mrs. Amyot, at that period, did not often walk home alone; but I doubt whether any of my discomfited rivals, whatever his claims to favor, was ever treated to so ravishing a mixture of shyness and self-abandonment, of sham erudition and real teeth and hair, as it was my privilege to enjoy. Even at the opening of her public career Mrs. Amyot had a tender eye for strangers, as possible links with successive centers of culture to which in due course the torch of Greek art might be handed on.

She began by telling me that she had never been so frightened in her life. She knew, of course, how dreadfully learned I was, and when, just as she was going to begin, her hostess had whispered to her that I was in the room, she had felt ready to sink through the floor. Then (with a flying dimple) she had remembered Emerson's line—wasn't it Emerson's?—that beauty is its own excuse for *seeing*, and that had made her feel a little more confident, since she was sure that no one *saw* beauty more vividly than she—as a child she used to sit for hours gazing at an Etruscan vase on the bookcase in the library, while her sisters played with their dolls—and if *seeing* beauty was the only excuse one needed for talking about it, why, she was sure I would make allowances and not be *too* critical and sarcastic, espe-

cially if, as she thought probable, I had heard of her having lost her poor husband, and how she had to do it for the baby.

Being abundantly assured of my sympathy on these points, she went on to say that she had always wanted so much to consult me about her lectures. Of course, one subject wasn't enough (this view of the limitations of Greek art as a "subject" gave me a startling idea of the rate at which a successful lecturer might exhaust the universe); she must find others; she had not ventured on any as yet, but she had thought of Tennyson—didn't I *love* Tennyson? She *worshipped* him so that she was sure she could help others to understand him; or what did I think of a "course" on Raphael or Michelangelo—or on the heroines of Shakespeare? There were some fine steel-engravings of Raphael's Madonnas and of the Sistine ceiling in her mother's library, and she had seen Miss Cushman in several Shakespearian rôles, so that on these subjects also she felt qualified to speak with authority.

When we reached her mother's door she begged me to come in and talk the matter over; she wanted me to see the baby—she felt as though I should understand her better if I saw the baby—and the dimple flashed through a tear.

The fear of encountering the author of *The Fall of Man*, combined with the opportune recollection of a dinner engagement, made me evade this appeal with the promise of returning on the morrow. On the morrow, I left too early to redeem my promise; and for several years afterwards I saw no more of Mrs. Amyot.

My calling at that time took me at irregular intervals from one to another of our larger cities, and as Mrs. Amyot was also peripatetic it was inevitable that sooner or later we should cross each other's path. It was therefore without surprise that, one snowy afternoon in Boston, I learned from the lady with whom I chanced to be lunching that, as soon as the meal was over, I was to be taken to hear Mrs. Amyot lecture.

"On Greek art?" I suggested.

"Oh, you've heard her then? No, this is one of the series called 'Homes and Haunts of the Poets.' Last week we had Wordsworth and the Lake Poets, to-day we are to have Goethe and Weimar. She is a wonderful

creature—all the women of her family are geniuses. You know, of course, that her mother was Irene Astarte Pratt, who wrote a poem on *The Fall of Man*; N. P. Willis called her the female Milton of America. One of Mrs. Amyot's aunts has translated Eurip——"

"And is she as pretty as ever?" I irrelevantly interposed.

My hostess looked shocked. "She is excessively modest and retiring. She says it is actual suffering for her to speak in public. You know she only does it for the baby."

Punctually at the hour appointed, we took our seats in a lecture-hall full of strenuous females in ulsters. Mrs. Amyot was evidently a favorite with these austere sisters, for every corner was crowded, and as we entered a pale usher with an educated mispronunciation was setting forth to several dejected applicants the impossibility of supplying them with seats.

Our own were happily so near the front that when the curtains at the back of the platform parted, and Mrs. Amyot appeared, I was at once able to establish a comparison between the lady placidly dimpling to the applause of her public and the shrinking drawing-room orator of my earlier recollections.

Mrs. Amyot was as pretty as ever, and there was the same curious discrepancy between the freshness of her aspect and the staleness of her theme, but something was gone of the blushing unsteadiness with which she had fired her first random shots at Greek art. It was not that the shots were less uncertain, but that she now had an air of assuming that, for her purpose, the bull's-eye was everywhere, so that there was no need to be flustered in taking aim. This assurance had so facilitated the flow of her eloquence that she seemed to be performing a trick analogous to that of the conjuror who pulls hundreds of yards of white paper out of his mouth. From a large assortment of stock adjectives she chose, with unerring deftness and rapidity, the one that taste and discrimination would most surely have rejected, fitting out her subject with a whole wardrobe of slop-shop epithets irrelevant in cut and size. To the invaluable knack of not disturbing the association of ideas in her

audience, she added the gift of what may be called a confidential manner—so that her fluent generalizations about Goethe and his place in literature (the lecture was, of course, manufactured out of Lewes's book) had the flavor of personal experience, of views sympathetically exchanged with her audience on the best way of knitting children's socks, or of putting up preserves for the winter. It was, I am sure, to this personal accent—the moral equivalent of her dimple—that Mrs. Amyot owed her prodigious, her irrational success. It was her art of transposing second-hand ideas into first-hand emotions that so endeared her to her feminine listeners.

To any one not in search of "documents" Mrs. Amyot's success was hardly of a kind to make her more interesting, and my curiosity flagged with the growing conviction that the "suffering" entailed on her by public speaking was at most a retrospective pang. I was sure that she had reached the point of measuring and enjoying her effects, of deliberately manipulating her public; and there must indeed have been a certain exhilaration in attaining results so considerable by means involving so little conscious effort. Mrs. Amyot's art was simply an extension of coquetry: she flirted with her audience.

In this mood of enlightened skepticism I responded but languidly to my hostess's suggestion that I should go with her that evening to see Mrs. Amyot. The aunt who had translated Euripides was at home on Saturday evenings, and one met "thoughtful" people there, my hostess explained: it was one of the intellectual centers of Boston. My mood remained distinctly resentful of any connection between Mrs. Amyot and intellectuality, and I declined to go; but the next day I met Mrs. Amyot in the street.

She stopped me reproachfully. She had heard I was in Boston; why had I not come last night? She had been told that I was at her lecture, and it had frightened her—yes, really, almost as much as years ago in Hill-bridge. She never *could* get over that stupid shyness, and the whole business was as distasteful to her as ever; but what could she do? There was the baby—he was a big boy now, and boys were *so* expensive! But did I really think she had improved the least

little bit? And why wouldn't I come home with her now, and see the boy, and tell her frankly what I had thought of the lecture? She had plenty of flattery—people were *so* kind, and every one knew that she did it for the baby—but what she felt the need of was criticism, severe, discriminating criticism like mine—oh, she knew that I was dreadfully discriminating!

I went home with her and saw the boy. In the early heat of her Tennyson-worship Mrs. Amyot had christened him Lancelot, and he looked it. Perhaps, however, it was his black velvet dress and the exasperating length of his yellow curls, together with the fact of his having been taught to recite Browning to visitors, that raised to fever-heat the itching of my palms in his Infant-Samuel-like presence. I have since had reason to think that he would have preferred to be called Billy, and to hunt cats with the other boys in the block: his curls and his poetry were simply another outlet for Mrs. Amyot's irrepressible coquetry.

But if Lancelot was not genuine, his mother's love for him was. It justified everything—the lectures *were* for the baby, after all. I had not been ten minutes in the room before I was pledged to help Mrs. Amyot carry out her triumphant fraud. If she wanted to lecture on Plato she should—Plato must take his chance like the rest of us! There was no use, of course, in being "discriminating." I preserved sufficient reason to avoid that pitfall, but I suggested "subjects" and made lists of books for her with a fatuity that became more obvious as time attenuated the remembrance of her smile; I even remember thinking that some men might have cut the knot by marrying her, but I handed over Plato as a hostage and escaped by the afternoon train.

The next time I saw her was in New York, when she had become so fashionable that it was a part of the whole duty of woman to be seen at her lectures. The lady who suggested that of course I ought to go and hear Mrs. Amyot, was not very clear about anything except that she was perfectly lovely, and had had a horrid husband, and was doing it to support her boy. The subject of the discourse (I think it was on Ruskin) was clearly of minor importance, not only to my friend, but to the throng of

well-dressed and absent-minded ladies who rustled in late, dropped their muffs and pocket-books, and undisguisedly lost themselves in the study of each other's apparel. They received Mrs. Amyot with warmth, but she evidently represented a social obligation like going to church, rather than any more personal interest; in fact, I suspect that every one of the ladies would have remained away, had they been sure that none of the others were coming.

Whether Mrs. Amyot was disheartened by the lack of sympathy between herself and her hearers, or whether the sport of arousing it had become a task, she certainly imparted her platitudes with less convincing warmth than of old. Her voice had the same confidential inflections, but it was like a voice reproduced by a gramophone: the real woman seemed far away. She had grown stouter without losing her dewy freshness, and her smart gown might have been taken to show either the potentialities of a settled income, or a politic concession to the taste of her hearers. As I listened I reproached myself for ever having suspected her of self-deception in saying that she took no pleasure in her work. I was sure now that she did it only for Lancelot, and judging from the size of her audience and the price of the tickets I concluded that Lancelot must be receiving a liberal education.

I was living in New York that winter, and in the rotation of dinners I found myself one evening at Mrs. Amyot's side. The dimple came out at my greeting as punctually as a cuckoo in a Swiss clock, and I detected the same automatic quality in the tone in which she made her usual pretty demand for advice. She was like a musical-box charged with popular airs. They succeeded one another with breathless rapidity, but there was a moment after each when the cylinders scraped and whizzed.

Mrs. Amyot, as I found when I called on her, was living in a sunny flat, with a sitting-room full of flowers and a tea-table that had the air of expecting visitors. She owned that she had been ridiculously successful. It was delightful, of course, on Lancelot's account. Lancelot had been sent to the best school in the country, and if things went well and people didn't tire of his silly mother he was to go to Harvard afterwards.

During the next two or three years Mrs. Amyot kept her flat in New York, and radiated art and literature upon the suburbs. I saw her now and then, always stouter, better dressed, more successful and more automatic: she had become a lecturing-machine.

I went abroad for a year or two and when I came back she had disappeared. I asked several people about her, but life had closed over her. She had been last heard of as lecturing—still lecturing—but no one seemed to know when or where.

It was in Boston that I found her at last, forlornly swaying to the oscillations of an overhead strap in a crowded trolley-car. Her face had so changed that I lost myself in a startled reckoning of the time that had elapsed since our parting. She spoke to me shyly, as though aware of my hurried calculation, and conscious that in five years she ought not to have altered so much as to upset my notion of time. Then she seemed to set it down to her dress, for she nervously gathered her cloak over a gown that asked only to be concealed, and shrank into a seat behind the line of prehensile bipeds blocking the aisle of the car.

It was perhaps because she so obviously avoided me that I felt for the first time that I might be of use to her; and when she left the car I made no excuse for following her.

She said nothing of needing advice and did not ask me to walk home with her, concealing, as we talked, her transparent preoccupations under the guise of a sudden interest in all I had been doing since she had last seen me. Of what concerned her, I learned only that Lancelot was well and that for the present she was not lecturing—she was tired and her doctor had ordered her to rest. On the door-step of a shabby house she paused and held out her hand. She had been so glad to see me and perhaps if I were in Boston again—the tired dimple, as it were, bowed me out and closed the door on the conclusion of the phrase.

Two or three weeks later, at my club in New York, I found a letter from her. In it she owned that she was troubled, that of late she had been unsuccessful, and that, if I chanced to be coming back to Boston, and could spare her a little of that invaluable

advice which——. A few days later the advice was at her disposal.

She told me frankly what had happened. Her public had grown tired of her. She had seen it coming on for some time, and was shrewd enough in detecting the causes. She had more rivals than formerly—younger women, she admitted, with a smile that could still afford to be generous—and then her audiences had grown more critical and consequently more exacting. Lecturing—as she understood it—used to be simple enough. You chose your topic—Raphael, Shakespeare, Gothic Architecture, or some such big familiar “subject”—and read up about it for a week or so at the Athenæum or the Astor Library, and then told your audience what you had read. Now, it appeared, that simple process was no longer adequate. People had tired of familiar “subjects”; it was the fashion to be interested in things that one hadn’t always known about—natural selection, animal magnetism, sociology and comparative folk-lore; while, in literature, the demand had become equally difficult to meet, since Matthew Arnold had introduced the habit of studying the “influence” of one author on another. She had tried lecturing on influences, and had done very well as long as the public was satisfied with the tracing of such obvious influences as that of Turner on Ruskin, of Schiller on Goethe, of Shakespeare on English literature; but such investigations had soon lost all charm for her too-sophisticated audiences, who now demanded either that the influence or the influenced should be quite unknown, or that there should be no perceptible connection between the two. The zest of the performance lay in the measure of ingenuity with which the lecturer established a relation between two people who had probably never heard of each other, much less read each other’s works. A pretty Miss Williams with red hair had, for instance, been lecturing with great success on the influence of the Rosicrucians upon the poetry of Keats, while somebody else had given a “course” on the influence of St. Thomas Aquinas upon Professor Huxley.

Mrs. Amyot, warmed by my participation in her distress, went on to say that the growing demand for evolution was what most troubled her. Her grandfather had

been a pillar of the Presbyterian ministry, and the idea of her lecturing on Darwin or Herbert Spencer was deeply shocking to her mother and aunts. In one sense the family had staked its literary as well as its spiritual hopes on the literal inspiration of Genesis: what became of *The Fall of Man* in the light of modern exegesis?

The upshot of it was that she had ceased to lecture because she could no longer sell tickets enough to pay for the hire of a lecture-hall; and as for the managers, they wouldn’t look at her. She had tried her luck all through the Eastern States and as far south as Washington; but it was of no use, and unless she could get hold of some new subjects—or, better still, of some new audiences—she must simply go out of the business. That would mean the failure of all she had worked for, since Lancelot would have to leave Harvard. She paused, and wept some of the unbecoming tears that spring from real grief. Lancelot, it appeared, was to be a genius. He had passed his opening examinations brilliantly; he had “literary gifts”; he had written beautiful poetry, much of which his mother had copied out, in reverentially slanting characters, in a velvet-bound volume which she drew from a locked drawer.

Lancelot’s verse struck me as nothing more alarming than growing-pains; but it was not to learn this that she had summoned me. What she wanted was to be assured that he was worth working for, an assurance which I managed to convey by the simple stratagem of remarking that the poems reminded me of Swinburne—and so they did, as well as of Browning, Tennyson, Rossetti, and all the other poets who supply young authors with original inspirations.

This point being established, it remained to be decided by what means his mother was, in the French phrase, to pay herself the luxury of a poet. It was clear that this indulgence could be bought only with counterfeit coin, and that the one way of helping Mrs. Amyot was to become a party to the circulation of such currency. My fetish of intellectual integrity went down like a nine-pin before the appeal of a woman no longer young and distinctly foolish, but full of those dear contradictions and irrelevancies that will always make flesh and blood prevail against a syllogism. When I took

leave of Mrs. Amyot I had promised her a dozen letters to Western universities and had half pledged myself to sketch out a lecture on the reconciliation of science and religion.

In the West she achieved a success which for a year or more embittered my perusal of the morning papers. The fascination that lures the murderer back to the scene of his crime drew my eye to every paragraph celebrating Mrs. Amyot's last brilliant lecture on the influence of something upon somebody; and her own letters—she overwhelmed me with them—spared me no detail of the entertainment given in her honor by the Palimpsest Club of Omaha or of her reception at the University of Leadville. The college professors were especially kind: she assured me that she had never before met with such discriminating sympathy. I winced at the adjective, which cast a sudden light on the vast machinery of fraud that I had set in motion. All over my native land, men of hitherto unblemished integrity were conniving with me in urging their friends to go and hear Mrs. Amyot lecture on the reconciliation of science and religion! My only hope was that, somewhere among the number of my accomplices, Mrs. Amyot might find one who would marry her in the defense of his convictions.

None, apparently, resorted to such heroic measures; for about two years later I was startled by the announcement that Mrs. Amyot was lecturing in Trenton, New Jersey, on modern theosophy in the light of the Vedas. The following week she was at Newark, discussing Schopenhauer in the light of recent psychology. The week after that I was on the deck of an ocean steamer, reconsidering my share in Mrs. Amyot's triumphs with the impartiality with which one views an episode that is being left behind at the rate of twenty knots an hour. After all, I had been helping a mother to educate her son.

The next ten years of my life were spent in Europe, and when I came home the recollection of Mrs. Amyot had become as inoffensive as one of those pathetic ghosts who are said to strive in vain to make themselves visible to the living. I did not even notice the fact that I no longer heard her spoken of; she had dropped like a dead leaf from the bough of memory.

A year or two after my return I was condemned to one of the worst punishments a worker can undergo—an enforced holiday. The doctors who pronounced the inhuman sentence decreed that it should be worked out in the South, and for a whole winter I carried my cough, my thermometer and my idleness from one fashionable orange-grove to another. In the vast and melancholy sea of my disoccupation I clutched like a drowning man at any human driftwood within reach. I took a critical and depreciatory interest in the coughs, the thermometers and the idleness of my fellow-sufferers; but to the healthy, the occupied, the transient I clung with indiscriminating enthusiasm.

In no other way can I explain, as I look back on it, the importance I attached to the leisurely confidences of a new arrival with a brown beard who, tilted back at my side on a hotel veranda hung with roses, imparted to me one afternoon the simple annals of his past. There was nothing in the tale to kindle the most inflammable imagination, and though the man had a pleasant frank face and a voice differing agreeably from the shrill inflections of our fellow-lodgers, it is probable that under different conditions his discursive history of successful business ventures in a Western city would have affected me somewhat in the manner of a lullaby.

Even at the time I was not sure I liked his agreeable voice: it had a self-importance out of keeping with the humdrum nature of his story, as though a breeze engaged in shaking out a table-cloth should have fancied itself inflating a banner. But this criticism may have been a mere mark of my own fastidiousness, for the man seemed a simple fellow, satisfied with his middling fortunes, and already (he was not much past thirty) deep-sunk in conjugal content.

He had just started on an anecdote connected with the cutting of his eldest boy's teeth, when a lady I knew, returning from her late drive, paused before us for a moment in the twilight, with the smile which is the feminine equivalent of beads to savages.

"Won't you take a ticket?" she said sweetly.

Of course I would take a ticket—but for what? I ventured to inquire.

"Oh, that's so good of you—for the lecture

this evening. You needn't go, you know; we're none of us going; most of us have been through it already at Aiken and at Saint Augustine and at Palm Beach. I've given away my tickets to some new people who've just come from the North, and some of us are going to send our maids, just to fill up the room."

"And may I ask to whom you are going to pay this delicate attention?"

"Oh, I thought you knew—to poor Mrs. Amyot. She's been lecturing all over the South this winter; she's simply *haunted* me ever since I left New York—and we had six weeks of her at Bar Harbor last summer! One has to take tickets, you know, because she's a widow and does it for her son—to pay for his education. She's so plucky and nice about it, and talks about him in such a touching unaffected way, that everybody is sorry for her, and we all simply ruin ourselves in tickets. I do hope that boy's nearly educated!"

"Mrs. Amyot? Mrs. Amyot?" I repeated. "Is she *still* educating her son?"

"Oh, do you know about her? Has she been at it long? There's some comfort in that, for I suppose when the boy's provided for the poor thing will be able to take a rest—and give us one!"

She laughed and held out her hand.

"Here's your ticket. Did you say *tickets*—two? Oh, thanks. Of course you needn't go."

"But I mean to go. Mrs. Amyot is an old friend of mine."

"Do you really? That's awfully good of you. Perhaps I'll go too if I can persuade Charlie and the others to come. And I wonder"—in a well-directed aside—"if your friend——?"

I telegraphed her under cover of the dusk that my friend was of too recent standing to be drawn into her charitable toils, and she masked her mistake under a rattle of friendly adjurations not to be late, and to be sure to keep a seat for her, as she had quite made up her mind to go even if Charlie and the others wouldn't.

The flutter of her skirts subsided in the distance, and my neighbor, who had half turned away to light a cigar, made no effort to reopen the conversation. At length, fearing he might have overheard the allusion

to himself, I ventured to ask if he were going to the lecture that evening.

"Much obliged—I have a ticket," he said abruptly.

This struck me as in such bad taste that I made no answer; and it was he who spoke next.

"Did I understand you to say that you were an old friend of Mrs. Amyot's?"

"I think I may claim to be, if it is the same Mrs. Amyot I had the pleasure of knowing many years ago. My Mrs. Amyot used to lecture too——"

"To pay for her son's education?"

"I believe so."

"Well—see you later."

He got up and walked into the house.

In the hotel drawing-room that evening there was but a meager sprinkling of guests, among whom I saw my brown-bearded friend sitting alone on a sofa, with his head against the wall. It could not have been curiosity to see Mrs. Amyot that had impelled him to attend the performance, for it would have been impossible for him, without changing his place, to command the improvised platform at the end of the room. When I looked at him he seemed lost in contemplation of the chandelier.

The lady from whom I had bought my tickets fluttered in late, unattended by Charlie and the others, and assuring me that she would *scream* if we had the lecture on Ibsen—she had heard it three times already that winter. A glance at the programme reassured her; it informed us (in the lecturer's own slanting hand) that Mrs. Amyot was to lecture on the *Cosmogony*.

After a long pause, during which the small audience coughed and moved its chairs and showed signs of regretting that it had come, the door opened, and Mrs. Amyot stepped upon the platform. Ah, poor lady!

Some one said "Hush!"—the coughing and chair-shifting subsided, and she began.

It was like looking at one's self early in the morning in a cracked mirror. I had no idea I had grown so old. As for Lancelot, he must have a beard. A beard? The word struck me, and without knowing why I glanced across the room at my bearded friend on the sofa. Oddly enough he was looking at me, with a half-defiant, half-sullen expression; and as our glances crossed,

and his fell, the conviction came to me that *he was Lancelot*.

I don't remember a word of the lecture; and yet there were enough of them to have filled a good-sized dictionary. The stream of Mrs. Amyot's eloquence had become a flood: one had the despairing sense that she had sprung a leak, and that until the plumber came there was nothing to be done about it.

The plumber came at length, in the shape of a clock striking ten; my companion, with a sigh of relief, drifted away in search of Charlie and the others; the audience scattered with the precipitation of people who had discharged a duty; and, without surprise, I found the brown-bearded stranger at my elbow.

We stood alone in the bare-floored room, under the flaring chandelier.

"I think you told me this afternoon that you were an old friend of Mrs. Amyot's?" he began awkwardly.

I assented.

"Will you come in and see her?"

"Now? I shall be very glad to, if——"

"She's ready; she's expecting you," he interposed.

He offered no further explanation, and I followed him in silence. He led me down the long corridor, and pushed open the door of a sitting-room.

"Mother," he said, closing the door after we had entered, "here's the gentleman who says he used to know you."

Mrs. Amyot, who sat in an easy-chair stirring a cup of bouillon, looked up with a start. She had evidently not seen me in the audience, and her son's description had failed to convey my identity. I saw a frightened look in her eyes; then, like a frost flower on a window-pane, the dimple expanded on her wrinkled cheek, and she held out her hand.

"I'm so glad," she said, "so glad!"

She turned to her son, who stood watching us. "You must have told Lancelot all about me—you've known me so long!"

"I haven't had time to talk to your son—since I knew he was your son," I explained.

Her brow cleared. "Then you haven't had time to say anything very dreadful?" she said with a laugh.

"It is he who has been saying dreadful things," I returned, trying to fall in with her tone.

I saw my mistake. "What things?" she faltered.

"Making me feel how old I am by telling me about his children."

"My grandchildren!" she exclaimed with a blush.

"Well, if you choose to put it so."

She laughed again, vaguely, and was silent. I hesitated a moment and then put out my hand.

"I see you are tired. I shouldn't have ventured to come in at this hour if your son——"

The son stepped between us. "Yes, I asked him to come," he said to his mother, in his clear self-assertive voice. "I haven't told him anything yet; but you've got to—now. That's what I brought him for."

His mother straightened herself, but I saw her eye waver.

"Lancelot——" she began.

"Mr. Amyot," I said, turning to the young man, "if your mother will let me come back to-morrow, I shall be very glad——"

He struck his hand hard against the table on which he was leaning.

"No, sir! It won't take long, but it's got to be said now."

He moved nearer to his mother, and I saw his lip twitch under his beard. After all, he was younger and less sure of himself than I had fancied.

"See here, mother," he went on, "there's something here that's got to be cleared up, and as you say this gentleman is an old friend of yours it had better be cleared up in his presence. Maybe he can help explain it—and if he can't, it's got to be explained to *him*."

Mrs. Amyot's lips moved, but she made no sound. She glanced at me helplessly and sat down. My early inclination to thrash Lancelot was beginning to reassert itself. I took up my hat and moved toward the door.

"Mrs. Amyot is under no obligation to explain anything whatever to me," I said curtly.

"Well! She's under an obligation to me, then—to explain something in your presence." He turned to her again. "Do you know what the people in this hotel are say-

ing? Do you know what he thinks—what they all think? That you're doing this lecturing to support me—to pay for my education! They say you go round telling them so. That's what they buy the tickets for—they do it out of charity. Ask him if it isn't what they say—ask him if they weren't joking about it on the piazza before dinner. The others think I'm a little boy, but he's known you for years, and must have known how old I was. *He* must have known it wasn't to pay for my education!"

He stood before her with his hands clenched, the veins beating in his temples. She had grown very pale, and her cheeks looked hollow. When she spoke her voice had an odd click in it.

"If—if these ladies and gentlemen have been coming to my lectures out of charity, I see nothing to be ashamed of in that——" she faltered.

"If they've been coming out of charity to *me*," he retorted, "don't you see you've been making me a party to a fraud? Isn't there any shame in that?" His forehead reddened. "Mother! Can't you see the shame of letting people think I was a d——beat, who sponged on you for my keep? Let alone making us both the laughing-stock of every place you go to!"

"I never did that, Lancelot!"

"Did what?"

"Made you a laughing-stock——"

He stepped close to her and caught her wrist.

"Will you look me in the face and swear you never told people you were doing this lecturing business to support me?"

There was a long silence. He dropped her wrist and she lifted a limp handkerchief to her frightened eyes. "I did do it—to support you—to educate you"—she sobbed.

"We're not talking about what you did when I was a boy. Everybody who knows me knows I've been a grateful son. Have I ever taken a penny from you since I left college ten years ago?"

"I never said you had! How can you accuse your mother of such wickedness, Lancelot?"

"Have you never told anybody in this hotel—or anywhere else in the last ten years—that you were lecturing to support me? Answer me that!"

"How can you," she wept, "before a stranger?"

"Haven't you said such things about *me* to strangers?" he retorted.

"Lancelot!"

"Well—answer me, then. Say you haven't, mother!" His voice broke unexpectedly and he took her hand with a gentler touch. "I'll believe anything you tell me," he said almost humbly.

She mistook his tone and raised her head with a rash clutch at dignity.

"I think you'd better ask this gentleman to excuse you first."

"No, by God, I won't!" he cried. "This gentleman says he knows all about you and I mean him to know all about me too. I don't mean that he or anybody else under this roof shall go on thinking for another twenty-four hours that a cent of their money has ever gone into my pockets since I was old enough to shift for myself. And he sha'n't leave this room till you've made that clear to him."

He stepped back as he spoke and put his shoulders against the door.

"My dear young gentleman," I said politely, "I shall leave this room exactly when I see fit to do so—and that is now. I have already told you that Mrs. Amyot owes me no explanation of her conduct."

"But I owe you an explanation of mine—you and every one who has bought a single one of her lecture tickets. Do you suppose a man who's been through what I went through while that woman was talking to you in the porch before dinner is going to hold his tongue, and not attempt to justify himself? No decent man is going to sit down under that sort of thing. It's enough to ruin his character. If you're my mother's friend, you owe it to me to hear what I've got to say."

He pulled out his handkerchief and wiped his forehead.

"Good God, mother!" he burst out suddenly, "what did you do it for? Haven't you had everything you wanted ever since I was able to pay for it? Haven't I paid you back every cent you spent on me when I was in college? Have I ever gone back on you since I was big enough to work?" He turned on me with a laugh. "I thought she did it to amuse herself—and because there

was such a demand for her lectures. *Such a demand!* That's what she always told me. When we asked her to come out and spend this winter with us in Minneapolis she wrote back that she couldn't because she had engagements all through the south, and her manager wouldn't let her off. That's the reason why I came all the way on here to see her. We thought she was the most popular lecturer in the United States, my wife and I did! We were awfully proud of it too, I can tell you." He dropped into a chair, still laughing.

"How can you, Lancelot, how can you!" His mother, forgetful of my presence, was clinging to him with tentative caresses. "When you didn't need the money any longer I spent it all on the children—you know I did."

"Yes, on lace christening dresses and life-size rocking-horses with real manes! The kind of thing children can't do without."

"Oh, Lancelot, Lancelot—I loved them so! How can you believe such falsehoods about me?"

"What falsehoods about you?"

"That I ever told anybody such dreadful things?"

He put her back gently, keeping his eyes on hers. "Did you never tell anybody in this house that you were lecturing to support your son?"

Her hands dropped from his shoulders and she flashed round on me in sudden anger.

"I know what I think of people who call themselves friends and who come between a mother and her son!"

"Oh, mother, mother!" he groaned.

I went up to him and laid my hand on his shoulder.

"My dear man," I said, "don't you see the uselessness of prolonging this?"

"Yes, I do," he answered abruptly; and before I could forestall his movement he rose and walked out of the room.

There was a long silence, measured by the lessening reverberations of his footsteps down the wooden floor of the corridor.

When they ceased I approached Mrs. Amyot, who had sunk into her chair. I held out my hand and she took it without a trace of resentment on her ravaged face.

"I sent his wife a seal-skin jacket at Christmas!" she said, with the tears running down her cheeks.

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON (1869-)

Mr. Robinson was born at Head Tide, Maine, on 22 December, 1869. His father was a grain merchant in this village, but, his business interests expanding, he removed with his family, about 1872, to the neighboring town of Gardiner, on the Kennebec River. Here Mr. Robinson passed his boyhood and youth, and this is the Tilbury Town of his poems. In 1891 he entered Harvard College, but was able to remain there only two years; and his father's ill health combined with reverses in business now forced him to make his own way without help. He had already determined upon poetry as his life's work, and from 1893 until 1905 he struggled in various ways to earn his living in New York, while writing and publishing his three earliest volumes of verse. His first volume, *The Torrent and the Night Before* (1896), was privately printed. In 1897 he published *The Children of the Night*, and in 1902 *Captain Craig*. Neither of these volumes attracted much attention from the public, but *Captain Craig* was warmly praised by Theodore Roosevelt, who also in 1905 gave Mr. Robinson a post in the New York Custom House. This position he held until 1910, when he published *The Town down the River*. Since 1910 he has been able to give his time entirely to literary work. In 1914 he published a play, *Van Zorn*, and in the following year a second play, *The Porcupine*. These plays have not aroused the enthusiasm of his critics, and it is generally felt that his dramatic ability—which is unquestioned and great—has found more congenial expression in many of his poems. And to poetry he returned in 1916, with the publication of a very striking and distinguished volume, *The Man against the Sky*. Two individual and significant interpretations of the matter of Arthurian legend followed in 1917 and 1920, *Merlin* and *Lancelot*, and in the latter year was published a collection of shorter pieces, *The Three Taverns*. In 1921 came another collection, *Avon's Harvest*, and in the same year Mr. Robinson's *Collected Poems* were published, for which he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. Two long poems have since appeared, *Roman Bartholomew* (1923) and *The Man Who Died Twice* (1924; awarded the Pulitzer prize), and a collection, *Dionysus in Doubt* (1925). Mr. Robinson has received an honorary doctorate of letters from Yale (1922) and is a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

It has been mentioned that Mr. Robinson's earlier volumes of verse did not attract much attention from the general public. Poetry in America in the last years of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth seemed to be practically a lost cause. Older poets of high reputation had died, and the most prominent of those who succeeded them were content to be followers and imitators. They found, moreover, no inspiration in the actual life or events of their country, but turned to distant lands or to dream-worlds of the fancy for their matter. Repelled by life's realities, they produced verse which was innocuous—and uninteresting. They were soft-spoken, decorative, in a small way melodious; they were, in a word, the last people in the world to convince an industrial nation, enjoying an extraordinary flow of material prosperity, that poetry could contribute anything valuable to its life. The work of William Vaughn Moody, and of a few others who had positive energy, vital interests, and high courage was tentative and at times confused, and did not suffice to change the popular attitude. It was only about 1912—the year in which *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* was founded—that a change began really to take place, a change which has in succeeding years been marked by increasingly widespread popular interest in poetry and by the appearance of a notable body of American verse which has rewarded that interest highly. The "new poets" have been boldly experimental, attempting to evolve new forms of expression and to alter poetic diction, with consequent excursions into the bizarre which have at times excited more curiosity than interest. Bewildered themselves—when not merely in search of the sensational—they have bewildered the public. In their defense it has been urged that, form and content in artistic expression being inseparable, the new poets with new things to say have had to try to discover an appropriately new mode of utterance. This is one of those dangerous half-truths which are the standing protection of eccentricity, and it has served to obscure the important fact that the "new poets" have won for themselves a popular hearing primarily because the best of them have an independent, pertinent, and valuable criticism of life to express, and the courage and feeling to express it frankly and movingly.

This is well illustrated by Mr. Robinson's achievement. For, as has been happily said, the first discovery made by Americans newly interested in poetry during recent years was, that in Mr. Robinson they had been neglecting a poet whose achievement was so high and important as to entitle him to the

first place among recent and contemporary writers of verse. Yet, although his language and poetic form are markedly individual, and although his criticism of life is independent, pertinent, and valuable, still, he has not found it necessary to depart from the traditional forms of English versification, nor is his language violent, slovenly, bizarre, or otherwise twisted from the norm of English speech. On the contrary, his orthodox numbers have a silvery smoothness which can only be the result of the most patient, skilled, and scrupulous workmanship, and the only extraordinary qualities of his language are its simplicity, directness, and precision. It is probable, indeed, that his effort to meet the high standards created by the great tradition of English verse has, by its very difficulty, braced him to greater coherence and strength, and it may also have helped him to see what is local and temporary in terms of what is universal and permanent in human experience. At least, this he has done. Subtle, quiet, profound, uniting the essence of good breeding with the fine fruit of mature reflection, Mr. Robinson has with steady composure, regardless of merely contemporary valuations, built up in his poems a picture of life as a spiritual ordeal too searching for nearly all of us, placed as we are in an alien, chaotic world, attracted as we are, like moths, by the irrelevant, and warped by suffering. But, at the same time, he has also pictured life as good beneath all its evil, if we have the strength and insight to endure the accidents of circumstance with quietness and resignation, while we continue to possess our souls, to possess our faith in and love for justice and goodness and beauty and truth. This is the barest summary statement, but it may be sufficient to indicate the quality of Mr. Robinson's achievement—his mature disenchantment with the world of appearances, ending not in mere petulance and negation and hatred, but in a conviction, against all appearances, of the high value and destiny of human life.

FLAMMONDE ¹

THE man Flammonde, from God knows
where,

With firm address and foreign air,
With news of nations in his talk
And something royal in his walk,
With glint of iron in his eyes,
But never doubt, nor yet surprise,
Appeared, and stayed, and held his head
As one by kings accredited.

Erect, with his alert repose
About him, and about his clothes, 10
He pictured all tradition hears
Of what we owe to fifty years.
His cleansing heritage of taste
Paraded neither want nor waste;
And what he needed for his fee
To live, he borrowed graciously.

He never told us what he was,
Or what mischance, or other cause,
Had banished him from better days
To play the Prince of Castaways. 20

Meanwhile he played surpassing well
A part, for most, unplayable;
In fine, one pauses, half afraid
To say for certain that he played.

For that, one may as well forego
Conviction as to yes or no;
Nor can I say just how intense
Would then have been the difference
To several, who, having striven
In vain to get what he was given, 30
Would see the stranger taken on
By friends not easy to be won.

Moreover, many a malcontent
He soothed and found munificent;
His courtesy beguiled and foiled
Suspicion that his years were soiled;
His mien distinguished any crowd,
His credit strengthened when he bowed;
And women, young and old, were fond
Of looking at the man Flammonde. 40

There was a woman in our town
On whom the fashion was to frown;
But while our talk renewed the tinge
Of a long-faded scarlet fringe,
The man Flammonde saw none of that,
And what he saw we wondered at—
That none of us, in her distress,
Could hide or find our littleness.

¹ This and the following poems are reprinted, in accordance with Mr. Robinson's request, from the revised text of his *Collected Poems* (1921), and they are arranged in the same order as in that volume. To meet a requirement of the publishers, however, the volume in which each poem originally appeared is named in the footnotes.

Flammonde comes from E. A. Robinson's *The Man Against the Sky*, copyrighted in 1916 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

There was a boy that all agreed
 Had shut within him the rare seed 50
 Of learning. We could understand,
 But none of us could lift a hand.
 The man Flammonde appraised the youth,
 And told a few of us the truth;
 And thereby, for a little gold,
 A flowered future was unrolled.

There were two citizens who fought
 For years and years, and over nought;
 They made life awkward for their friends,
 And shortened their own dividends. 60
 The man Flammonde said what was wrong
 Should be made right; nor was it long
 Before they were again in line,
 And had each other in to dine.

And these I mention are but four
 Of many out of many more.
 So much for them. But what of him—
 So firm in every look and limb?
 What small satanic sort of kink 70
 Was in his brain? What broken link
 Withheld him from the destinies
 That came so near to being his?

What was he, when we came to sift
 His meaning, and to note the drift
 Of incommunicable ways
 That make us ponder while we praise?
 Why was it that his charm revealed
 Somehow the surface of a shield?
 What was it that we never caught?
 What was he, and what was he not? 80

How much it was of him we met
 We cannot ever know; nor yet
 Shall all he gave us quite atone
 For what was his, and his alone;
 Nor need we now, since he knew best,
 Nourish an ethical unrest:
 Rarely at once will nature give
 The power to be Flammonde and live.

We cannot know how much we learn
 From those who never will return, 90
 Until a flash of unforeseen
 Remembrance falls on what has been.
 We've each a darkening hill to climb;
 And this is why, from time to time
 In Tilbury Town, we look beyond
 Horizons for the man Flammonde.

CASSANDRA¹

I HEARD one who said: "Verily,
 What word have I for children here?
 Your Dollar is your only Word,
 The wrath of it your only fear.

"You build it altars tall enough
 To make you see, but you are blind;
 You cannot leave it long enough
 To look before you or behind.

"When Reason beckons you to pause,
 You laugh and say that you know best; 10
 But what it is you know, you keep
 As dark as ingots in a chest.

"You laugh and answer, 'We are young;
 O leave us now, and let us grow.'—
 Not asking how much more of this
 Will Time endure or Fate bestow.

"Because a few complacent years
 Have made your peril of your pride,
 Think you that you are to go on 20
 Forever pampered and untried?

"What lost eclipse of history,
 What bivouac of the marching stars,
 Has given the sign for you to see
 Millenniums and last great wars?

"What unrecorded overthrow
 Of all the world has ever known,
 Or ever been, has made itself
 So plain to you, and you alone?

"Your Dollar, Dove and Eagle make
 A Trinity that even you 30
 Rate higher than you rate yourselves;
 It pays, it flatters, and it's new.

"And though your very flesh and blood
 Be what your Eagle eats and drinks,
 You'll praise him for the best of birds,
 Not knowing what the Eagle thinks.

"The power is yours, but not the sight;
 You see not upon what you tread;
 You have the ages for your guide,
 But not the wisdom to be led. 40

¹ From E. A. Robinson's *The Man Against the Sky*, copyrighted in 1916 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

"Think you to tread forever down
The merciless old verities?
And are you never to have eyes
To see the world for what it is?

"Are you to pay for what you have
With all you are?"—No other word
We caught, but with a laughing crowd
Moved on. None heeded, and few heard.

OLD KING COLE ¹

In Tilbury Town did Old King Cole
A wise old age anticipate,
Desiring, with his pipe and bowl,
No Khan's extravagant estate.
No crown annoyed his honest head,
No fiddlers three were called or needed;
For two disastrous heirs instead
Made music more than ever three did.

Bereft of her with whom his life
Was harmony without a flaw,
He took no other for a wife,
Nor sighed for any that he saw;
And if he doubted his two sons,
And heirs, Alexis and Evander,
He might have been as doubtful once
Of Robert Burns and Alexander.

Alexis, in his early youth,
Began to steal—from old and young.
Likewise Evander, and the truth
Was like a bad taste on his tongue.
Born thieves and liars, their affair
Seemed only to be tarred with evil—
The most insufferable pair
Of scamps that ever cheered the devil.

The world went on, their fame went on,
And they went on—from bad to worse;
Till, goaded hot with nothing done,
And each accoutered with a curse,
The friends of Old King Cole, by twos,
And fours, and sevens, and elevens,
Pronounced unalterable views
Of doings that were not of heaven's.

And having learned again whereby
Their baleful zeal had come about,
King Cole met many a wrathful eye
So kindly that its wrath went out—
Or partly out. Say what they would,
He seemed the more to court their candor;
But never told what kind of good
Was in Alexis and Evander.

40

And Old King Cole, with many a puff
That haloed his urbanity,
Would smoke till he had smoked enough,
And listen most attentively.
He beamed as with an inward light
That had the Lord's assurance in it;
And once a man was there all night,
Expecting something every minute.

But whether from too little thought,
Or too much fealty to the bowl,
A dim reward was all he got
For sitting up with Old King Cole.
"Though mine," the father mused aloud,
"Are not the sons I would have chosen,
Shall I, less evilly endowed,
By their infirmity be frozen?"

50

"They'll have a bad end, I'll agree,
But I was never born to groan;
For I can see what I can see,
And I'm accordingly alone.
With open heart and open door,
I love my friends, I like my neighbors;
But if I try to tell you more,
Your doubts will overmatch my labors.

60

"This pipe would never make me calm,
This bowl my grief would never drown.
For grief like mine there is no balm
In Gilead, or in Tilbury Town.
And if I see what I can see,
I know not any way to blind it;
Nor more if any way may be
For you to grope or fly to find it.

70

"There may be room for ruin yet,
And ashes for a wasted love;
Or, like One whom you may forget,
I may have meat you know not of.
And if I'd rather live than weep
Meanwhile, do you find that surprising?
Why, bless my soul, the man's asleep!
That's good. The sun will soon be rising."

80

¹ From E. A. Robinson's *The Man Against the Sky*, copyrighted in 1916 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

BETWEEN me and the sunset, like a dome
Against the glory of a world on fire,
Now burned a sudden hill,
Bleak, round, and high, by flame-lit height
 made higher,
With nothing on it for the flame to kill
Save one who moved and was alone up there
To loom before the chaos and the glare
As if he were the last god going home
Unto his last desire.

Even he, who stood where I had found him,
On high with fire all round him,
Who moved along the molten west,
And over the round hill's crest
That seemed half ready with him to go down,
Flame-bitten and flame-cleft,
As if there were to be no last thing left
Of a nameless unimaginable town,— 30
Even he who climbed and vanished may have
taken

¹ From E. A. Robinson's *The Man Against the Sky*, copyrighted in 1916 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Again, he may have gone down easily,
By comfortable altitudes, and found,
As always, underneath him solid ground
Whereon to be sufficient and to stand 50
Possessed already of the promised land,
Far stretched and fair to see:
A good sight, verily,
And one to make the eyes of her who bore
him

Or with an even likelihood,
He may have met with atrabilious eyes
The fires of time on equal terms and passed
Indifferently down, until at last
His only kind of grandeur would have been,
Apparently, in being seen.
He may have had for evil or for good
No argument; he may have had no care
For what without himself went anywhere
To failure or to glory, and least of all 80
For such a stale, flamboyant miracle;
He may have been the prophet of an art
Immovable to old idolatries;
He may have been a player without a part,
Annoyed that even the sun should have the
skies

For such a flaming way to advertise;
He may have been a painter sick at heart
With Nature's toiling for a new surprise;

¹ From E. A. Robinson's *The Man Against the Sky*, copyrighted in 1916 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

He may have been a cynic, who now, for all
 Of anything divine that his effete 90
 Negation may have tasted,
 Saw truth in his own image, rather small,
 Forbore to fever the ephemeral,
 Found any barren height a good retreat
 From any swarming street,
 And in the sun saw power superbly wasted;
 And when the primitive old-fashioned stars
 Came out again to shine on joys and wars
 More primitive, and all arrayed for doom,
 He may have proved a world a sorry thing
 In his imagining, 101
 And life a lighted highway to the tomb.

Or, mounting with infirm unsearching tread,
 His hopes to chaos led,
 He may have stumbled up there from the
 past,
 And with an aching strangeness viewed the
 last
 Abysmal conflagration of his dreams,—
 A flame where nothing seems
 To burn but flame itself, by nothing fed;
 And while it all went out, 110
 Not even the faint anodyne of doubt
 May then have eased a painful going down
 From pictured heights of power and lost
 renown,
 Revealed at length to his outlived endeavor
 Remote and unapproachable forever;
 And at his heart there may have gnawed
 Sick memories of a dead faith foiled and
 flawed
 And long dishonored by the living death
 Assigned alike by chance
 To brutes and hierophants; 120
 And anguish fallen on those he loved around
 him,
 May once have dealt the last blow to con-
 found him,
 And so have left him as death leaves a child,
 Who sees it all too near;
 And he who knows no young way to forget
 May struggle to the tomb unreconciled.
 Whatever suns may rise or set
 There may be nothing kinder for him here
 Than shafts and agonies;
 And under these 130
 He may cry out and stay on horribly;
 Or, seeing in death too small a thing to fear,
 He may go forward like a stoic Roman
 Where pangs and terrors in his pathway
 lie,—

Or, seizing the swift logic of a woman,
 Curse God and die.

Or maybe there, like many another one
 Who might have stood aloft and looked
 ahead,
 Black-drawn against wild red,
 He may have built, unawed by fiery gules
 That in him no commotion stirred, 141
 A living reason out of molecules
 Why molecules occurred,
 And one for smiling when he might have
 sighed
 Had he seen far enough,
 And in the same inevitable stuff
 Discovered an odd reason too for pride
 In being what he must have been by laws
 Infrangible and for no kind of cause.
 Deterred by no confusion or surprise 150
 He may have seen with his mechanic eyes
 A world without a meaning, and had room,
 Alone amid magnificence and doom,
 To build himself an airy monument
 That should, or fail him in his vague intent,
 Outlast an accidental universe—
 To call it nothing worse—
 Or, by the burrowing guile
 Of Time disintegrated and effaced,
 Like once-remembered mighty trees go
 down 160
 To ruin, of which by man may now be traced
 No part sufficient even to be rotten,
 And in the book of things that are forgotten
 Is entered as a thing not quite worth while.
 He may have been so great
 That satraps would have shivered at his
 frown,
 And all he prized alive may rule a state
 No larger than a grave that holds a clown;
 He may have been a master of his fate,
 And of his atoms,—ready as another 170
 In his emergence to exonerate
 His father and his mother;
 He may have been a captain of a host,
 Self-eloquent and ripe for prodigies,
 Doomed here to swell by dangerous degrees,
 And then give up the ghost.
 Nahum's great grasshoppers were such as
 these,
 Sun-scattered and soon lost.

Whatever the dark road he may have taken,
 This man who stood on high 180
 And faced alone the sky,

Shall we, because Eternity records 270
Too vast an answer for the time-born words
We spell, whereof so many are dead that once
In our capricious lexicons
Were so alive and final, hear no more
The Word itself, the living word
That none alive has ever heard
Or ever spelt,
And few have ever felt
Without the fears and old surrenderings
And terrors that began 280
When Death let fall a feather from his wings
And humbled the first man?

Because the weight of our humility,
 Wherefrom we gain
 A little wisdom and much pain,
 Falls here too sore and there too tedious,
 Are we in anguish or complacency,
 Not looking far enough ahead
 To see by what mad couriers we are led
 Along the roads of the ridiculous, 290
 To pity ourselves and laugh at faith
 And while we curse life bear it?
 And if we see the soul's dead end in death,
 Are we to fear it?
 What folly is here that has not yet a name
 Unless we say outright that we are liars?
 What have we seen beyond our sunset fires
 That lights again the way by which we came?
 Why pay we such a price, and one we give
 So clamoringly, for each racked empty
 day 300
 That leads one more last human hope away,
 As quiet fiends would lead past our crazed
 eyes
 Our children to an unseen sacrifice?
 If after all that we have lived and thought,
 All comes to Nought,—
 If there be nothing after Now,
 And we be nothing anyhow,
 And we know that,—why live?
 'Twere sure but weaklings' vain distress
 To suffer dungeons where so many doors
 Will open on the cold eternal shores 311
 That look sheer down
 To the dark tideless floods of Nothingness
 Where all who know may drown.

RICHARD CORY ¹

WHENEVER Richard Cory went down town,
 We people on the pavement looked at him:
 He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
 Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
 And he was always human when he talked;
 But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
 "Good-morning," and he glittered when he
 walked.

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king—
 And admirably schooled in every grace: 10
 In fine, we thought that he was everything
 To make us wish that we were in his place.

¹ From *The Children of the Night* (1897). Reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
 And went without the meat, and cursed the
 bread;
 And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
 Went home and put a bullet through his
 head.

ISAAC AND ARCHIBALD ²

ISAAC and Archibald were two old men.
 I knew them, and I may have laughed at
 them
 A little; but I must have honored them
 For they were old, and they were good to me.

I do not think of either of them now,
 Without remembering, infallibly,
 A journey that I made one afternoon
 With Isaac to find out what Archibald
 Was doing with his oats. It was high time
 Those oats were cut, said Isaac; and he
 feared 10

That Archibald—well, he could never feel
 Quite sure of Archibald. Accordingly
 The good old man invited me—that is,
 Permitted me—to go along with him;
 And I, with a small boy's adhesiveness
 To competent old age, got up and went.
 I do not know that I cared overmuch
 For Archibald's or anybody's oats,
 But Archibald was quite another thing,
 And Isaac yet another; and the world 20
 Was wide, and there was gladness every-
 where.

We walked together down the River Road
 With all the warmth and wonder of the land
 Around us, and the wayside flash of leaves,—
 And Isaac said the day was glorious;
 But somewhere at the end of the first mile
 I found that I was figuring to find
 How long those ancient legs of his would keep
 The pace that he had set for them. The sun
 Was hot, and I was ready to sweat blood; 30
 But Isaac, for aught I could make of him,
 Was cool to his hat-band. So I said then
 With a dry gasp of affable despair,
 Something about the scorching days we have
 In August without knowing it sometimes;
 But Isaac said the day was like a dream,
 And praised the Lord, and talked about the
 breeze.

² From E. A. Robinson's *Captain Craig*, copyrighted by him in 1902. Copyright owned by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

I made a fair confession of the breeze,
 And crowded casually on his thought
 The nearness of a profitable nook 40
 That I could see. First I was half inclined
 To caution him that he was growing old,
 But something that was not compassion soon
 Made plain the folly of all subterfuge.
 Isaac was old, but not so old as that.

So I proposed, without an overture,
 That we be seated in the shade a while,
 And Isaac made no murmur. Soon the talk
 Was turned on Archibald, and I began
 To feel some premonitions of a kind 50
 That only childhood knows; for the old man
 Had looked at me and clutched me with his
 eye,
 And asked if I had ever noticed things.
 I told him that I could not think of them,
 And I knew then, by the frown that left his
 face

Unsatisfied, that I had injured him.
 "My good young friend," he said, "you cannot feel

What I have seen so long. You have the
 eyes—

Oh, yes—but you have not the other things:
 The sight within that never will deceive,
 You do not know—you have no right to
 know; 61

The twilight warning of experience,
 The singular idea of loneliness,—
 These are not yours. But they have long
 been mine,

And they have shown me now for seven years
 That Archibald is changing. It is not
 So much that he should come to his last hand,
 And leave the game, and go the old way
 down;

But I have known him in and out so long,
 And I have seen so much of good in him
 That other men have shared and have not
 seen, 71

And I have gone so far through thick and
 thin,
 Through cold and fire with him, that now it
 brings

To this old heart of mine an ache that you
 Have not yet lived enough to know about.
 But even unto you, and your boy's faith,
 Your freedom, and your untried confidence,
 A time will come to find out what it means
 To know that you are losing what was yours,
 To know that you are being left behind; 80

And then the long contempt of innocence—
 God bless you, boy!—don't think the worse
 of it

Because an old man chatters in the shade—
 Will all be like a story you have read
 In childhood and remembered for the
 pictures.

And when the best friend of your life goes
 down,

When first you know in him the slackening
 That comes, and coming always tells the
 end,—

Now in a common word that would have
 passed

Uncaught from any other lips than his, 90
 Now in some trivial act of every day,
 Done as he might have done it all along
 But for a twinging little difference
 That nips you like a squirrel's teeth—oh,
 yes,

Then you will understand it well enough.
 But oftener it comes in other ways;
 It comes without your knowing when it
 comes;

You know that he is changing, and you know
 That he is going—just as I know now
 That Archibald is going, and that I 100
 Am staying. . . . Look at me, my boy,
 And when the time shall come for you to see
 That I must follow after him, try then
 To think of me, to bring me back again,
 Just as I was to-day. Think of the place
 Where we are sitting now, and think of me—
 Think of old Isaac as you knew him then,
 When you set out with him in August once
 To see old Archibald."—The words come
 back 109

Almost as Isaac must have uttered them,
 And there comes with them a dry memory
 Of something in my throat that would not
 move.

If you had asked me then to tell just why
 I made so much of Isaac and the things
 He said, I should have gone far for an
 answer;

For I knew it was not sorrow that I felt,
 Whatever I may have wished it, or tried
 then

To make my self believe. My mouth was
 full
 Of words, and they would have been com-
 forting 119

To Isaac, spite of my twelve years, I think;

But there was not in me the willingness
To speak them out. Therefore I watched
the ground;

And I was wondering what made the Lord
Create a thing so nervous as an ant,
When Isaac, with commendable unrest,
Ordained that we should take the road
again—

For it was yet three miles to Archibald's,
And one to the first pump. I felt relieved
All over when the old man told me that;
I felt that he had stilled a fear of mine 130
That those extremities of heat and cold
Which he had long gone through with Archi-
bald

Had made the man impervious to both;
But Isaac had a desert somewhere in him,
And at the pump he thanked God for all
things

That He had put on earth for men to drink,
And he drank well,—so well that I proposed
That we go slowly lest I learn too soon
The bitterness of being left behind, 139
And all those other things. That was a joke
To Isaac, and it pleased him very much;
And that pleased me—for I was twelve
years old.

At the end of an hour's walking after that
The cottage of old Archibald appeared.
Little and white and high on a smooth round
hill

It stood, with hackmatacks and apple-trees
Before it, and a big barn-roof beyond;
And over the place—trees, house, fields
and all—

Hovered an air of still simplicity
And a fragrance of old summers—the old
style 150

That lives the while it passes. I dare say
That I was lightly conscious of all this
When Isaac, of a sudden, stopped himself,
And for the long first quarter of a minute
Gazed with incredulous eyes, forgetful quite
Of breezes and of me and of all else
Under the scorching sun but a smooth-cut
field,

Faint yellow in the distance. I was young,
But there were a few things that I could see,
And this was one of them.—“Well, well!”
said he; 160

And “Archibald will be surprised, I think,”
Said I. But all my childhood subtlety
Was lost on Isaac, for he strode along

Like something out of Homer—powerful
And awful on the wayside, so I thought.
Also I thought how good it was to be
So near the end of my short-legged endeavor
To keep the pace with Isaac for five miles.

Hardly had we turned in from the main road
When Archibald, with one hand on his back
And the other clutching his huge-headed
cane, 171

Came limping down to meet us.—“Well!
well! well!”

Said he; and then he looked at my red face,
All streaked with dust and sweat, and shook
my hand,

And said it must have been a right smart
walk

That we had had that day from Tilbury
Town.—

“Magnificent,” said Isaac; and he told
About the beautiful west wind there was
Which cooled and clarified the atmosphere.
“You must have made it with your legs, I
guess,” 180

Said Archibald; and Isaac humored him
With one of those infrequent smiles of his
Which he kept in reserve, apparently,
For Archibald alone. “But why,” said he,
“Should Providence have cider in the world
If not for such an afternoon as this?”
And Archibald, with a soft light in his eyes,
Replied that if he chose to go down cellar,
There he would find eight barrels—one of
which

Was newly tapped, he said, and to his taste
An honor to the fruit. Isaac approved 191
Most heartily of that, and guided us
Forthwith, as if his venerable feet
Were measuring the turf in his own door-
yard,

Straight to the open rollway. Down we
went,

Out of the fiery sunshine to the gloom,
Grateful and half sepulchral, where we found
The barrels, like eight potent sentinels,
Close ranged along the wall. From one of
them

A bright pine spile stuck out alluringly, 200
And on the black flat stone, just under it,
Glimmered a late-spilled proof that Archibald
Had spoken from unfeigned experience.
There was a fluted antique water-glass
Close by, and in it, prisoned, or at rest,
There was a cricket, of the brown soft sort

That feeds on darkness. Isaac turned him
out,

And touched him with his thumb to make
him jump, 208

And then composedly pulled out the plug
With such a practiced hand that scarce a drop
Did even touch his fingers. Then he drank
And smacked his lips with a slow patronage
And looked along the line of barrels there
With a pride that may have been forgetful-
ness

That they were Archibald's and not his own.
"I never twist a spigot nowadays,"

He said, and raised the glass up to the light,
"But I thank God for orchards." And that
glass 218

Was filled repeatedly for the same hand
Before I thought it worth while to discern
Again that I was young, and that old age,
With all his woes, had some advantages.

"Now, Archibald," said Isaac, when we stood
Outside again, "I have it in my mind
That I shall take a sort of little walk—
To stretch my legs and see what you are
doing.

You stay and rest your back and tell the boy
A story: Tell him all about the time

In Stafford's cabin forty years ago, 229

When four of us were snowed up for ten days
With only one dried haddock. Tell him all
About it, and be wary of your back.

Now I will go along."—I looked up then

At Archibald, and as I looked I saw
Just how his nostrils widened once or twice

And then grew narrow. I can hear to-day

The way the old man chuckled to himself—

Not wholesomely, not wholly to convince

Another of his mirth,—as I can hear

The lonely sigh that followed.—But at
length 240

He said: "The orchard now's the place for us;
We may find something like an apple there,
And we shall have the shade, at any rate."

So there we went and there we laid ourselves
Where the sun could not reach us; and I
champed

A dozen of worm-blighted astrakhans

While Archibald said nothing—merely told

The tale of Stafford's cabin, which was good,

Though "master chilly"—after his own
phrase—

Even for a day like that. But other thoughts
Were moving in his mind, imperative, 251

And writhing to be spoken: I could see
The glimmer of them in a glance or two,
Cautious, or else unconscious, that he gave
Over his shoulder: . . . "Stafford and the
rest—

But that's an old song now, and Archibald
And Isaac are old men. Remember, boy,
That we are old. Whatever we have gained,
Or lost, or thrown away, we are old men.

You look before you and we look behind,
And we are playing life out in the shadow—
But that's not all of it. The sunshine lights
A good road yet before us if we look, 263
And we are doing that when least we know it;
For both of us are children of the sun,
Like you, and like the weed there at your
feet.

The shadow calls us, and it frightens us—
We think; but there's a light behind the stars
And we old fellows who have dared to live,
We see it—and we see the other things,
The other things. . . Yes, I have seen it
come

These eight years, and these ten years, and I
know 272

Now that it cannot be for very long

That Isaac will be Isaac. You have seen—
Young as you are, you must have seen the
strange

Uncomfortable habit of the man?

He'll take my nerves and tie them in a knot
Sometimes, and that's not Isaac. I know
that—

And I know what it is: I get it here

A little, in my knees, and Isaac—here."

The old man shook his head regretfully

And laid his knuckles three times on his
forehead. 282

"That's what it is: Isaac is not quite right.

You see it, but you don't know what it means:

The thousand little differences—no,

You do not know them, and it's well you
don't;

You'll know them soon enough—God bless
you, boy!—

You'll know them, but not all of them—not
all.

So think of them as little as you can:

There's nothing in them for you, or for me—

But I am old and I must think of them; 291

I'm in the shadow, but I don't forget

The light, my boy,—the light behind the
stars.

Remember that: remember that I said it;

Likewise I made Ulysses, after Isaac,
And a little after Flaxman. Archibald 380
Was injured when he found himself left out,
But he had no heroics, and I said so:
I told him that his white beard was too long
And too straight down to be like things in
Homer.

"Quite so," said Isaac.—"Low," said
Archibald;
And he threw down a deuce with a deep grin
That showed his yellow teeth and made me
happy.

So they played on till a bell rang from the
door,

And Archibald said, "Supper."—After that
The old men smoked while I sat watching
them 390

And wondered with all comfort what might
come

To me, and what might never come to me;
And when the time came for the long walk
home

With Isaac in the twilight, I could see
The forest and the sunset and the sky-line,
No matter where it was that I was looking:
The flame beyond the boundary, the music,
The foam and the white ships, and two old
men

Were things that would not leave me.—And
that night 399

There came to me a dream—a shining one,
With two old angels in it. They had wings,
And they were sitting where a silver light
Suffused them, face to face. The wings of one
Began to palpitate as I approached,
But I was yet unseen when a dry voice
Cried thinly, with unpatronizing triumph,
"I've got you, Isaac; high, low, jack, and
the game."

Isaac and Archibald have gone their way
To the silence of the loved and well-forgotten.
I knew them, and I may have laughed at
them; 410

But there's a laughing that has honor in it,
And I have no regret for light words now.
Rather I think sometimes they may have
made
Their sport of me;—but they would not do
that,

They were too old for that. They were old
men,

And I may laugh at them because I knew
them.

THE GROWTH OF "LORRAINE"¹

I

WHILE I stood listening, discreetly dumb,
Lorraine was having the last word with me:
"I know," she said, "I know it, but you see
Some creatures are born fortunate, and some
Are born to be found out and overcome,—
Born to be slaves, to let the rest go free;
And if I'm one of them (and I must be)
You may as well forget me and go home.

"You tell me not to say these things, I know,
But I should never try to be content: 10
I've gone too far; the life would be too slow.
Some could have done it—some girls have
the stuff;
But I can't do it: I don't know enough.
I'm going to the devil."—And she went.

II

I did not half believe her when she said
That I should never hear from her again;
Nor when I found a letter from Lorraine,
Was I surprised or grieved at what I read:
"Dear friend, when you find this, I shall be
dead.

You are too far away to make me stop. 20
They say that one drop—think of it, one
drop!—

Will be enough,—but I'll take five instead.

"You do not frown because I call you friend,
For I would have you glad that I still keep
Your memory, and even at the end—
Impenitent, sick, shattered—cannot curse
The love that flings, for better or for worse,
This worn-out, cast-out flesh of mine to
sleep."

MINIVER CHEEVY²

MINIVER CHEEVY, child of scorn,
Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
He wept that he was ever born,
And he had reasons.

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² From *The Town Down the River* (1910). Reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Miniver loved the days of old
 When swords were bright and steeds were
 prancing;
 The vision of a warrior bold
 Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not, 9
 And dreamed, and rested from his labors;
 He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,
 And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
 That made so many a name so fragrant;
 He mourned Romance, now on the town,
 And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,
 Albeit he had never seen one;
 He would have sinned incessantly
 Could he have been one. 20

Miniver cursed the commonplace
 And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
 He missed the medieval grace
 Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
 But sore annoyed was he without it;
 Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,
 And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late, 29
 Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
 Miniver coughed, and called it fate,
 And kept on drinking.

FIRELIGHT ¹

TEN years together without yet a cloud,
 They seek each other's eyes at intervals
 Of gratefulness to firelight and four walls
 For love's obliteration of the crowd.
 Serenely and perennially endowed
 And bowered as few may be, their joy recalls
 No snake, no sword; and over them there
 falls
 The blessing of what neither says aloud.

Wiser for silence, they were not so glad
 Were she to read the graven tale of lines 10
 On the wan face of one somewhere alone;

¹ From E. A. Robinson's *The Three Taverns*, copyrighted in 1920 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Nor were they more content could he have
 had
 Her thoughts a moment since of one who
 shines
 Apart, and would be hers if he had known.

INFERENTIAL ²

ALTHOUGH I saw before me there the face
 Of one whom I had honored among men
 The least, and on regarding him again
 Would not have had him in another place,
 He fitted with an unfamiliar grace
 The coffin where I could not see him then
 As I had seen him and appraised him when
 I deemed him unessential to the race.

For there was more of him than what I saw.
 And there was on me more than the old
 awe 10
 That is the common genius of the dead.
 I might as well have heard him: "Never
 mind;
 If some of us were not so far behind,
 The rest of us were not so far ahead."

MR. FLOOD'S PARTY ³

OLD Eben Flood, climbing alone one night
 Over the hill between the town below
 And the forsaken upland hermitage
 That held as much as he should ever know
 On earth again of home, paused warily.
 The road was his with not a native near;
 And Eben, having leisure, said aloud,
 For no man else in Tilbury Town to hear:

"Well, Mr. Flood, we have the harvest moon
 Again, and we may not have many more; 10
 The bird is on the wing, the poet says, I
 And you and I have said it here before.
 Drink to the bird." He raised up to the
 light
 The jug that he had gone so far to fill,
 And answered huskily: "Well, Mr. Flood,
 Since you propose it, I believe I will."

² From E. A. Robinson's *The Three Taverns*, copyrighted in 1920 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

³ From E. A. Robinson's *Avon's Harvest*, copyrighted in 1921 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Alone, as if enduring to the end
 A valiant armor of scarred hopes outworn,
 He stood there in the middle of the road
 Like Roland's ghost winding a silent horn. 20
 Below him, in the town among the trees,
 Where friends of other days had honored him,
 A phantom salutation of the dead
 Rang thinly till old Eben's eyes were dim.

Then, as a mother lays her sleeping child
 Down tenderly, fearing it may awake,
 He set the jug down slowly at his feet
 With trembling care, knowing that most
 things break;
 And only when assured that on firm earth
 It stood, as the uncertain lives of men 30
 Assuredly did not, he paced away,
 And with his hand extended paused again:

"Well, Mr. Flood, we have not met like this
 In a long time; and many a change has come
 To both of us, I fear, since last it was
 We had a drop together. Welcome home!"
 Convivially returning with himself,
 Again he raised the jug up to the light;
 And with an acquiescent quaver said:
 "Well, Mr. Flood, if you insist, I might. 40

"Only a very little, Mr. Flood—
 For auld lang syne. No more, sir; that will
 do."

So, for the time, apparently it did,
 And Eben evidently thought so too;
 For soon amid the silver loneliness
 Of night he lifted up his voice and sang,
 Secure, with only two moons listening,
 Until the whole harmonious landscape rang—

"For auld lang syne." The weary throat
 gave out,
 The last word wavered; and the song being
 done, 50
 He raised again the jug regretfully
 And shook his head, and was again alone.
 There was not much that was ahead of him,
 And there was nothing in the town below—
 Where strangers would have shut the many
 doors
 That many friends had opened long ago.

VAIN GRATUITIES¹

NEVER was there a man much uglier
 In eyes of other women, or more grim:
 "The Lord has filled her chalice to the brim,
 So let us pray she's a philosopher,"
 They said; and there was more they said of
 her—
 Deeming it, after twenty years with him,
 No wonder that she kept her figure slim
 And always made you think of lavender.

But she, demure as ever, and as fair,
 Almost, as they remembered her before 10
 She found him, would have laughed had she
 been there;
 And all they said would have been heard no
 more
 Than foam that washes on an island shore
 Where there are none to listen or to care.

¹ From E. A. Robinson's *Avon's Harvest*, copyrighted in 1921 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

JOHN JAY CHAPMAN (1862-)

Mr. Chapman was born and brought up in New York. He entered Harvard College in 1880, and was graduated in 1884. He remained in Cambridge another year to take a master's degree, after which he spent three years in study of the law. He was admitted to the bar in 1888, and practiced law until 1898. Since then he has devoted himself to literary work. His earliest volumes of essays were published in 1898, *Emerson and Other Essays* and *Causes and Consequences*. *Practical Agitation* followed in 1900. Later volumes of essays and notes have been *Learning and Other Essays* (1910), *Memories and Milestones* (1915), *Notes on Religion* (1915), *The Greek Genius and Other Essays* (1915), *A Glance toward Shakespeare* (1922), and *Letters and Religion* (1924). He has also written a notable volume, really a series of essays, concerning *William Lloyd Garrison* (1913; revised and enlarged edition, 1921). In addition, he has published several plays in verse, including *Benedict Arnold, A Play for a Greek Theater* (1911), a rendering in verse of two *Homeric Scenes* (1914), and *Songs and Poems* (1919).

It is as a critic that Mr. Chapman has won for himself a place in American letters. He began as a literary critic, and his essay on Emerson remains probably his most remarkable piece of work. Portions of it are likely to provoke disagreement, but it is full of power and insight, and is itself literature of a high order. All in all, this appears to be our best commentary on Emerson, and it is likely long to keep its place among the best criticism we have produced. Mr. Chapman, however, has not confined his criticism to literature. He has always been rather a critic of life itself, and has concerned himself with problems of education, of politics and government, and of religion, as well as with literature. His work is markedly uneven; he seems to see things by sudden flashes, and is likely at one moment to be central and profound, and the next moment astonishingly casual and superficial. But, where he does see, as was just said, he sees far and deeply, and his writing is powerful, arresting, and honest. William James wrote: "He just looks at things, and tells the truth about them—a strange thing even to *try* to do, and he doesn't always succeed." No, but the effort must always be made; and when it is made honestly, by a man of positive and courageous character and of genuine insight, it deserves the best welcome we can give it. And in Mr. Chapman's case this effort is the more important and significant because his convictions tally with the central tradition of American thought. This appears clearly in his essay on Emerson. It appears with equal clearness in his latest book: "We must remain detached, alone, fluid, or we are lost." "Those who pursue their own loved studies quietly rule the tastes of the next generation. One man collects old Chinese bronzes; another studies the coloration of animals, or the heritable variations of plants; another, Persian vases; and their tastes turn insensibly into departments in colleges and new wings to museums. The direction of the world's education depends on the hobbies of amateurs." "It is personal temperament that gives institutions their value. At best they are makeshifts, and most of the conscious effort of the world is spent in boosting some makeshift. This cannot be avoided; but it can be remembered, and the thought emancipates us." (*Letters and Religion*, 86, 104, 105.)

EMERSON ¹

I

"LEAVE this hypocritical prating about the masses. Masses are rude, lame, unmade, pernicious in their demands and influence, and need not to be flattered, but to be schooled. I wish not to concede anything to them, but to tame, drill, divide, and break them up, and draw individuals out of them. The worst of charity is that the lives you are asked to pre-

serve are not worth preserving. Masses! The calamity is the masses. I do not wish any mass at all, but honest men only, lovely, sweet, accomplished women only, and no shovel-handed, narrow-brained, gin-drinking million stockingers or lazzaroni at all. If government knew how, I should like to see it check, not multiply the population. When it reaches its true law of action, every man that is born will be hailed as essential. Away with this hurrah of masses, and let us have the considerate vote of single men spoken on their honor and their conscience."

¹ Reprinted from *Emerson and Other Essays* (1898) with the permission of Mr. John Jay Chapman.

This extract from *The Conduct of Life* gives fairly enough the leading thought of Emerson's life. The unending warfare between the individual and society shows us in each generation a poet or two, a dramatist or a musician who exalts and deifies the individual, and leads us back again to the only object which is really worthy of enthusiasm or which can permanently excite it,—the character of a man. It is surprising to find this identity of content in all great deliverances. The only thing we really admire is personal liberty. Those who fought for it and those who enjoyed it are our heroes.

But the hero may enslave his race by bringing in a system of tyranny; the battle-cry of freedom may become a dogma which crushes the soul; one good custom may corrupt the world. And so the inspiration of one age becomes the damnation of the next. This crystallizing of life into death has occurred so often that it may almost be regarded as one of the laws of progress.

Emerson represents a protest against the tyranny of democracy. He is the most recent example of elemental hero-worship. His opinions are absolutely unqualified except by his temperament. He expresses a form of belief in the importance of the individual which is independent of any personal relations he has with the world. It is as if a man had been withdrawn from the earth and dedicated to condensing and embodying this eternal idea—the value of the individual soul—so vividly, so vitally, that his words could not die, yet in such illusive and abstract forms that by no chance and by no power could his creed be used for purposes of tyranny. Dogma cannot be extracted from it. Schools cannot be built on it. It either lives as the spirit lives, or else it evaporates and leaves nothing. Emerson was so afraid of the letter that killeth that he would hardly trust his words to print. He was assured there was no such thing as literal truth, but only literal falsehood. He therefore resorted to metaphors which could by no chance be taken literally. And he has probably succeeded in leaving a body of work which cannot be made to operate to any other end than that for which he designed it. If this be true, he has accomplished the inconceivable feat of eluding

misconception. If it be true, he stands alone in the history of teachers; he has circumvented fate, he has left an unmixed blessing behind him.

The signs of those times which brought forth Emerson are not wholly undecipherable. They are the same times which gave rise to every character of significance during the period before the war. Emerson is indeed the easiest to understand of all the men of his time, because his life is freest from the tangles and qualifications of circumstance. He is a sheer and pure type and creature of destiny, and the unconsciousness that marks his development allies him to the deepest phenomena. It is convenient, in describing him, to use language which implies consciousness on his part, but he himself had no purpose, no theory of himself; he was a product.

The years between 1820 and 1830 were the most pitiable through which this country has ever passed. The conscience of the North was pledged to the Missouri Compromise, and that Compromise neither slumbered nor slept. In New England, where the old theocratical oligarchy of the colonies had survived the Revolution and kept under its own water-locks the new flood of trade, the conservatism of politics reinforced the conservatism of religion; and as if these two inquisitions were not enough to stifle the soul of man, the conservatism of business self-interest was superimposed. The history of the conflicts which followed has been written by the radicals, who negligently charge up to self-interest all the resistance which establishments offer to change. But it was not solely self-interest, it was conscience that backed the Missouri Compromise, nowhere else, naturally, so strongly as in New England. It was conscience that made cowards of us all. The white-lipped generation of Edward Everett were victims, one might even say martyrs, to conscience. They suffered the most terrible martyrdom that can fall to man, a martyrdom which injured their immortal volition and dried up the springs of life. If it were not that our poets have too seldom deigned to dip into real life, I do not know what more awful subject for a poem could have been found than that of the New England judge enforcing the Fugitive Slave Law. For lack of such a poem the heroism

of these men has been forgotten, the losing heroism of conservatism. It was this spiritual power of a committed conscience which met the new forces as they arose, and it deserves a better name than these new forces afterward gave it. In 1830 the social fruits of these heavy conditions could be seen in the life of the people. Free speech was lost.

"I know no country," says Tocqueville, who was here in 1831, "in which there is so little independence of mind and freedom of discussion as in America." Tocqueville recurs to the point again and again. He cannot disguise his surprise at it, and it tinged his whole philosophy and his book. The timidity of the Americans of this era was a thing which intelligent foreigners could not understand. Miss Martineau wrote in her *Autobiography*: "It was not till months afterwards that I was told that there were two reasons why I was not invited there [Chelsea] as elsewhere. One reason was that I had avowed, in reply to urgent questions, that I was disappointed in an oration of Mr. Everett's; and another was that I had publicly condemned the institution of slavery. I hope the Boston people have outgrown the childishness of sulking at opinions not in either case volunteered, but obtained by pressure. But really, the subservience to opinion at that time seemed a sort of mania."

The mania was by no means confined to Boston, but qualified this period of our history throughout the Northern States. There was no literature. "If great writers have not at present existed in America, the reason is very simply given in the fact that there can be no literary genius without freedom of opinion, and freedom of opinion does not exist in America," wrote Tocqueville. There were no amusements, neither music nor sport nor pastime, indoors or out of doors. The whole life of the community was a life of the intelligence, and upon the intelligence lay the weight of intellectual tyranny. The pressure kept on increasing, and the suppressed forces kept on increasing, till at last, as if to show what gigantic power was needed to keep conservatism dominant, the Merchant Province put forward Daniel Webster.

The worst period of panic seems to have preceded the anti-slavery agitations of 1831, because these agitations soon demonstrated

that the sky did not fall nor the earth yawn and swallow Massachusetts because of Mr. Garrison's opinions, as most people had sincerely believed would be the case. Some semblance of free speech was therefore gradually regained.

Let us remember the world upon which the young Emerson's eyes opened. The South was a plantation. The North crooked the hinges of the knee where thrift might follow fawning. It was the era of Martin Chuzzlewit, a malicious caricature,—founded on fact. This time of humiliation, when there was no free speech, no literature, little manliness, no reality, no simplicity, no accomplishment, was the era of American brag. We flattered the foreigner and we boasted of ourselves. We were over-sensitive, insolent, and cringing. As late as 1845, G. P. Putnam, a most sensible and modest man, published a book to show what the country had done in the field of culture. The book is a monument of the age. With all its good sense and good humor, it justifies foreign contempt because it is explanatory. Underneath everything lay a feeling of unrest, an instinct,—"this country cannot permanently endure half slave and half free,"—which was the truth, but which could not be uttered.

So long as there is any subject which men may not freely discuss, they are timid upon all subjects. They wear an iron crown and talk in whispers. Such social conditions crush and maim the individual, and throughout New England, as throughout the whole North, the individual was crushed and maimed.

The generous youths who came to manhood between 1820 and 1830, while this deadly era was maturing, seem to have undergone a revulsion against the world almost before touching it; at least two of them suffered, revolted, and condemned, while still boys sitting on benches in school, and came forth advancing upon this old society like gladiators. The activity of William Lloyd Garrison, the man of action, preceded by several years that of Emerson, who is his prophet. Both of them were parts of one revolution. One of Emerson's articles of faith was that a man's thoughts spring from his actions rather than his actions from his thoughts, and possibly the same thing holds good for society at large. Perhaps all truths,

whether moral or economic, must be worked out in real life before they are discovered by the student, and it was therefore necessary that Garrison should be evolved earlier than Emerson.

The silent years of early manhood, during which Emerson passed through the Divinity School and to his ministry, known by few, understood by none, least of all by himself, were years in which the revolting spirit of an archangel thought out his creed. He came forth perfect, with that serenity of which we have scarce another example in history,—that union of the man himself, his beliefs, and his vehicle of expression that makes men great because it makes them comprehensible. The philosophy into which he had already transmuted all his earlier theology at the time we first meet him consisted of a very simple drawing together of a few ideas, all of which had long been familiar to the world. It is the wonderful use he made of these ideas, the closeness with which they fitted his soul, the tact with which he took what he needed, like a bird building its nest, that make the originality, the man.

The conclusion of Berkeley, that the external world is known to us only through our impressions, and that therefore, for aught we know, the whole universe exists only in our own consciousness, cannot be disproved. It is so simple a conception that a child may understand it; and it has probably been passed before the attention of every thinking man since Plato's time. The notion is in itself a mere philosophical catch or crux to which there is no answer. It may be true. The mystics made this doctrine useful. They were not content to doubt the independent existence of the external world. They imagined that this external world, the earth, the planets, the phenomena of nature, bore some relation to the emotions and destiny of the soul. The soul and the cosmos were somehow related, and related so intimately that the cosmos might be regarded as a sort of projection or diagram of the soul.

Plato was the first man who perceived that this idea could be made to provide the philosopher with a vehicle of expression more powerful than any other. If a man will once plant himself firmly on the proposition that *he is* the universe, that every emotion or expression of his mind is correlated in some

way to phenomena in the external world, and that he shall say how correlated, he is in a position where the power of speech is at a maximum. His figures of speech, his tropes, his witticisms, take rank with the law of gravity and the precession of the equinoxes. Philosophical exaltation of the individual cannot go beyond this point. It is the climax.

This is the school of thought to which Emerson belonged. The sun and moon, the planets, are mere symbols. They signify whatever the poet chooses. The planets for the most part stay in conjunction just long enough to flash his thought through their symbolism, and no permanent relation is established between the soul and the zodiac. There is, however, one link of correlation between the external and internal worlds which Emerson considered established, and in which he believed almost literally, namely, the moral law. This idea he drew from Kant through Coleridge and Wordsworth, and it is so familiar to us all that it hardly needs stating. The fancy that the good, the true, the beautiful,—all things of which we instinctively approve,—are somehow connected together and are really one thing; that our appreciation of them is in its essence the recognition of a law; that this law, in fact all law and the very idea of law, is a mere subjective experience; and that hence any external sequence which we coördinate and name, like the law of gravity, is really intimately connected with our moral nature,—this fancy has probably some basis of truth. Emerson adopted it as a corner-stone of his thought.

Such are the ideas at the basis of Emerson's philosophy, and it is fair to speak of them in this place because they antedate everything else which we know of him. They had been for years in his mind before he spoke at all. It was in the armor of this invulnerable idealism and with weapons like shafts of light that he came forth to fight.

In 1836, at the age of thirty-three, Emerson published the little pamphlet called *Nature*, which was an attempt to state his creed. Although still young, he was not without experience of life. He had been assistant minister to the Rev. Dr. Ware from 1829 to 1832, when he resigned his ministry on account of his views regarding the Lord's

Supper. He had married and lost his first wife in the same interval. He had been abroad and had visited Carlyle in 1833. He had returned and settled in Concord, and had taken up the profession of lecturing, upon which he in part supported himself ever after. It is unnecessary to review these early lectures. "Large portions of them," says Mr. Cabot, his biographer, "appeared afterwards in the *Essays*, especially those of the first series." Suffice it that through them Emerson had become so well known that although *Nature* was published anonymously, he was recognized as the author. Many people had heard of him at the time he resigned his charge, and the story went abroad that the young minister of the Second Church had gone mad. The lectures had not discredited the story, and *Nature* seemed to corroborate it. Such was the impression which the book made upon Boston in 1836. As we read it to-day, we are struck by its extraordinary beauty of language. It is a supersensuous, lyrical, and sincere rhapsody, written evidently by a man of genius. It reveals a nature compelling respect,—a Shelley, and yet a sort of Yankee Shelley, who is mad only when the wind is nor'-nor'-west; a mature nature which must have been nourished for years upon its own thoughts, to speak this new language so eloquently, to stand so calmly on its feet. The deliverance of his thought is so perfect that this work adapts itself to our mood and has the quality of poetry. This fluency Emerson soon lost; it is the quality missing in his poetry. It is the efflorescence of youth.

"In good health, the air is a cordial of incredible virtue. Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. I am glad to the brink of fear. In the woods, too, a man casts off his years, as the snake his slough, and at what period soever of life is always a child. In the woods is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God, a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. . . . It is the uniform effect of culture on the human mind, not to shake our faith in the stability of particular phenomena, as heat,

water, azote; but to lead us to regard nature as phenomenon, not a substance; to attribute necessary existence to spirit; to esteem nature as an accident and an effect."

Perhaps these quotations from the pamphlet called *Nature* are enough to show the clouds of speculation in which Emerson had been walking. With what lightning they were charged was soon seen.

In 1837 he was asked to deliver the Phi Beta Kappa oration at Cambridge. This was the opportunity for which he had been waiting. The mystic and eccentric young poet-preacher now speaks his mind, and he turns out to be a man exclusively interested in real life. This recluse, too tender for contact with the rough facts of the world, whose conscience has retired him to rural Concord, pours out a vial of wrath. This cub puts forth the paw of a full-grown lion.

Emerson has left behind him nothing stronger than this address, *The American Scholar*. It was the first application of his views to the events of his day, written and delivered in the heat of early manhood while his extraordinary powers were at their height. It moves with a logical progression of which he soon lost the habit. The subject of it, the scholar's relation to the world, was the passion of his life. The body of his belief is to be found in this address, and in any adequate account of him the whole address ought to be given.

"Thus far," he said, "our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such it is precious as the sign of an indestructible instinct. Perhaps the time is already come when it ought to be, and will be, something else; when the sluggard intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. . . . The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him life; it went out from him truth. . . . Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation, the act of thought, is transferred to the record. The poet chanting was felt to be a divine man:

henceforth the chant is divine, also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforward it is settled the book is perfect; as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. . . . Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. . . . The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although in almost all men obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth and utters truth, or creates. In this action it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. . . . Genius is always sufficiently the enemy of genius by over-influence. The literature of every nation bears me witness. The English dramatic poets have Shakespearized now for two hundred years. . . . These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself, and to defer never to the popular cry. He, and he only, knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if all depended on this particular up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit his belief that a popgun is a popgun, though the ancient and honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom."

Dr. Holmes called this speech of Emerson's our "intellectual Declaration of Independence," and indeed it was. "The Phi Beta Kappa speech," says Mr. Lowell, "was an event without any former parallel in our literary annals,—a scene always to be treasured in the memory for its picturesqueness and its inspiration. What crowded and breathless aisles, what windows clustering with eager heads, what enthusiasm of approval, what grim silence of foregone dissent!"

The authorities of the Divinity School can hardly have been very careful readers of

Nature and *The American Scholar*, or they would not have invited Emerson, in 1838, to deliver the address to the graduating class. This was Emerson's second opportunity to apply his beliefs directly to society. A few lines out of the famous address are enough to show that he saw in the church of his day signs of the same decadence that he saw in the letters: "The prayers and even the dogmas of our church are like the zodiac of Denderah and the astronomical monuments of the Hindoos, wholly insulated from anything now extant in the life and business of the people. They mark the height to which the waters once rose. . . . It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was; that he speaketh, not spake. The true Christianity—a faith like Christ's in the infinitude of man—is lost. None believeth in the soul of man, but only in some man or person old and departed. Ah me! no man goeth alone. All men go in flocks to this saint or that poet, avoiding the God who seeth in secret. They cannot see in secret; they love to be blind in public. They think society wiser than their soul, and know not that one soul, and their soul, is wiser than the whole world."

It is almost misleading to speak of the lofty utterances of these early addresses as attacks upon society, but their reception explains them. The element of absolute courage is the same in all natures. Emerson himself was not unconscious of what function he was performing.

The "storm in our wash-bowl" which followed this Divinity School address, the letters of remonstrance from friends, the advertisements by the Divinity School of "no complicity," must have been cheering to Emerson. His unseen yet dominating ambition is shown throughout the address, and in this note in his diary of the following year:

"August 31. Yesterday at the Phi Beta Kappa anniversary. Steady, steady. I am convinced that if a man will be a true scholar he shall have perfect freedom. The young people and the mature hint at odium and the aversion of forces to be presently encountered in society. I say No; I fear it not."

The lectures and addresses which form the latter half of the first volume in the collected

edition show the early Emerson in the ripeness of his powers. These writings have a lyrical sweep and a beauty which the later works often lack. Passages in them remind us of Hamlet:

"How silent, how spacious, what room for all, yet without space to insert an atom;—in graceful succession, in equal fullness, in balanced beauty, the dance of the hours goes forward still. Like an odor of incense, like a strain of music, like a sleep, it is inexact and boundless. It will not be dissected, nor unraveled, nor shown. . . . The great Pan of old, who was clothed in a leopard skin to signify the beautiful variety of things and the firmament, his coat of stars,—was but the representative of thee, O rich and various man! thou palace of sight and sound, carrying in thy senses the morning and the night and the unfathomable galaxy; in thy brain, the geometry of the City of God; in thy heart, the bower of love and the realms of right and wrong. . . . Every star in heaven is discontent and insatiable. Gravitation and chemistry cannot content them. Ever they woo and court the eye of the beholder. Every man who comes into the world they seek to fascinate and possess, to pass into his mind, for they desire to republish themselves in a more delicate world than that they occupy. . . . So it is with all immaterial objects. These beautiful basilisks set their brute glorious eyes on the eye of every child, and, if they can, cause their nature to pass through his wondering eyes into him, and so all things are mixed."

Emerson is never far from his main thought:

["The universe does not attract us till it is housed in an individual." "A man, a personal ascendancy, is the only great phenomenon."

"I cannot find language of sufficient energy to convey my sense of the sacredness of private integrity."

On the other hand, he is never far from his great fear: "But Truth is such a fly-away, such a sly-boots, so untransportable and unbarrelable a commodity, that it is as bad to catch as light." "Let him beware of proposing to himself any end. . . . I say to you plainly, there is no end so sacred or so large that if pursued for itself will not become carion and an offense to the nostril."

There can be nothing finer than Emerson's knowledge of the world, his sympathy with young men and with the practical difficulties of applying his teachings. We can see in his early lectures before students and mechanics how much he had learned about the structure of society from his own short contact with the organized church.

"Each finds a tender and very intelligent conscience a disqualification for success. Each requires of the practitioner a certain shutting of the eyes, a certain dapperiness and compliance, an acceptance of customs, a sequestration from the sentiments of generosity and love, a compromise of private opinion and lofty integrity. . . . The fact that a new thought and hope have dawned in your breast, should apprise you that in the same hour a new light broke in upon a thousand private hearts. . . . And further I will not dissemble my hope that each person whom I address has felt his own call to cast aside all evil customs, timidity, and limitations, and to be in his place a free and helpful man, a reformer, a benefactor, not content to slip along through the world like a footman or a spy, escaping by his nimbleness and apologies as many knocks as he can, but a brave and upright man who must find or cut a straight road to everything excellent in the earth, and not only go honorably himself, but make it easier for all who follow him to go in honor and with benefit. . . ."

Beneath all lay a greater matter,—Emerson's grasp of the forms and conditions of progress, his reach of intellect, which could afford fair play to every one.

His lecture on *The Conservative* is not a puzzling *jeu d'esprit*, like *Bishop Blougram's Apology*, but an honest attempt to set up the opposing chessmen of conservatism and reform so as to represent real life. Hardly can such a brilliant statement of the case be found elsewhere in literature. It is not necessary to quote here the reformer's side of the question, for Emerson's whole life was devoted to it. The conservatives' attitude he gives with such accuracy and such justice that the very bankers of State Street seem to be speaking:

"The order of things is as good as the character of the population permits. Consider it as the work of a great and beneficent and progressive necessity, which, from the

first pulsation in the first animal life up to the present high culture of the best nations, has advanced thus far. . . .

"The conservative party in the universe concedes that the radical would talk sufficiently to the purpose if we were still in the garden of Eden; he legislates for man as he ought to be; his theory is right, but he makes no allowance for friction, and this omission makes his whole doctrine false. The idealist retorts that the conservative falls into a far more noxious error in the other extreme. The conservative assumes sickness as a necessity, and his social frame is a hospital, his total legislation is for the present distress, a universe in slippers and flannels, with bib and pap-spoon, swallowing pills and herb tea. Sickness gets organized as well as health, the vice as well as the virtue."

It is unnecessary to go, one by one, through the familiar essays and lectures which Emerson published between 1838 and 1875. They are in everybody's hands and in everybody's thoughts. In 1840 he wrote in his diary: "In all my lectures I have taught one doctrine, namely, the infinitude of the private man. This the people accept readily enough, and even with commendation, as long as I call the lecture Art or Politics, or Literature or the Household; but the moment I call it Religion they are shocked, though it be only the application of the same truth which they receive elsewhere to a new class of facts." To the platform he returned, and left it only once or twice during the remainder of his life.

His writings vary in coherence. In his early occasional pieces, like the Phi Beta Kappa address, coherence is at a maximum. They were written for a purpose, and were perhaps struck off all at once. But he earned his living by lecturing, and a lecturer is always recasting his work and using it in different forms. A lecturer has no prejudice against repetition. It is noticeable that in some of Emerson's important lectures the logical scheme is more perfect than in his essays. The truth seems to be that in the process of working up and perfecting his writings, in revising and filing his sentences, the logical scheme became more and more obliterated. Another circumstance helped make his style fragmentary. He was by nature a man of inspirations and exalted

moods. He was subject to ecstasies, during which his mind worked with phenomenal brilliancy. Throughout his works and in his diary we find constant reference to these moods, and to his own inability to control or recover them. "But what we want is consecutiveness. 'Tis with us a flash of light, then a long darkness, then a flash again. Ah! could we turn these fugitive sparkles into an astronomy of Copernican worlds!"

In order to take advantage of these periods of divination, he used to write down the thoughts that came to him at such times. From boyhood onward he kept journals and commonplace books, and in the course of his reading and meditation he collected innumerable notes and quotations which he indexed for ready use. In these mines he "quarried," as Mr. Cabot says, for his lectures and essays. When he needed a lecture he went to the repository, threw together what seemed to have a bearing on some subject, and gave it a title. If any other man should adopt this method of composition, the result would be incomprehensible chaos; because most men have many interests, many moods, many and conflicting ideas. But with Emerson it was otherwise. There was only one thought which could set him aflame, and that was the thought of the unfathomed might of man. This thought was his religion, his politics, his ethics, his philosophy. One moment of inspiration was in him own brother to the next moment of inspiration, although they might be separated by six weeks. When he came to put together his star-born ideas, they fitted well, no matter in what order he placed them, because they were all part of the same idea.

His works are all one single attack on the vice of the age, moral cowardice. He assails it not by railings and scorn, but by positive and stimulating suggestion. The imagination of the reader is touched by every device which can awake the admiration for heroism, the consciousness of moral courage. Wit, quotation, anecdote, eloquence, exhortation, rhetoric, sarcasm, and very rarely denunciation, are launched at the reader, till he feels little lambent flames beginning to kindle in him. He is perhaps unable to see the exact logical connection between two paragraphs of an essay, yet he feels they are germane. He takes up Emerson tired and apathetic,

but presently he feels himself growing heady and truculent, strengthened in his most inward vitality, surprised to find himself again master in his own house.

The difference between Emerson and the other moralists is that all these stimulating pictures and suggestions are not given by him in illustration of a general proposition. They have never been through the mill of generalization in his own mind. He himself could not have told you their logical bearing on one another. They have all the vividness of disconnected fragments of life, and yet they all throw light on one another, like the facets of a jewel. But whatever cause it was that led him to adopt his method of writing, it is certain that he succeeded in delivering himself of his thought with an initial velocity and carrying power such as few men ever attained. He has the force at his command of the thrower of the discus.

His style is American, and beats with the pulse of the climate. He is the only writer we have had who writes as he speaks, who makes no literary parade, has no pretensions of any sort. He is the only writer we have had who has wholly subdued his vehicle to his temperament. It is impossible to name his style without naming his character: they are one thing.

Both in language and in elocution Emerson was a practiced and consummate artist, who knew how both to command his effects and to conceal his means. The casual, practical, disarming directness with which he writes puts any honest man at his mercy. What difference does it make whether a man who can talk like this is following an argument or not? You cannot always see Emerson clearly; he is hidden by a high wall; but you always know exactly on what spot he is standing. You judge it by the flight of the objects he throws over the wall,—a bootjack, an apple, a crown, a razor, a volume of verse. With one or other of these missiles, all delivered with a very tolerable aim, he is pretty sure to hit you. These catchwords stick in the mind. People are not in general influenced by long books or discourses, but by odd fragments of observation which they overhear, sentences or head-lines which they read while turning over a book at random or while waiting for dinner to be announced. These are the oracles and orphic words that

get lodged in the mind and bend a man's most stubborn will. Emerson called them the Police of the Universe. His works are a treasury of such things. They sparkle in the mine, or you may carry them off in your pocket. They get driven into your mind like nails, and on them catch and hang your own experiences, till what was once his thought has become your character.

"God offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please; you can never have both." "Discontent is want of self-reliance; it is infirmity of will." "It is impossible for a man to be cheated by any one but himself."

The orchestration with which Emerson introduces and sustains these notes from the spheres is as remarkable as the winged things themselves. Open his works at a hazard. You hear a man talking.

"A garden is like those pernicious machineries we read of every month in the newspapers, which catch a man's coat-skirt or his hand, and draw in his arm, his leg, and his whole body to irresistible destruction. In an evil hour he pulled down his wall and added a field to his homestead. No land is bad, but land is worse. If a man own land, the land owns him. Now let him leave home if he dare. Every tree and graft, every hill of melons, row of corn, or quickset hedge, all he has done and all he means to do, stand in his way like duns, when he would go out of his gate."

Your attention is arrested by the reality of this gentleman in his garden, by the first-hand quality of his mind. It matters not on what subject he talks. While you are musing, still pleased and patronizing, he has picked up the bow of Ulysses, bent it with the ease of Ulysses, and sent a shaft clear through the twelve axes, nor missed one of them. But this, it seems, was mere byplay and marksmanship; for before you have done wondering, Ulysses rises to his feet in anger, and pours flight after flight, arrow after arrow, from the great bow. The shafts sing and strike, the suitors fall in heaps. The brow of Ulysses shines with unearthly splendor. The air is filled with lightning. After a little, without shock or transition, without apparent change of tone, Mr. Emerson is offering you a biscuit before you leave, and bidding you mind the last step at the garden

end. If the man who can do these things be not an artist, then must we have a new vocabulary and rename the professions.

There is, in all this effectiveness of Emerson, no pose, no literary art; nothing that corresponds even remotely to the pretended modesty and ignorance with which Socrates lays pitfalls for our admiration in Plato's dialogues.

It was the platform which determined Emerson's style. He was not a writer, but a speaker. On the platform his manner of speech was a living part of his words. The pauses and hesitation, the abstraction, the searching, the balancing, the turning forward and back of the leaves of his lecture, and then the discovery, the illumination, the gleam of lightning which you saw before your eyes descend into a man of genius,—all this was Emerson. He invented this style of speaking, and made it express the supersensuous, the incommunicable. Lowell wrote, while still under the spell of the magician: "Emerson's oration was more disjointed than usual, even with him. It began nowhere, and ended everywhere, and yet, as always with that divine man, it left you feeling that something beautiful had passed that way, something more beautiful than anything else, like the rising and setting of stars. Every possible criticism might have been made on it but one,—that it was not noble. There was a tone in it that awakened all elevating associations. He boggled, he lost his place, he had to put on his glasses; but it was as if a creature from some fairer world had lost his way in our fogs, and it was *our* fault, not his. It was chaotic, but it was all such stuff as stars are made of, and you couldn't help feeling that, if you waited awhile, all that was nebulous would be whirled into planets, and would assume the mathematical gravity of system. All through it I felt something in me that cried, 'Ha! ha!' to the sound of the trumpets."

It is nothing for any man sitting in his chair to be overcome with the sense of the immediacy of life, to feel the spur of courage, the victory of good over evil, the value, now and forever, of all great-hearted endeavor. Such moments come to us all. But for a man to sit in his chair and write what shall call up these forces in the bosoms of others—that is desert, that is greatness. To do this was the

gift of Emerson. The whole earth is enriched by every moment of converse with him. The shows and shams of life become transparent, the lost kingdoms are brought back, the shutters of the spirit are opened, and provinces and realms of our own existence lie gleaming before us.

It has been necessary to reduce the living soul of Emerson to mere dead attributes like "moral courage" in order that we might talk about him at all. His effectiveness comes from his character; not from his philosophy, nor from his rhetoric nor his wit, nor from any of the accidents of his education. He might never have heard of Berkeley or Plato. A slightly different education might have led him to throw his teaching into the form of historical essays or of stump speeches. He might, perhaps, have been bred a stonemason, and have done his work in the world by traveling with a panorama. But he would always have been Emerson. His weight and his power would always have been the same. It is solely as character that he is important. He discovered nothing; he bears no relation whatever to the history of philosophy. We must regard him and deal with him simply as a man.

Strangely enough, the world has always insisted upon accepting him as a thinker: and hence a great coil of misunderstanding. As a thinker, Emerson is difficult to classify. Before you begin to assign him a place, you must clear the ground by a disquisition as to what is meant by "a thinker," and how Emerson differs from other thinkers. As a man, Emerson is as plain as Ben Franklin.

People have accused him of inconsistency; they say that he teaches one thing one day, and another the next day. But from the point of view of Emerson there is no such thing as inconsistency. Every man is each day a new man. Let him be to-day what he is to-day. It is immaterial and waste of time to consider what he once was or what he may be.

His picturesque speech delights in fact and anecdote and a public which is used to treatises and deduction cares always to be told the moral. It wants everything reduced to a generalization. All generalizations are partial truths, but we are used to them, and we ourselves mentally make the proper allowance. Emerson's method is, not to give a

generalization and trust to our making the allowance, but to give two conflicting statements and leave the balance of truth to be struck in our own minds on the facts. There is no inconsistency in this. It is a vivid and very legitimate method of procedure. But he is much more than a theorist: he is a practitioner. He does not merely state a theory of agitation: he proceeds to agitate. "Do not," he says, "set the least value on what I do, or the least discredit on what I do not, as if I pretended to settle anything as false or true. I unsettle all things. No facts are to me sacred, none are profane. I simply experiment, an endless seeker with no past at my back." He was not engaged in teaching many things, but one thing,—Courage. Sometimes he inspires it by pointing to great characters,—Fox, Milton, Alcibiades; sometimes he inspires it by bidding us beware of imitating such men, and, in the ardor of his rhetoric, even seems to regard them as hindrances and dangers to our development. There is no inconsistency here. Emerson might logically have gone one step further and raised inconsistency into a jewel. For what is so useful, so educational, so inspiring, to a timid and conservative man, as to do something inconsistent and regrettable? It lends character to him at once. He breathes freer and is stronger for the experience.

Emerson is no cosmopolitan. He is a patriot. He is not like Goethe, whose sympathies did not run on national lines. Emerson has America in his mind's eye all the time. There is to be a new religion, and it is to come from America; a new and better type of man, and he is to be an American. He not only cared little or nothing for Europe, but he cared not much for the world at large. His thought was for the future of this country. You cannot get into any chamber in his mind which is below this chamber of patriotism. He loves the valor of Alexander and the grace of the Oxford athlete; but he loves them not for themselves. He has a use for them. They are grist to his mill and powder to his gun. His admiration of them he subordinates to his main purpose,—they are his blackboard and diagrams. His patriotism is the backbone of his significance. He came to his countrymen at a time when they lacked, not thoughts, but manliness.

The needs of his own particular public are always before him.

"It is odd that our people should have, not water on the brain, but a little gas there. A shrewd foreigner said of the Americans that 'whatever they say has a little the air of a speech.'"

"I shall not need to go into an enumeration of our national defects and vices which require this Order of Censors in the State. . . . The timidity of our public opinion is our disease, or, shall I say, the publicness of opinion, the absence of private opinion."

"Our measure of success is the moderation and low level of an individual's judgment. Dr. Channing's piety and wisdom had such weight in Boston that the popular idea of religion was whatever this eminent divine held."

"Let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity, the squalid contentment of the times."

The politicians he scores constantly.

"Who that sees the meanness of our politics, but congratulates Washington that he is long already wrapped in his shroud and forever safe." The following is his description of the social world of his day: "If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society*, he will see the need of these ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we are become timorous, desponding whimperers."

It is the same wherever we open his books. He must spur on, feed up, bring forward the dormant character of his countrymen. When he goes to England, he sees in English life nothing except those elements which are deficient in American life. If you wish a catalogue of what America has not, read *English Traits*. Emerson's patriotism had the effect of expanding his philosophy. To-day we know the value of physique, for science has taught it, but it was hardly discovered in his day, and his philosophy affords no basis for it. Emerson in this matter transcends his philosophy. When in England, he was fairly made drunk with the physical life he found there. He is like Casper Hauser gazing for the first time on green fields. *English Traits* is the ruddiest book he ever wrote. It is a hymn to force, honesty, and physical well-being, and ends with the dominant note of his belief: "By this general activity and

by this sacredness of individuals, they [the English] have in seven hundred years evolved the principles of freedom. It is the land of patriots, martyrs, sages, and bards, and if the ocean out of which it emerged should wash it away, it will be remembered as an island famous for immortal laws, for the announcements of original right which make the stone tables of liberty." He had found in England free speech, personal courage, and reverence for the individual.

No convulsion could shake Emerson or make his view unsteady even for an instant. What no one else saw, he saw, and he saw nothing else. Not a boy in the land welcomed the outbreak of the war so fiercely as did this shy village philosopher, then at the age of fifty-eight. He saw that war was the cure for cowardice, moral as well as physical. It was not the cause of the slave that moved him; it was not the cause of the Union for which he cared a farthing. It was something deeper than either of these things for which he had been battling all his life. It was the cause of character against convention. Whatever else the war might bring, it was sure to bring in character, to leave behind it a file of heroes; if not heroes, then villains, but in any case strong men. On the 9th of April, 1861, three days before Fort Sumter was bombarded, he had spoken with equanimity of "the downfall of our character-destroying civilization. . . . We find that civilization crowed too soon, that our triumphs were treacheries; we had opened the wrong door and let the enemy into the castle."

"Ah," he said, when the firing began, "sometimes gunpowder smells good." Soon after the attack on Sumter he said in a public address, "We have been very homeless for some years past, say since 1850; but now we have a country again. . . . The war was an eye-opener, and showed men of all parties and opinions the value of those primary forces that lie beneath all political action." And it was almost a personal pledge when he said at the Harvard Commemoration in 1865, "We shall not again disparage America, now that we have seen what men it will bear."

The place which Emerson forever occupies as a great critic is defined by the same sharp outlines that mark his work, in whatever

light and from whatever side we approach it. A critic in the modern sense he was not, for his point of view is fixed, and he reviews the world like a search-light placed on the top of a tall tower. He lived too early and at too great a distance from the forum of European thought to absorb the ideas of evolution and give place to them in his philosophy. Evolution does not graft well upon the Platonic Idealism, nor are physiology and the kindred sciences sympathetic. Nothing aroused Emerson's indignation more than the attempts of the medical faculty and of phrenologists to classify, and therefore limit individuals. "The grossest ignorance does not disgust me like this ignorant knowingness."

We miss in Emerson the underlying conception of growth, of development, so characteristic of the thought of our own day, and which, for instance, is found everywhere latent in Browning's poetry. Browning regards character as the result of experience and as an ever-changing growth. To Emerson, character is rather an entity complete and eternal from the beginning. He is probably the last great writer to look at life from a stationary standpoint. There is a certain lack of the historic sense in all he has written. The ethical assumption that all men are exactly alike permeates his work. In his mind, Socrates, Marco Polo, and General Jackson stand surrounded by the same atmosphere, or rather stand as mere naked characters surrounded by no atmosphere at all. He is probably the last great writer who will fling about classic anecdotes as if they were club gossip. In the discussion of morals, this assumption does little harm. The stories and proverbs which illustrate the thought of the moralist generally concern only those simple relations of life which are common to all ages. There is charm in this familiar dealing with antiquity. The classics are thus domesticated and made real to us. What matter if *Æsop* appear a little too much like an American citizen, so long as his points tell?

It is in Emerson's treatment of the fine arts that we begin to notice his want of historic sense. Art endeavors to express subtle and ever-changing feelings by means of conventions which are as protean as the forms of a cloud; and the man who in speaking on the plastic arts makes the assumption that

all men are alike will reveal before he has uttered three sentences that he does not know what art is, that he has never experienced any form of sensation from it. Emerson lived in a time and clime where there was no plastic art, and he was obliged to arrive at his ideas about art by means of a highly complex process of reasoning. He dwelt constantly in a spiritual place which was the very focus of high moral fervor. This was his enthusiasm, this was his revelation, and from it he reasoned out the probable meaning of the fine arts. "This," thought Emerson, his eye rolling in a fine frenzy of moral feeling, "this must be what Apelles experienced, this fervor is the passion of Bramante. I understand the Parthenon." And so he projected his feelings about morality into the field of the plastic arts. He deals very freely and rather indiscriminately with the names of artists,—Phidias, Raphael, Salvator Rosa,—and he speaks always in such a way that it is impossible to connect what he says with any impression we have ever received from the works of those masters.

In fact, Emerson has never in his life felt the normal appeal of any painting, or any sculpture, or any architecture, or any music. These things, of which he does not know the meaning in real life, he yet uses, and uses constantly, as symbols to convey ethical truths. The result is that his books are full of blind places, like the notes which will not strike on a sick piano.

It is interesting to find that the one art of which Emerson did have a direct understanding, the art of poetry, gave him some insight into the relation of the artist to his vehicle. In his essay on Shakespeare there is a full recognition of the debt of Shakespeare to his times. This essay is filled with the historic sense. We ought not to accuse Emerson because he lacked appreciation of the fine arts, but rather admire the truly Goethean spirit in which he insisted upon the reality of arts of which he had no understanding. This is the same spirit which led him to insist on the value of the Eastern poets. Perhaps there exist a few scholars who can tell us how far Emerson understood or misunderstood Saadi and Firdusi and the Koran. But we need not be disturbed for his learning. It is enough that he makes us recognize that these

men were men too, and that their writings mean something not unknowable to us. The East added nothing to Emerson, but gave him a few trappings of speech. The whole of his mysticism is to be found in *Nature*, written before he knew the sages of the Orient, and it is not improbable that there is some real connection between his own mysticism and the mysticism of the Eastern poets.

Emerson's criticism on men and books is like the test of a great chemist who seeks one or two elements. He burns a bit of the stuff in his incandescent light, shows the lines of it in his spectrum, and there an end.

It was a thought of genius that led him to write *Representative Men*. The scheme of this book gave play to every illumination of his mind, and it pinned him down to the objective, to the field of vision under his microscope. The table of contents of *Representative Men* is the dial of his education. It is as follows: Uses of Great Men; Plato, or The Philosopher; Plato, New Readings; Swedenborg, or The Mystic; Montaigne, or The Skeptic; Shakespeare, or The Poet; Napoleon, or The Man of the World; Goethe, or The Writer. The predominance of the writers over all other types of men is not cited to show Emerson's interest in The Writer, for we know his interest centered in the practical man,—even his ideal scholar is a practical man,—but to show the sources of his illustration. Emerson's library was the old-fashioned gentleman's library. His mines of thought were the world's classics. This is one reason why he so quickly gained an international currency. His very subjects in *Representative Men* are of universal interest, and he is limited only by certain inevitable local conditions. *Representative Men* is thought by many persons to be his best book. It is certainly filled with the strokes of a master. There exists no more profound criticism than Emerson's analysis of Goethe and of Napoleon, by both of whom he was at once fascinated and repelled.

II

THE attitude of Emerson's mind toward reformers results so logically from his philosophy that it is easily understood. He saw in them people who sought something as a panacea or as an end in itself. To speak

strictly and not irreverently, he had his own panacea,—the development of each individual; and he was impatient of any other. He did not believe in association. The very idea of it involved a surrender by the individual of some portion of his identity, and of course all the reformers worked through their associations. With their general aims he sympathized. "These reforms," he wrote, "are our contemporaries; they are ourselves, our own light and sight and conscience; they only name the relation which subsists between us and the vicious institutions which they go to rectify." But with the methods of the reformers he had no sympathy: "He who aims at progress should aim at an infinite, not at a special benefit. The reforms whose fame now fills the land with temperance, anti-slavery, non-resistance, no-government, equal labor, fair and generous as each appears, are poor bitter things when prosecuted for themselves as an end." Again: "The young men who have been vexing society for these last years with regenerative methods seem to have made this mistake: they all exaggerated some special means, and all failed to see that the reform of reforms must be accomplished without means."

Emerson did not at first discriminate between the movement of the Abolitionists and the hundred and one other reform movements of the period; and in this lack of discrimination lies a point of extraordinary interest. The Abolitionists, as it afterwards turned out, had in fact got hold of the issue which was to control the fortunes of the republic for thirty years. The difference between them and the other reformers was this: that the Abolitionists were men set in motion by the primary and unreasoning passion of pity. Theory played small part in the movement. It grew by the excitement which exhibitions of cruelty will arouse in the minds of sensitive people.

It is not to be denied that the social conditions in Boston in 1831 foreboded an outbreak in some form. If the abolition excitement had not drafted off the rising forces, there might have been a Merry Mount, an epidemic of crime or insanity, or a mob of some sort. The abolition movement afforded the purest form of an indulgence in human feeling that was ever offered to men. It was intoxicating. It made the

agitators perfectly happy. They sang at their work and bubbled over with exhilaration. They were the only people in the United States, at this time, who were enjoying an exalted, glorifying, practical activity.

But Emerson at first lacked the touchstone, whether of intellect or of heart, to see the difference between this particular movement and the other movements then in progress. Indeed, in so far as he sees any difference between the Abolitionists and the rest, it is that the Abolitionists were more objectionable and distasteful to him. "Those," he said, "who are urging with most ardor what are called the greatest benefits to mankind are narrow, conceited, self-pleasing men, and affect us as the insane do." And again: "By the side of these men [the idealists] the hot agitators have a certain cheap and ridiculous air; they even look smaller than others. Of the two, I own I like the speculators the best. They have some piety which looks with faith to a fair future unprofaned by rash and unequal attempts to realize it." He was drawn into the abolition cause by having the truth brought home to him that these people were fighting for the Moral Law. He was slow in seeing this, because in their methods they represented everything he most condemned. As soon, however, as he was convinced, he was ready to lecture for them and to give them the weight of his approval. In 1844 he was already practically an Abolitionist, and his feelings upon the matter deepened steadily in intensity ever after. *

The most interesting page of Emerson's published journal is the following, written at some time previous to 1844; the exact date is not given. A like page, whether written or unwritten, may be read into the private annals of every man who lived before the war. Emerson has, with unconscious mastery, photographed the half-specter that stalked in the minds of all. He wrote: "I had occasion to say the other day to Elizabeth Hoar that I like best the strong and worthy persons, like her father, who support the social order without hesitation or misgiving. I like these; they never incommode us by exciting grief, pity, or perturbation of any sort. But the professed philanthropists, it is strange and horrible to say, are an altogether odious set of people, whom one would

shun as the worst of bores and canters. But my conscience, my unhappy conscience respects that hapless class who see the faults and stains of our social order, and who pray and strive incessantly to right the wrong; this annoying class of men and women, though they commonly find the work altogether beyond their faculty, and their results are, for the present, distressing. They are partial, and apt to magnify their own. Yes, and the prostrate penitent, also,—he is not comprehensive, he is not philosophical in those tears and groans. Yet I feel that under him and his partiality and exclusiveness is the earth and the sea and all that in them is, and the axis around which the universe revolves passes through his body where he stands.”

It was the defection of Daniel Webster that completed the conversion of Emerson and turned him from an adherent into a propagandist of abolition. Not pity for the slave, but indignation at the violation of the Moral Law by Daniel Webster, was at the bottom of Emerson’s anger. His abolitionism was secondary to his main mission, his main enthusiasm. It is for this reason that he stands on a plane of intellect where he might, under other circumstances, have met and defeated Webster. After the 7th of March, 1850, he recognized in Webster the embodiment of all that he hated. In his attacks on Webster, Emerson trembles to his inmost fiber with antagonism. He is savage, destructive, personal, bent on death.

This exhibition of Emerson as a fighting animal is magnificent, and explains his life. There is no other instance of his ferocity. No other nature but Webster’s ever so moved him; but it was time to be moved, and Webster was a man of his size. Had these two great men of New England been matched in training as they were matched in endowment, and had they then faced each other in debate, they would not have been found to differ so greatly in power. Their natures were electrically repellent, but from which did the greater force radiate? Their education differed so radically that it is impossible to compare them, but if you translate the Phi Beta Kappa address into politics, you have something stronger than Webster,—something that recalls Chatham; and Emerson would have had this advantage,—

that he was not afraid. As it was, he left his library and took the stump. Mr. Cabot has given us extracts from his speeches:

“The tameness is indeed complete; all are involved in one hot haste of terror,—presidents of colleges and professors, saints and brokers, lawyers and manufacturers; not a liberal recollection, not so much as a snatch of an old song for freedom, dares intrude on their passive obedience. . . . Mr. Webster, perhaps, is only following the laws of his blood and constitution. I suppose his pledges were not quite natural to him. He is a man who lives by his memory; a man of the past, not a man of faith and of hope. All the drops of his blood have eyes that look downward, and his finely developed understanding only works truly and with all its force when it stands for animal good; that is, for property. He looks at the Union as an estate, a large farm, and is excellent in the completeness of his defense of it so far. What he finds already written he will defend. Lucky that so much had got well written when he came, for he has no faith in the power of self-government. Not the smallest municipal provision, if it were new, would receive his sanction. In Massachusetts, in 1776, he would, beyond all question, have been a refugee. He praises Adams and Jefferson, but it is a past Adams and Jefferson. A present Adams or Jefferson he would denounce. . . . But one thing appears certain to me: that the Union is at an end as soon as an immoral law is enacted. He who writes a crime into the statute book digs under the foundations of the Capitol. . . . The words of John Randolph, wiser than he knew, have been ringing ominously in all echoes for thirty years: ‘We do not govern the people of the North by our black slaves, but by their own white slaves.’ . . . They come down now like the cry of fate, in the moment when they are fulfilled.”

The exasperation of Emerson did not subside, but went on increasing during the next four years, and on March 7, 1854, he read his lecture on the Fugitive Slave Law at the New York Tabernacle: “I have lived all my life without suffering any inconvenience from American Slavery. I never saw it; I never heard the whip; I never felt the check on my free speech and action, until the other day, when Mr. Webster, by his personal influence,

brought the Fugitive Slave Law on the country. I say Mr. Webster, for though the bill was not his, it is yet notorious that he was the life and soul of it, that he gave it all he had. It cost him his life, and under the shadow of his great name inferior men sheltered themselves, threw their ballots for it, and made the law. . . . Nobody doubts that Daniel Webster could make a good speech. Nobody doubts that there were good and plausible things to be said on the part of the South. But this is not a question of ingenuity, not a question of syllogisms, but of sides. *How came he there?* . . . But the question which history will ask is broader. In the final hour when he was forced by the peremptory necessity of the closing armies to take a side,—did he take the part of great principles, the side of humanity and justice, or the side of abuse, and oppression and chaos? . . . He did as immoral men usually do,—made very low bows to the Christian Church and went through all the Sunday decorums, but when allusion was made to the question of duty and the sanctions of morality, he very frankly said, at Albany, ‘Some higher law, something existing somewhere between here and the heaven—I do not know where.’ And if the reporters say true, this wretched atheism found some laughter in the company.”

It was too late for Emerson to shine as a political debater. On May 14, 1857, Longfellow wrote in his diary, “It is rather painful to see Emerson in the arena of politics, hissed and hooted at by young law students.” Emerson records a similar experience at a later date: “If I were dumb, yet would I have gone and mowed and muttered or made signs. The mob roared whenever I attempted to speak, and after several beginnings I withdrew.” There is nothing “painful” here: it is the sublime exhibition of a great soul in bondage to circumstance.

The thing to be noted is that this is the same man, in the same state of excitement about the same idea, who years before spoke out in *The American Scholar*, in the *Essays*, and in the *Lectures*.

What was it that had aroused in Emerson such Promethean antagonism in 1837 but those same forces which in 1850 came to their culmination and assumed visible shape in the person of Daniel Webster? The formal

victory of Webster drew Emerson into the arena, and made a dramatic episode in his life. But his battle with those forces had begun thirteen years earlier, when he threw down the gauntlet to them in his Phi Beta Kappa oration. Emerson by his writings did more than any other man to rescue the youth of the next generation and fit them for the fierce times to follow. It will not be denied that he sent ten thousand sons to the war.

In speaking of Emerson’s attitude toward the anti-slavery cause, it has been possible to dispense with any survey of that movement, because the movement was simple and specific and is well remembered. But when we come to analyze the relations he bore to some of the local agitations of his day, it becomes necessary to weave in with the matter a discussion of certain tendencies deeply imbedded in the life of his times, and of which he himself was in a sense an outcome. In speaking of the Transcendentalists, who were essentially the children of the Puritans, we must begin with some study of the chief traits of Puritanism.

What parts the factors of climate, circumstance, and religion have respectively played in the development of the New England character no analysis can determine. We may trace the imaginary influence of a harsh creed in the lines of the face. We may sometimes follow from generation to generation the course of a truth which at first sustained the spirit of man, till we see it petrify into a dogma which now kills the spirits of men. Conscience may destroy the character. The tragedy of the New England judge enforcing the Fugitive Slave Law was no new spectacle in New England. A dogmatic crucifixion of the natural instincts had been in progress there for two hundred years. Emerson, who is more free from dogma than any other teacher that can be named, yet comes very near being dogmatic in his reiteration of the Moral Law.

Whatever volume of Emerson we take up, the Moral Law holds the same place in his thoughts. It is the one storable revelation of truth which he is ready to stake his all upon. “The illusion that strikes me as the masterpiece in that ring of illusions which our life is, is the timidity with which we assert our moral sentiment. We are made of it, the

world is built by it, things endure as they share it; all beauty, all health, all intelligence exist by it; yet we shrink to speak of it or range ourselves by its side. Nay, we presume strength of him or them who deny it. Cities go against it, the college goes against it, the courts snatch any precedent at any vicious form of law to rule it out; legislatures listen with appetite to declamations against it and vote it down."

With this very beautiful and striking passage no one will quarrel, nor will any one misunderstand it.

The following passage has the same sort of poetical truth. "Things are saturated with the moral law. There is no escape from it. Violets and grass preach it; rain and snow, wind and tides, every change, every cause in Nature is nothing but a disguised missionary. . . ."

But Emerson is not satisfied with metaphor. "We affirm that in all men is this majestic perception and command; that it is the presence of the eternal in each perishing man; that it distances and degrades all statements of whatever saints, heroes, poets, as obscure and confused stammerings before its silent revelation. *They* report the truth. *It* is the truth." In this last extract we have Emerson actually affirming that his dogma of the Moral Law is Absolute Truth. He thinks it not merely a form of truth, like the old theologies, but very distinguishable from all other forms in the past.

Curiously enough, his statement of the law grows dogmatic and incisive in proportion as he approaches the borderland between his law and the natural instincts: "The last revelation of intellect and of sentiment is that in a manner it severs the man from all other men; makes known to him *that the spiritual powers are sufficient to him if no other being existed*; that he is to deal absolutely in the world, as if he alone were a system and a state, and though all should perish could make all anew." Here we have the dogma applied, and we see in it only a new form of old Calvinism as cruel as Calvinism, and not much different from its original. The italics are not Emerson's, but are inserted to bring out an idea which is everywhere prevalent in his teaching.

In this final form, the Moral Law, by insisting that sheer conscience can slake the

thirst that rises in the soul, is convicted of falsehood; and this heartless falsehood is the same falsehood that has been put into the porridge of every Puritan child for six generations. A grown man can digest doctrine and sleep at night. But a young person of high purpose and strong will, who takes such a lie as this half-truth and feeds on it as on the bread of life, will suffer. It will injure the action of his heart. Truly the fathers have eaten sour grapes, therefore the children's teeth are set on edge.

To understand the civilization of cities, we must look at the rural population from which they draw their life. We have recently had our attention called to the last remnants of that village life so reverently gathered up by Miss Wilkins, and of which Miss Emily Dickinson was the last authentic voice. The spirit of this age has examined with an almost pathological interest this rescued society. We must go to it if we would understand Emerson, who is the blossoming of its culture. We must study it if we would arrive at any intelligent and general view of that miscellaneous crop of individuals who have been called the Transcendentalists.

Between 1830 and 1840 there were already signs in New England that the nutritive and reproductive forces of society were not quite wholesome, not exactly well adjusted. Self-repression was the religion which had been inherited. "Distrust Nature" was the motto written upon the front of the temple. What would have happened to that society if left to itself for another hundred years no man can guess. It was rescued by the two great regenerators of mankind, new land and war. The dispersion came, as Emerson said of the barbarian conquests of Rome, not a day too soon. It happened that the country at large stood in need of New England as much as New England stood in need of the country. This congested virtue, in order to be saved, must be scattered. This ferment, in order to be kept wholesome, must be used as leaven to leaven the whole lump. "As you know," says Emerson in his Eulogy on Boston, "New England supplies annually a large detachment of preachers and schoolmasters and private tutors to the interior of the South and West. . . . We are willing to see our sons emigrate, as to see our hives

swarm. That is what they were made to do, and what the land wants and invites."

For purposes of yeast, there was never such leaven as the Puritan stock. How little the natural force of the race had really abated became apparent when it was placed under healthy conditions, given land to till, foes to fight, the chance to renew its youth like the eagle. But during this period the relief had not yet come. The terrible pressure of Puritanism and conservatism in New England was causing a revolt not only of the Abolitionists, but of another class of people of a type not so virile as they. The times have been smartly described by Lowell in his essay on Thoreau:

"Every possible form of intellectual and physical dyspepsia brought forth its gospel. Bran had its prophets. . . . Everybody had a Mission (with a capital M) to attend to everybody else's business. No brain but had its private maggot, which must have found pitiably short commons sometimes. Not a few impecunious zealots abjured the use of money (unless earned by other people), professing to live on the internal revenues of the spirit. Some had an assurance of instant millennium so soon as hooks and eyes should be substituted for buttons. Communities were established where everything was to be common but common sense. . . . Conventions were held for every hitherto inconceivable purpose."

Whatever may be said of the Transcendentalists, it must not be forgotten that they represented an elevation of feeling, which through them qualified the next generation, and can be traced in the life of New England to-day. The strong intrinsic character lodged in these recusants was later made manifest; for many of them became the best citizens of the commonwealth,—statesmen, merchants, soldiers, men and women of affairs. They retained their idealism while becoming practical men. There is hardly an example of what we should have thought would be common in their later lives, namely, a reaction from so much ideal effort, and a plunge into cynicism and malice, scoundrelism and the flesh-pots. In their early life they resembled the Abolitionists in their devotion to an idea; but with the Transcendentalists self-culture and the æsthetic and sentimental education took the place of more

public aims. They seem also to have been persons of greater social refinement than the Abolitionists.

The Transcendentalists were sure of only one thing,—that society as constituted was all wrong. In this their main belief they were right. They were men and women whose fundamental need was activity, contact with real life, and the opportunity for social expansion; and they keenly felt the chill and fictitious character of the reigning conventionalities. The rigidity of behavior which at this time characterized the Bostonians seemed sometimes ludicrous and sometimes disagreeable to the foreign visitor. There was great gravity, together with a certain pomp and dumbness, and these things were supposed to be natural to the inhabitants and to give them joy. People are apt to forget that such masks are never worn with ease. They result from the application of an inflexible will, and always inflict discomfort. The Transcendentalists found themselves all but stifled in a society as artificial in its decorum as the court of France during the last years of Louis XIV.

Emerson was in no way responsible for the movement, although he got the credit of having evoked it by his teaching. He was elder brother to it, and was generated by its parental forces; but even if Emerson had never lived, the Transcendentalists would have appeared. He was their victim rather than their cause. He was always tolerant of them and sometimes amused at them, and disposed to treat them lightly. It is impossible to analyze their case with more astuteness than he did in an editorial letter in *The Dial*. The letter is cold, but is a masterpiece of good sense. He had, he says, received fifteen letters on the Prospects of Culture. "Excellent reasons have been shown us why the writers, obviously persons of sincerity and elegance, should be dissatisfied with the life they lead, and with their company. . . . They want a friend to whom they can speak and from whom they may hear now and then a reasonable word." After discussing one or two of their proposals,—one of which was that the tiresome "uncles and aunts" of the enthusiasts should be placed by themselves in one delightful village, the dough, as Emerson says, be placed in one pan and the leaven in another,—he continues: "But it

would be unjust not to remind our younger friends that whilst this aspiration has always made its mark in the lives of men of thought, in vigorous individuals it does not remain a detached object, but is satisfied along with the satisfaction of other aims." Young Americans "are educated above the work of their times and country, and disdain it. Many of the more acute minds pass into a lofty criticism . . . which only embitters their sensibility to the evil, and widens the feeling of hostility between them and the citizens at large. . . . We should not know where to find in literature any record of so much unbalanced intellectuality, such undeniable apprehension without talent, so much power without equal applicability, as our young men pretend to. . . . The balance of mind and body will redress itself fast enough. Superficialness is the real distemper. . . . It is certain that speculation is no succedaneum for life." He then turns to find the cure for these distempers in the farm lands of Illinois, at that time already being fenced in "almost like New England itself," and closes with a suggestion that so long as there is a woodpile in the yard, and the "wrongs of the Indian, of the Negro, of the emigrant, remain unmitigated," relief might be found even nearer home.

In his lecture on the Transcendentalists he says: ". . . But their solitary and fastidious manners not only withdraw them from the conversation, but from the labors of the world: they are not good citizens, not good members of society; unwillingly they bear their part of the public and private burdens; they do not willingly share in the public charities, in the public religious rites, in the enterprises of education, of missions foreign and domestic, in the abolition of the slave-trade, or in the temperance society. They do not even like to vote." A less sympathetic observer, Harriet Martineau, wrote of them: "While Margaret Fuller and her adult pupils sat 'gorgeously dressed,' talking about Mars and Venus, Plato and Goethe, and fancying themselves the elect of the earth in intellect and refinement, the liberties of the republic were running out as fast as they could go at a breach which another sort of elect persons were devoting themselves to repair; and my complaint against the 'gorgeous' pedants was that they regarded

their preservers as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and their work as a less vital one than the pedantic orations which were spoiling a set of well-meaning women in a pitiable way." Harriet Martineau, whose whole work was practical, and who wrote her journal in 1855 and in the light of history, was hardly able to do justice to these unpractical but sincere spirits.

Emerson was divided from the Transcendentalists by his common sense. His shrewd business intellect made short work of their schemes. Each one of their social projects contained some covert economic weakness, which always turned out to lie in an attack upon the integrity of the individual, and which Emerson of all men could be counted on to detect. He was divided from them also by the fact that he was a man of genius, who had sought out and fought out his means of expression. He was a great artist, and as such he was a complete being. No one could give to him nor take from him. His yearnings found fruition in expression. He was sure of his place and of his use in this world. But the Transcendentalists were neither geniuses nor artists nor complete beings. Nor had they found their places or uses as yet. They were men and women seeking light. They walked in dry places, seeking rest and finding none. The Transcendentalists are not collectively important because their *Sturm und Drang* was intellectual and bloodless. Though Emerson admonish and Harriet Martineau condemn, yet from the memorials that survive, one is more impressed with the sufferings than with the ludicrousness of these persons. There is something distressing about their letters, their talk, their memoirs, their interminable diaries. They worry and contort and introspect. They rave and dream. They peep and theorize. They cut open the bellows of life to see where the wind comes from. Margaret Fuller analyzes Emerson, and Emerson Margaret Fuller. It is not a wholesome ebullition of vitality. It is a nightmare, in which the emotions, the terror, the agony, the rapture, are all unreal, and have no vital content, no consequence in the world outside. It is positively wonderful that so much excitement and so much suffering should have left behind nothing in the field of art which is valuable. All that intel-

ligence could do toward solving problems for his friends Emerson did. But there are situations in life in which the intelligence is helpless, and in which something else, something perhaps possessed by a ploughboy, is more divine than Plato.

If it were not pathetic, there would be something cruel—indeed there is something cruel—in Emerson's incapacity to deal with Margaret Fuller. He wrote to her on October 24, 1840: "My dear Margaret, I have your frank and noble and affecting letter, and yet I think I could wish it unwritten. I ought never to have suffered you to lead me into any conversation or writing on our relation, a topic from which with all persons my Genius warns me away."

The letter proceeds with unimpeachable emptiness and integrity in the same strain. In 1841 he writes in his diary: "Strange, cold-warm, attractive-repelling conversation with Margaret, whom I always admire, most revere when I nearest see, and sometimes love; yet whom I freeze and who freezes me to silence when we promise to come nearest."

Human sentiment was known to Emerson mainly in the form of pain. His nature shunned it; he cast it off as quickly as possible. There is a word or two in the essay on Love which seems to show that the inner and diaphanous core of this seraph had once, but not for long, been shot with blood: he recalls only the pain of it. His relations with Margaret Fuller seem never normal, though they lasted for years. This brilliant woman was in distress. She was asking for bread, and he was giving her a stone, and neither of them was conscious of what was passing. This is pitiful. It makes us clutch about us to catch hold, if we somehow may, of the hand of a man.

There was manliness in Horace Greeley, under whom Miss Fuller worked on the New York *Tribune* not many years afterward. She wrote: "Mr. Greeley I like,—nay, more, love. He is in his habit a plebeian, in his heart a nobleman. His abilities in his own way are great. He believes in mine to a surprising degree. We are true friends."

This anæmic incompleteness of Emerson's character can be traced to the philosophy of his race; at least it can be followed in that philosophy. There is an implication of a

fundamental falsehood in every bit of Transcendentalism, including Emerson. That falsehood consists in the theory of the self-sufficiency of each individual, men and women alike. Margaret Fuller is a good example of the effect of this philosophy, because her history afterward showed that she was constituted like other human beings, was dependent upon human relationship, and was not only a very noble, but also a very womanly creature. Her marriage, her Italian life, and her tragic death light up with the splendor of reality the earlier and unhappy period of her life. This woman had been driven into her vagaries by the lack of something which she did not know existed, and which she sought blindly in metaphysics. Harriet Martineau writes of her: "It is the most grievous loss I have almost ever known in private history, the deferring of Margaret Fuller's married life so long. That noble last period of her life is happily on record as well as the earlier." The hardy English-woman has here laid a kind human hand on the weakness of New England, and seems to be unconscious that she is making a revelation as to the whole Transcendental movement. But the point is this: there was no one within reach of Margaret Fuller, in her early days, who knew what was her need. One offered her Kant, one Comte, one Fourier, one Swedenborg, one the Moral Law. You cannot feed the heart on these things.

Yet there is a bright side to this New England spirit, which seems, if we look only to the graver emotions, so dry, dismal, and deficient. A bright and cheery courage appears in certain natures of which the sun has made conquest, that almost reconciles us to all loss, so splendid is the outcome. The practical, dominant, insuppressible active temperaments who have a word for every emergency, and who carry the controlled force of ten men at their disposal, are the fruits of this same spirit. Emerson knew not tears, but he and the hundred other beaming and competent characters which New England has produced make us almost envy their state. They give us again the old Stoics at their best.

Very closely connected with this subject—the crisp and cheery New England temperament—lies another which any discussion of Emerson must bring up,—namely, Asceti-

cism. It is probable that in dealing with Emerson's feelings about the plastic arts we have to do with what is really the inside, or metaphysical side, of the same phenomena which present themselves on the outside, or physical side, in the shape of asceticism.

Emerson's natural asceticism is revealed to us in almost every form in which history can record a man. It is in his philosophy, in his style, in his conduct, and in his appearance. It was, however, not in his voice. Mr. Cabot, with that reverence for which every one must feel personally grateful to him, has preserved a description of Emerson by the New York journalist, N. P. Willis: "It is a voice with shoulders in it, which he has not; with lungs in it far larger than his; with a walk which the public never see; with a fist in it which his own hand never gave him the model for; and with a gentleman in it which his parochial and 'bare-necessaries-of-life' sort of exterior gives no other betrayal of. We can imagine nothing in nature (which seems too to have a type for everything) like the want of correspondence between the Emerson that goes in at the eye and the Emerson that goes in at the ear. A heavy and vase-like blossom of a magnolia, with fragrance enough to perfume a whole wilderness, which should be lifted by a whirlwind and dropped into a branch of aspen, would not seem more as if it could never have grown there than Emerson's voice seems inspired and foreign to his visible and natural body." Emerson's ever exquisite and wonderful good taste seems closely connected with this asceticism, and it is probable that his taste influenced his views and conduct to some small extent.

The anti-slavery people were not always refined. They were constantly doing things which were tactically very effective, but were not calculated to attract the over-sensitive. Garrison's rampant and impersonal egotism was good politics, but bad taste. Wendell Phillips did not hesitate upon occasion to deal in personalities of an exasperating kind. One sees a certain shrinking in Emerson from the taste of the Abolitionists. It was not merely their doctrines or their methods which offended him. He at one time refused to give Wendell Phillips his hand because of Phillips's treatment of his friend, Judge Hoar. One hardly knows whether to be pleased at Emerson for showing a human weakness, or

annoyed at him for not being more of a man. The anecdote is valuable in both lights. It is like a tiny speck on the crystal of his character which shows us the exact location of the orb, and it is the best illustration of the feeling of the times which has come down to us.

If by "asceticism" we mean an experiment in starving the senses, there is little harm in it. Nature will soon reassert her dominion, and very likely our perceptions will be sharpened by the trial. But "natural asceticism" is a thing hardly to be distinguished from functional weakness. What is natural asceticism but a lack of vigor? Does it not tend to close the avenues between the soul and the universe? "Is it not so much death?" The accounts of Emerson show him to have been a man in whom there was almost a hiatus between the senses and the most inward spirit of life. The lower register of sensations and emotions which domesticate a man into fellowship with common life was weak. Genial familiarity was to him impossible; laughter was almost a pain. "It is not the sea and poverty and pursuit that separate us. Here is Alcott by my door,—yet is the union more profound? No! the sea, vocation, poverty, are seeming fences, but man is insular and cannot be touched. Every man is an infinitely repellent orb, and holds his individual being on that condition. . . . Most of the persons whom I see in my own house I see across a gulf; I cannot go to them nor they come to me."

This aloofness of Emerson must be remembered only as blended with his benignity. "His friends were all that knew him," and, as Dr. Holmes said, "his smile was the well-remembered line of Terence written out in living features." Emerson's journals show the difficulty of his intercourse even with himself. He could not reach himself at will, nor could another reach him. The sensuous and ready contact with nature which more carnal people enjoy was unknown to him. He had eyes for the New England landscape, but for no other scenery. If there is one supreme sensation reserved for man, it is the vision of Venice seen from the water. This sight greeted Emerson at the age of thirty. The famous city, as he approached it by boat, "looked for some time like nothing but New York. It is a great oddity, a city for beavers,

but to my thought a most disagreeable residence. You feel always in prison and solitary. It is as if you were always at sea. I soon had enough of it."

Emerson's contempt for travel and for the "rococo toy," Italy, is too well known to need citation. It proceeds from the same deficiency of sensation. His eyes saw nothing; his ears heard nothing. He believed that men traveled for distraction and to kill time. The most vulgar plutocrat could not be blinder to beauty nor bring home less from Athens than this cultivated saint. Everything in the world which must be felt with a glow in the breast, in order to be understood, was to him dead-letter. Art was a name to him; music was a name to him; love was a name to him. His essay on Love is a nice compilation of compliments and elegant phrases ending up with some icy morality. It seems very well fitted for a gift-book or an old-fashioned lady's annual.

"The lovers delight in endearments, in avowals of love, in comparisons of their regards. . . . The soul which is in the soul of each, craving a perfect beatitude, detects incongruities, defects, and disproportion in the behavior of the other. Hence arise surprise, expostulation, and pain. Yet that which drew them to each other was signs of loveliness, signs of virtue; and these virtues are there, however eclipsed. They appear and reappear and continue to attract; but the regard changes, quits the sign and attaches to the substance. This repairs the wounded affection. Meantime, as life wears on, it proves a game of permutation and combination of all possible positions of the parties, to employ all the resources of each, and acquaint each with the weakness of the other. . . . At last they discover that all which at first drew them together—those once sacred features, that magical play of charms—was deciduous, had a prospective end like the scaffolding by which the house was built, and the purification of the intellect and the heart from year to year is the real marriage, foreseen and prepared from the first, and wholly above their consciousness. . . . Thus are we put in training for a love which knows not sex nor person nor partiality, but which seeks wisdom and virtue everywhere, to the end of increasing virtue and wisdom. . . . There are moments

when the affections rule and absorb the man, and make his happiness dependent on a person or persons. But in health the mind is presently seen again," *etc.*

All this is not love, but the merest literary coquetry. Love is different from this. Lady Burton, when a very young girl, and six years before her engagement, met Burton at Boulogne. They met in the street, but did not speak. A few days later they were formally introduced at a dance. Of this she writes: "That was a night of nights. He waltzed with me once, and spoke to me several times. I kept the sash where he put his arm around me and my gloves, and never wore them again."

A glance at what Emerson says about marriage shows that he suspected that institution. He can hardly speak of it without some sort of caveat or precaution. "Though the stuff of tragedy and of romances is in a moral union of two superior persons whose confidence in each other for long years, out of sight and in sight, and against all appearances, is at last justified by victorious proof of probity to gods and men, causing joyful emotions, tears, and glory,—though there be for heroes this *moral union*, yet they too are as far as ever from an intellectual union, and the moral is for low and external purposes, like the corporation of a ship's company or of a fire club." In speaking of modern novels, he says: "There is no new element, no power, no furtherance. 'Tis only confectionery, not the raising of new corn. Great is the poverty of their inventions. *She was beautiful, and he fell in love.* . . . Happy will that house be in which the relations are formed by character; after the highest and not after the lowest; the house in which character marries and not confusion and a miscellany of unavowable motives. . . . To each occurs soon after puberty, some event, or society or way of living, which becomes the crisis of life and the chief fact in their history. In women it is love and marriage (which is more reasonable), and yet it is pitiful to date and measure all the facts and sequel of an unfolding life from such a youthful and generally inconsiderate period as the age of courtship and marriage. . . . Women more than all are the element and kingdom of illusion. Being fascinated they fascinate. They see through Claude Lorraines. And

how dare any one, if he could, pluck away the coulisses, stage effects and ceremonies by which they live? Too pathetic, too pitiable, is the region of affection, and its atmosphere always liable to mirage."

We are all so concerned that a man who writes about love shall tell the truth that if he chance to start from premises which are false or mistaken, his conclusions will appear not merely false, but offensive. It makes no matter how exalted the personal character of the writer may be. Neither sanctity nor intellect nor moral enthusiasm, though they be intensified to the point of incandescence, can make up for a want of nature.

This perpetual splitting up of love into two species, one of which is condemned, but admitted to be useful—is it not degrading? There is in Emerson's theory of the relation between the sexes neither good sense, nor manly feeling, nor sound psychology. It is founded on none of these things. It is a pure piece of dogmatism, and reminds us that he was bred to the priesthood. We are not to imagine that there was in this doctrine anything peculiar to Emerson. But we are surprised to find the pessimism inherent in the doctrine overcome Emerson, to whom pessimism is foreign. Both doctrine and pessimism are a part of the Puritanism of the times. They show a society in which the intellect had long been used to analyze the affections, in which the head had become dislocated from the body. To this disintegration of the simple passion of love may be traced the lack of maternal tenderness characteristic of the New England nature. The relation between the blood and the brain was not quite normal in this civilization, nor in Emerson, who is its most remarkable representative.

If we take two steps backward from the canvas of this mortal life and glance at it impartially, we shall see that these matters of love and marriage pass like a pivot through the lives of almost every individual, and are, sociologically speaking, the *primum mobile* of the world. The books of any philosopher who slurs them or distorts them will hold up a false mirror to life. If an inhabitant of another planet should visit the earth, he would receive, on the whole, a truer notion of human life by attending an Italian opera than he would by reading Emerson's

volumes. He would learn from the Italian opera that there were two sexes; and this, after all, is probably the fact with which the education of such a stranger ought to begin.

In a review of Emerson's personal character and opinions, we are thus led to see that his philosophy, which finds no room for the emotions, is a faithful exponent of his own and of the New England temperament, which distrusts and dreads the emotions. Regarded as a sole guide to life for a young person of strong conscience and undeveloped affections, his works might conceivably be even harmful because of their unexampled power of purely intellectual stimulation.

Emerson's poetry has given rise to much heart-burning and disagreement. Some people do not like it. They fail to find the fire in the ice. On the other hand, his poems appeal not only to a large number of professed lovers of poetry, but also to a class of readers who find in Emerson an element for which they search the rest of poesy in vain.

It is the irony of fate that his admirers should be more than usually sensitive about his fame. This prophet who desired not to have followers, lest he too should become a cult and a convention, and whose main thesis throughout life was that piety is a crime, has been calmly canonized and embalmed in amber by the very forces he braved. He is become a tradition and a sacred relic. You must speak of him under your breath, and you may not laugh near his shrine.

Emerson's passion for nature was not like the passion of Keats or of Burns, of Coleridge or of Robert Browning; compared with these men he is cold. His temperature is below blood-heat, and his volume of poems stands on the shelf of English poets like the icy fish which in *Caliban upon Setebos* is described as finding himself thrust into the warm ooze of an ocean not his own.

But Emerson is a poet, nevertheless, a very extraordinary and rare man of genius, whose verses carry a world of their own within them. They are overshadowed by the greatness of his prose, but they are authentic. He is the chief poet of that school of which Emily Dickinson is a minor poet. His poetry is a successful spiritual deliverance of great interest. His worship of the New England

landscape amounts to a religion. His poems do that most wonderful thing, make us feel that we are alone in the fields and with the trees,—not English fields nor French lanes, but New England meadows and uplands. There is no human creature in sight, not even Emerson is there, but the wind and the flowers, the wild birds, the fences, the transparent atmosphere, the breath of nature. There is a deep and true relation between the intellectual and almost dry brilliancy of Emerson's feelings and the landscape itself. Here is no defective English poet, no Shelley without the charm, but an American poet, a New England poet with two hundred years of New England culture and New England landscape in him.

People are forever speculating upon what will last, what posterity will approve, and some people believe that Emerson's poetry will outlive his prose. The question is idle. The poems are alive now, and they may or may not survive the race whose spirit they embody; but one thing is plain: they have qualities which have preserved poetry in the past. They are utterly indigenous and sincere. They are short. They represent a civilization and a climate.

His verse divides itself into several classes. We have the single lyrics, written somewhat in the style of the later seventeenth century. Of these *The Humble Bee* is the most exquisite, and although its tone and imagery can be traced to various well-known and dainty bits of poetry, it is by no means an imitation, but a masterpiece of fine taste. *The Rhodora* and *Terminus* and perhaps a few others belong to that class of poetry which, like *Abou Ben Adhem*, is poetry because it is the perfection of statement. The *Boston Hymn*, the *Concord Ode*, and the other occasional pieces fall in another class, and do not seem to be important. The first two lines of the *Ode*,

O tenderly the haughty day
Fills his blue urn with fire,

are for their extraordinary beauty worthy of some mythical Greek, some Simonides, some Sappho, but the rest of the lines are commonplace. Throughout his poems there are good bits, happy and golden lines, snatches of grace. He himself knew the quality of his poetry, and wrote of it,

All were sifted through and through,
Five lines lasted sound and true.

He is never merely conventional, and his poetry, like his prose, is homespun and sound. But his ear was defective: his rhymes are crude, and his verse is often lame and unmusical, a fault which can be countervailed by nothing but force, and force he lacks. To say that his ear was defective is hardly strong enough. Passages are not uncommon which hurt the reader and unfit him to proceed; as, for example:

Thorough a thousand voices
Spoke the universal dame:
"Who telleth one of my meanings
Is master of all I am."

He himself has very well described the impression his verse is apt to make on a new reader when he says,

Poetry must not freeze, but flow.

The lovers of Emerson's poems freely acknowledge all these defects, but find in them another element, very subtle and rare, very refined and elusive, if not altogether unique. This is the mystical element or strain which qualifies many of his poems, and to which some of them are wholly devoted.

There has been so much discussion as to Emerson's relation to the mystics that it is well here to turn aside for a moment and consider the matter by itself. The elusiveness of "mysticism" arises out of the fact that it is not a creed, but a state of mind. It is formulated into no dogmas, but, in so far as it is communicable, it is conveyed, or sought to be conveyed, by symbols. These symbols to a skeptical or an unsympathetic person will say nothing, but the presumption among those who are inclined toward the cult is that if these symbols convey anything at all, that thing is mysticism. The mystics are right. The familiar phrases, terms, and symbols of mysticism are not meaningless, and a glance at them shows that they do tend to express and evoke a somewhat definite psychic condition.

There is a certain mood of mind experienced by most of us in which we feel the mystery of existence; in which our consciousness seems to become suddenly separated from our thoughts, and we find ourselves asking, "Who am I? What are these

thoughts?" The mood is very apt to overtake us while engaged in the commonest acts. In health it is always momentary, and seems to coincide with the instant of the transition and shift of our attention from one thing to another. It is probably connected with the transfer of energy from one set of faculties to another set, which occurs, for instance, on our waking from sleep, on our hearing a bell at night, on our observing any common object, a chair or a pitcher, at a time when our mind is or has just been thoroughly preoccupied with something else. This displacement of the attention occurs in its most notable form when we walk from the study into the open fields. Nature then attacks us on all sides at once, overwhelms, drowns, and destroys our old thoughts, stimulates vaguely and all at once a thousand new ideas, dissipates all focus of thought and dissolves our attention. If we happen to be mentally fatigued, and we take a walk in the country, a sense of immense relief, of rest and joy, which nothing else on earth can give, accompanies this distraction of the mind from its problems. The reaction fills us with a sense of mystery and expansion. It brings us to the threshold of those spiritual experiences which are the obscure core and reality of our existence, ever alive within us, but generally veiled and sub-conscious. It brings us, as it were, into the ante-chamber of art, poetry, and music. The condition is one of excitation and receptiveness, where art may speak and we shall understand. On the other hand, the condition shows a certain dethronement of the will and attention which may ally it to the hypnotic state.

Certain kinds of poetry imitate this method of nature by calling on us with a thousand voices at once. Poetry deals often with vague or contradictory statements, with a jumble of images, a throng of impressions. But in true poetry the psychology of real life is closely followed. The mysticism is momentary. We are not kept suspended in a limbo, "trembling like a guilty thing surprised," but are ushered into another world of thought and feeling. On the other hand, a mere statement of inconceivable things is the *reductio ad absurdum* of poetry, because such a statement puzzles the mind, scatters the attention, and does to a certain extent superinduce the "blank mis-

givings" of mysticism. It does this, however, *without* going further and filling the mind with new life. If I bid a man follow my reasoning closely, and then say, "I am the slayer and the slain, I am the doubter and the doubt," I puzzle his mind, and may succeed in reawakening in him the sense he has often had come over him that we are ignorant of our own destinies and cannot grasp the meaning of life. If I do this, nothing can be a more legitimate opening for a poem, for it is an opening of the reader's mind. Emerson, like many other highly organized persons, was acquainted with the mystic mood. It was not momentary with him. It haunted him, and he seems to have believed that the whole of poetry and religion was contained in the mood. And no one can gainsay that this mental condition is intimately connected with our highest feelings and leads directly into them.

The fault with Emerson is that he stops in the ante-chamber of poetry. He is content if he has brought us to the hypnotic point. His prologue and overture are excellent, but where is the argument? Where is the substantial artistic content that shall feed our souls?

The *Sphinx* is a fair example of an Emerson poem. The opening verses are musical, though they are handicapped by a reminiscence of the German way of writing. In the succeeding verses we are lapped into a charming reverie, and then at the end suddenly jolted by the question, "What is it all about?" In this poem we see expanded into four or five pages of verse an experience which in real life endures an eighth of a second, and when we come to the end of the mood we are at the end of the poem.

There is no question that the power to throw your sitter into a receptive mood by a pass or two which shall give you his virgin attention is necessary to any artist. Nobody has the knack of this more strongly than Emerson in his prose writings. By a phrase or a common remark he creates an ideal atmosphere in which his thought has the directness of great poetry. But he cannot do it in verse. He seeks in his verse to do the very thing which he avoids doing in his prose: follow a logical method. He seems to know too much what he is about, and to be content with doing too little. His mystical poems,

from the point of view of such criticism as this, are all alike in that they all seek to do the same thing. Nor does he always succeed. How does he sometimes fail in verse to say what he conveys with such everlasting happiness in prose!

I am owner of the sphere,
Of the seven stars and the solar year,
Of Cæsar's hand and Plato's brain,
Of Lord Christ's heart and Shakespeare's strain.

In these lines we have the same thought which appears a few pages later in prose: "All that Shakespeare says of the king, yonder slip of a boy that reads in the corner feels to be true of himself." He has failed in the verse because he has thrown a mystical gloss over a thought which was stronger in its simplicity; because in the verse he states an abstraction instead of giving an instance. The same failure follows him sometimes in prose when he is too conscious of his machinery.

Emerson knew that the sense of mystery accompanies the shift of an absorbed attention to some object which brings the mind back to the present. "There are times when the cawing of a crow, a weed, a snowflake, a boy's willow whistle, or a farmer planting in his field is more suggestive to the mind than the Yosemite gorge or the Vatican would be in another hour. In like mood, an old verse, or certain words, gleam with rare significance." At the close of his essay on *History* he is trying to make us feel that all history, in so far as we can know it, is within ourselves, and is in a certain sense autobiography. He is speaking of the Romans, and he suddenly pretends to see a lizard on the wall, and proceeds to wonder what the lizard has to do with the Romans. For this he has been quite properly laughed at by Dr. Holmes, because he has resorted to an artifice and has failed to create an illusion. Indeed, Dr. Holmes is somewhere so irreverent as to remark that a gill of alcohol will bring on a psychical state very similar to that suggested by Emerson; and Dr. Holmes is accurately happy in his jest, because alcohol does dislocate the attention in a thoroughly mystical manner.

There is throughout Emerson's poetry, as throughout all of the New England poetry, too much thought, too much argument.

Some of his verse gives the reader a very curious and subtle impression that the lines are a translation. This is because he is closely following a thesis. Indeed, the lines are a translation. They were thought first, and poetry afterwards. Read off his poetry, and you see through the scheme of it at once. Read his prose, and you will be put to it to make out the connection of ideas. The reason is that in the poetry the sequence is intellectual, in the prose the sequence is emotional. It is no mere epigram to say that his poetry is governed by the ordinary laws of prose writing, and his prose by the laws of poetry.

The lines entitled *Days* have a dramatic vigor, a mystery, and a music all their own:

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them
all.

I, in my pleachèd garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

The prose version of these lines, which in this case is inferior, is to be found in *Works and Days*: "He only is rich who owns the day. . . . They come and go like muffled and veiled figures, sent from a distant friendly party; but they say nothing, and if we do not use the gifts they bring, they carry them as silently away."

That Emerson had within him the soul of a poet no one will question, but his poems are expressed in prose forms. There are passages in his early addresses which can be matched in English only by bits from Sir Thomas Browne or Milton, or from the great poets. Heine might have written the following parable into verse, but it could not have been finer. It comes from the very bottom of Emerson's nature. It is his uttermost. Infancy and manhood and old age, the first and the last of him, speak in it.

"Every god is there sitting in his sphere. The young mortal enters the hall of the firmament; there is he alone with them alone, they pouring on him benedictions and gifts, and beckoning him up to their thrones. On

the instant, and incessantly, fall snowstorms of illusions. He fancies himself in a vast crowd which sways this way and that, and whose movements and doings he must obey; he fancies himself poor, orphaned, insignificant. The mad crowd drives hither and thither, now furiously commanding this thing to be done, now that. What is he that he should resist their will, and think or act for himself? Every moment new changes and new showers of deceptions to baffle and distract him. And when, by and by, for an instant, the air clears and the cloud lifts a little, there are the gods still sitting around him on their thrones,—they alone with him alone."

With the war closes the colonial period of our history, and with the end of the war begins our national life. Before that time it was not possible for any man to speak for the nation, however much he might long to, for there was no nation; there were only discordant provinces held together by the exercise on the part of each of a strong and conscientious will. It is too much to expect that national character shall be expressed before it is developed, or that the arts shall flourish during a period when everybody is preoccupied with the fear of revolution. The provincial note which runs through all our literature down to the war resulted in one sense from our dependence upon Europe. "All American manners, language, and writings," says Emerson, "are derivative. We do not write from facts, but we wish to state the facts after the English manner. It is the tax we pay for the splendid inheritance of English Literature." But in a deeper sense this very dependence upon Europe was due to our disunion among ourselves. The equivocal and unhappy self-assertive patriotism to which we were consigned by fate, and which made us perceive and resent the condescension of foreigners, was the logical outcome of our political situation.

The literature of the Northern States before the war, although full of talent, lacks body, lacks courage. It has not a full national tone. The South is not in it. New England's share in this literature is so large that small injustice will be done if we give her credit for all of it. She was the Academy of the land, and her scholars were our

authors. The country at large has sometimes been annoyed at the self-consciousness of New England, at the atmosphere of clique, of mutual admiration, of isolation, in which all her scholars, except Emerson, have lived, and which notably enveloped the last little distinguished group of them. The circumstances which led to the isolation of Lowell, Holmes, Longfellow, and the Saturday Club fraternity are instructive. The ravages of the war carried off the poets, scholars, and philosophers of the generation which immediately followed these men, and by destroying their natural successors left them standing magnified beyond their natural size, like a grove of trees left by a fire. The war did more than kill off a generation of scholars who would have succeeded these older scholars. It emptied the universities by calling all the survivors into the field of practical life; and after the war ensued a period during which all the learning of the land was lodged in the heads of these older worthies who had made their mark long before. A certain complacency which piqued the country at large was seen in these men. An ante-bellum colonial posing, inevitable in their own day, survived with them. When Jared Sparks put Washington in the proper attitude for greatness by correcting his spelling, Sparks was in cue with the times. It was thought that a great man must have his hat handed to him by his biographer, and be ushered on with decency toward posterity. In the lives and letters of some of our recent public men there has been a reminiscence of this posing, which we condemn as absurd because we forget it is merely archaic. Provincial manners are always a little formal, and the pomposity of the colonial governor was never quite worked out of our literary men.

Let us not disparage the past. We are all grateful for the New England culture, and especially for the little group of men in Cambridge and Boston who did their best according to the light of their day. Their purpose and taste did all that high ideals and good taste can do, and no more eminent literati have lived during this century. They gave the country songs, narrative poems, odes, epigrams, essays, novels. They chose their models well, and drew their materials from decent and likely sources. They lived stain-

less lives, and died in their professors' chairs honored by all men. For achievements of this sort we need hardly use as strong language as Emerson does in describing contemporary literature: "It exhibits a vast carcass of tradition every year with as much solemnity as a new revelation."

The mass and volume of literature must always be traditional, and the secondary writers of the world do nevertheless perform a function of infinite consequence in the spread of thought. A very large amount of first-hand thinking is not comprehensible to the average man until it has been distilled and is fifty years old. The men who welcome new learning as it arrives are the picked men, the minor poets of the next age. To their own times these secondary men often seem great because they are recognized and understood at once. We know the disadvantage under which these Humanists of ours worked. The shadow of the time in which they wrote hangs over us still. The conservatism and timidity of our politics and of our literature to-day are due in part to that fearful pressure which for sixty years was never lifted from the souls of Americans. That conservatism and timidity may be seen in all our past. They are in the rhetoric of Webster and in the style of Hawthorne. They killed Poe. They created Bryant.

Since the close of our most blessed war, we have been left to face the problems of democracy, unhampered by the terrible complications of sectional strife. It has happened, however, that some of the tendencies of our commercial civilization go toward strengthening and riveting upon us the very traits encouraged by provincial disunion. Wendell Phillips, with a cool grasp of understanding for which he is not generally given credit, states the case as follows:

"The general judgment is that the freest possible government produces the freest possible men and women, the most individual, the least servile to the judgment of others. But a moment's reflection will show any man that this is an unreasonable expectation, and that, on the contrary, entire equality and freedom in political forms almost invariably tend to make the individual subside into the mass and lose his identity in the general whole. Suppose we stood in England to-

night. There is the nobility, and here is the church. There is the trading class, and here is the literary. A broad gulf separates the four; and provided a member of either can conciliate his own section, he can afford in a very large measure to despise the opinions of the other three. He has to some extent a refuge and a breakwater against the tyranny of what we call public opinion. But in a country like ours, of absolute democratic equality, public opinion is not only omnipotent, it is omnipresent. There is no refuge from its tyranny, there is no hiding from its reach; and the result is that if you take the old Greek lantern and go about to seek among a hundred, you will find not one single American who has not, or who does not fancy at least that he has, something to gain or lose in his ambition, his social life, or his business, from the good opinion and the votes of those around him. And the consequence is that instead of being a mass of individuals, each one fearlessly blurting out his own convictions, as a nation, compared to other nations, we are a mass of cowards. More than all other people, we are afraid of each other."

If we take a bird's-eye view of our history, we shall find that this constant element of democratic pressure has always been so strong a factor in molding the character of our citizens, that there is less difference than we could wish to see between the types of citizenship produced before the war and after the war.

Charles Follen, that excellent and worthy German who came to this country while still a young man and who lived in the midst of the social and intellectual life of Boston, felt the want of intellectual freedom in the people about him. If one were obliged to describe the America of to-day in a single sentence, one could hardly do it better than by a sentence from a letter of Follen to Harriet Martineau written in 1837, after the appearance of one of her books: "You have pointed out the two most striking national characteristics, 'Deficiency of individual moral independence and extraordinary mutual respect and kindness.'"

Much of what Emerson wrote about the United States in 1850 is true of the United States to-day. It would be hard to find a civilized people who are more timid, more

cowed in spirit, more illiberal, than we. It is easy to-day for the educated man who has read Bryce and Tocqueville to account for the mediocrity of American literature. The merit of Emerson was that he felt the atmospheric pressure without knowing its reason. He felt he was a cabined, cribbed, confined creature, although every man about him was celebrating Liberty and Democracy, and every day was Fourth of July. He taxes language to its limits in order to express his revolt. He says that no man should write except what he has discovered in the process of satisfying his own curiosity, and that every man will write well in proportion as he has contempt for the public.

Emerson seems really to have believed that if any man would only resolutely be himself, he would turn out to be as great as Shakespeare. He will not have it that anything of value can be monopolized. His review of the world, whether under the title of Manners, Self-Reliance, Fate, Experience, or what-not, leads him to the same thought. His conclusion is always the finding of eloquence, courage, art, intellect, in the breast of the humblest reader. He knows that we are full of genius and surrounded by genius, and that we have only to throw something off, not to acquire any new thing, in order to be bards, prophets, Napoleons, and Goethes. This belief is the secret of his stimulating power. It is this which gives his writings a radiance like that which shone from his personality.

The deep truth shadowed forth by Emerson when he said that "all the American geniuses lacked nerve and dagger" was illustrated by our best scholar. Lowell had the soul of the Yankee, but in his habits of writing he continued English tradition. His literary essays are full of charm. The *Commemoration Ode* is the high-water mark of the attempt to do the impossible. It is a fine thing, but it is imitative and secondary. It has paid the inheritance tax. Twice, however, at a crisis of pressure, Lowell assumed his real self under the guise of a pseudonym; and with his own hand he rescued a language, a type, a whole era of civilization from oblivion. Here gleams the dagger and here is Lowell revealed. His limitations as a poet, his too much wit, his too much morality, his mixture of shrewdness and religion, are seen to be the very elements of power. The

novelty of the *Biglow Papers* is as wonderful as their world-old naturalness. They take rank with greatness, and they were the strongest political tracts of their time. They imitate nothing; they are real.

Emerson himself was the only man of his times who consistently and utterly expressed himself, never measuring himself for a moment with the ideals of others, never troubling himself for a moment with what literature was or how literature should be created. The other men of his epoch, and among whom he lived, believed that literature was a very desirable article, a thing you could create if you were only smart enough. But Emerson had no literary ambition. He cared nothing for belles-lettres. The consequence is that he stands above his age like a colossus. While he lived his figure could be seen from Europe towering like Atlas over the culture of the United States.

Great men are not always like wax which their age imprints. They are often the mere negation and opposite of their age. They give it the lie. They become by revolt the very essence of all the age is not, and that part of the spirit which is suppressed in ten thousand breasts gets lodged, isolated, and breaks into utterance in one. Through Emerson spoke the fractional spirits of a multitude. He had not time, he had not energy left over to understand himself; he was a mouthpiece.

If a soul be taken and crushed by democracy till it utter a cry, that cry will be Emerson. The region of thought he lived in, the figures of speech he uses, are of an intellectual plane so high that the circumstances which produced them may be forgotten; they are indifferent. The Consitution, Slavery, the War itself, are seen as mere circumstances. They did not confuse him while he lived; they are not necessary to support his work now that it is finished. Hence comes it that Emerson is one of the world's voices. He was heard afar off. His foreign influence might deserve a chapter by itself. Conservatism is not confined to this country. It is the very basis of all government. The bolts Emerson forged, his thought, his wit, his perception, are not provincial. They were found to carry inspiration to England and Germany. Many of the important men of the last half-century owe him a debt. It is not

yet possible to give any account of his influence abroad, because the memoirs which will show it are only beginning to be published. We shall have them in due time; for Emerson was an outcome of the world's progress. His appearance marks the turning-point in the history of that enthusiasm for pure democracy which has tinged the political thought of the world for the past one hundred and fifty years. The youths of England and Germany may have been surprised at hearing from America a piercing voice of protest against the very influences which were crushing them at home. They could not realize that the chief difference between Europe and America is a difference in the

rate of speed with which revolutions in thought are worked out.

While the radicals of Europe were revolting in 1848 against the abuses of a tyranny whose roots were in feudalism, Emerson, the great radical of America, the arch-radical of the world, was revolting against the evils whose roots were in universal suffrage. By showing the identity in essence of all tyranny, and by bringing back the attention of political thinkers to its starting-point, the value of human character, he has advanced the political thought of the world by one step. He has pointed out for us in this country to what end our efforts must be bent.

GEORGE SANTAYANA (1863-)

Mr. Santayana was born of Spanish parents at Madrid on 16 December, 1863. His earliest years were passed in Spain, but he came to America in 1872, and carried on his education here. He was graduated from Harvard College in 1886. The next two years were spent in study at Berlin, and in 1889 he received the doctorate of philosophy from Harvard. He was at once appointed an instructor in the department of philosophy there and remained a member of that department until 1912, being promoted to an assistant professorship in 1898, and to a professorship in 1907. The academic year 1896-1897 he spent in study at King's College, Cambridge University. During the winter of 1905-1906 he was Hyde Lecturer at the Sorbonne, in Paris. In 1912 Mr. Santayana retired from his post at Harvard, and also retired from the United States. At the outbreak of the Great War, in 1914, he was in England, and he remained there until after its conclusion. Since then he has lived in Paris and elsewhere in Europe. In the fall of 1923 he delivered the Herbert Spencer Lecture at Oxford University. He has been a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

Mr. Santayana began his distinguished literary career as a poet, publishing a volume entitled *Sonnets and Other Verses* in 1894, a "theological tragedy" entitled *Lucifer, or the Heavenly Truce* in 1898, and *A Hermit of Carmel and Other Poems* in 1901. But before 1898 he had turned to prose, which was to be the medium of practically all of his later writing, and had published an æsthetic treatise, *The Sense of Beauty* (1896), and was at work upon his first volume of critical essays, *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900). There followed several years later his series of philosophical studies, *The Life of Reason* (5 vols., 1905-1906), in 1910 a volume of essays on Lucretius, Dante, and Goethe (*Three Philosophical Poets*), in 1913 another volume of essays, *Winds of Doctrine*, in 1916 *Egotism in German Philosophy*, in 1920 *Character and Opinion in the United States, with Reminiscences of William James and Josiah Royce and Academic Life in America*, in 1922 *Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies*, in 1923 *Skepticism and Animal Faith* (an "introduction to a system of philosophy"), and in 1925 *Dialogues in Limbo*.

In a recent volume of selections from his poems (1923) Mr. Santayana confesses that his "best critics and friends" have warned him that he is no poet, and he adds that in the sense in which they mean the word he agrees with them: "Of impassioned tenderness or Dionysiac frenzy I have nothing, nor even of that magic and pregnancy of phrase—really the creation of a fresh idiom—which marks the high lights of poetry. Even if my temperament had been naturally warmer, the fact that the English language (and I can write no other with assurance) was not my mother-tongue would of itself preclude any inspired use of it on my part; its roots do not quite reach to my center." But he also says that what he has written in verse he could have written in no other way, and this we may believe. For the truth is that Mr. Santayana is a reflective poet of a high order, with a delicate and sensitive imagination, whose verse is the product of fine and scrupulous workmanship. Its appeal is of course limited, but it is none the less memorable for that, and it has the added interest for some of exhibiting his philosophy in the making. This, moreover, is a matter of no little importance to the student of Mr. Santayana's work. For it helps to show that, if he has written the poetry of a philosopher, he has also worked out the philosophy of a poet—a poet, however, of a particular kind, one who somehow combines in his person a real and deep Platonic feeling for spiritual values with the prejudices of a thorough materialistic naturalism.

As a materialistic naturalist he conceives the sum of existence to be comprised in a flux of substance, and ourselves to be as it were temporary little eddies in this flux wherein matter has become, for the moment, conscious of its aspiration to realize in its existence ideal values. These spiritual or immaterial values have no existence anywhere, and no home save in matter which has become, through natural evolution, self-conscious, so that their very appearance on the horizon depends upon those precarious combinations of substance which form sentient and dreaming creatures, and so that even their appearance must cease with our own extinction. Nevertheless, such is the character of our substance that only in the attempt to realize spiritual values do we find the aim and crown of our existence, and this

attempt can be made only through rational activity. "The life of reason . . . is simply the dreaming mind becoming coherent, devising symbols and methods, such as languages, by which it may fitly survey its own career, and the forces of nature on which that career depends. Reason thereby raises our vegetative dream into a poetic revelation and transcript of the truth." Reason, by selection and organization, reduces the chaotic mass of our impressions and dreams to order and relevancy, and so forms ideal patterns, or norms, for our contemplation. Thus rational activity is "the purpose and standard of all life," and progress, when it occurs—for there is nothing to make it inevitable—consists in extending and consolidating the work of reason. In this way we raise ourselves above the unmeaning flux of substance and come to live in an ideal, non-existent world of timeless perfection which is our true home and which it is our true happiness to contemplate. Obviously all experience is grist for our mill, but our business with it is not mere brutish pleasure in immediate enjoyment of it, nor mere brutish suffering from untoward accident;—our business is its rational evaluation. Increasing knowledge of the world should make us increasingly unworldly. We are the spectators of an existence which we ourselves make dramatic by our intellectual activity, and which we judge by standards of our own creation. For us religion is one of the kinds of poetry, and the function of the imagination is the expression of our ideals through a splendid imagery, or allegory. "The dignity of religion, like that of poetry and of every moral ideal, lies precisely in its ideal adequacy, in its fit rendering of the meanings and values of life, in its anticipation of perfection; so that the excellence of religion is due to an idealization of experience which, while making religion noble if treated as poetry, makes it necessarily false if treated as science. Its function is rather to draw from reality materials for an image of that ideal to which reality ought to conform, and to make us citizens, by anticipation, in the world we crave." Further, "as religion is deflected from its course when it is confused with a record of facts or of natural laws, so poetry is arrested in its development if it remains an unmeaning play of fancy without relevance to the ideals and purposes of life. In that relevance lies its highest power. As its elementary pleasantness comes from its response to the demands of the ear, so its deepest beauty comes from its response to the ultimate demands of the soul."

Mr. Santayana's conception of life, then, is that it should consist in the attempt by judicious contemplation to create and inhabit a world of non-existent values. As a philosophy this would appear to be extraordinarily jejune, but, curiously enough, the attitude towards life which it engenders is one which has helped Mr. Santayana to become a flexible, appreciative, and shrewd critic of humanity and of the imaginative expression of life in literature. Here his catholic receptivity serves him excellently, while his application of his criterion—rational activity in the interest of the realization of spiritual ideals—everywhere renders his criticism significant and valuable. His mind and taste, moreover, are enriched by a thorough culture, and his thought is expressed in a singularly lucid and beautiful and finely imaginative English. He is, in short, whatever we are to think of his empty philosophy of unworldly worldliness, a memorable, talented, and significant critic.

SONNET III¹

O WORLD, thou choosest not the better part!
It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes,
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Columbus found a world, and had no chart,
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies;
To trust the soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science and his only art.
Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine
That lights the pathway but one step
ahead 10
Across a void of mystery and dread.
Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
By which alone the mortal heart is led
Unto the thinking of the thought divine.

¹ This and the two following poems are reprinted from *Poems* (1923) with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

SONNET XLII

As when the scepter dangles from the hand
Of some king doting, faction runneth wild,
Thieves shake their chains and traitors,
long exiled,
Hover about the confines of the land,
Till the young Prince, anointed, takes
command,
Full of high purpose, simple, trustful, mild,
And, smitten by his radiance undefiled,
The ruffians are abashed, the cowards
stand:—
So in my kindgom riot and despair
Lived by thy lack, and called for thy
control, 10
But at thy coming all the world grew fair;
Away before thy face the villains stole,
And panoplied I rose to do and bear,
When love his clarion sounded in my soul.

ODE II

My heart rebels against my generation,
That talks of freedom and is slave to riches,
And, toiling 'neath each day's ignoble
burden,

Boasts of the morrow.

No space for noonday rest or midnight
watches,

No purest joy of breathing under heaven!
Wretched themselves, they heap, to make
them happy,

Many possessions.

But thou, O silent Mother, wise, immortal,
To whom our toil is laughter,—take, divine
one,

10

This vanity away, and to thy lover

Give what is needful:—

A stanch heart, nobly calm, averse to evil,
The windy sky for breath, the sea, the
mountain,

A well-born, gentle friend, his spirit's
brother,

Ever beside him.

What would you gain, ye seekers, with your
striving,

Or what vast Babel raise you on your
shoulders?

You multiply distresses, and your children
Surely will curse you.

20

O leave them rather friendlier gods, and
fairer

Orchards and temples, and a freer bosom!

What better comfort have we, or what other
Profit in living,

Than to feed, sobered by the truth of Nature,
Awhile upon her bounty and her beauty,
And hand her torch of gladness to the ages
Following after?

She hath not made us, like her other children,
Merely for peopling of her spacious king-
doms,

30

Beasts of the wild, or insects of the summer,
Breeding and dying,

But also that we might, half knowing,
worship

The deathless beauty of her guiding vision,
And learn to love, in all things mortal, only
What is eternal.

THE POETRY OF BARBARISM¹

I

IT is an observation at first sight melancholy but in the end, perhaps, enlightening, that the earliest poets are the most ideal, and that primitive ages furnish the most heroic characters and have the clearest vision of a perfect life. The Homeric times must have been full of ignorance and suffering. In those little barbaric towns, in those camps and farms, in those shipyards, there must have been much insecurity and superstition. That age was singularly poor in all that concerns the convenience of life and the entertainment of the mind with arts and sciences. Yet it had a sense for civilization. That machinery of life which men were beginning to devise appealed to them as poetical; they knew its ultimate justification and studied its incipient processes with delight. The poetry of that simple and ignorant age was, accordingly, the sweetest and sanest that the world has known; the most faultless in taste, and the most even and lofty in inspiration. Without lacking variety and homeliness, it bathed all things human in the golden light of morning; it clothed sorrow in a kind of majesty, instinct with both self-control and heroic frankness. Nowhere else can we find so noble a rendering of human nature, so spontaneous a delight in life, so uncompromising a dedication to beauty, and such a gift of seeing beauty in everything. Homer, the first of poets, was also the best and the most poetical.

From this beginning, if we look down the history of Occidental literature, we see the power of idealization steadily decline. For while it finds here and there, as in Dante, a more spiritual theme and a subtler and riper intellect, it pays for that advantage by a more than equivalent loss in breadth, sanity, and happy vigor. And if ever imagination bursts out with a greater potency, as in Shakespeare (who excels the patriarch of poetry in depth of passion and vividness of characterization, and in those exquisite bubbling of poetry and humor in which English genius is at its best), yet Shakespeare also pays the price by a notable loss in taste,

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in sustained inspiration, in consecration, and in rationality. There is more or less rubbish in his greatest works. When we come down to our own day we find poets of hardly less natural endowment (for in endowment all ages are perhaps alike) and with vastly richer sources of inspiration; for they have many arts and literatures behind them, with the spectacle of a varied and agitated society, a world which is the living microcosm of its own history and presents in one picture many races, arts, and religions. Our poets have more wonderful tragedies of the imagination to depict than had Homer, whose world was innocent of any essential defeat, or Dante, who believed in the world's definitive redemption. Or, if perhaps their inspiration is comic, they have the pageant of medieval manners, with its picturesque artifices and passionate fancies, and the long comedy of modern social revolutions, so illusory in their aims and so productive in their aimlessness. They have, moreover, the new and marvelous conception which natural science has given us of the world and of the conditions of human progress.

With all these lessons of experience behind them, however, we find our contemporary poets incapable of any high wisdom, incapable of any imaginative rendering of human life and its meaning. Our poets are things of shreds and patches; they give us episodes and studies, a sketch of this curiosity, a glimpse of that romance; they have no total vision, no grasp of the whole reality, and consequently no capacity for a sane and steady idealization. The comparatively barbarous ages had a poetry of the ideal; they had visions of beauty, order, and perfection. This age of material elaboration has no sense for those things. Its fancy is retrospective, whimsical, and flickering; its ideals, when it has any, are negative and partial; its moral strength is a blind and miscellaneous vehemence. Its poetry, in a word, is the poetry of barbarism.

This poetry should be viewed in relation to the general moral crisis and imaginative disintegration of which it gives a verbal echo; then we shall avoid the injustice of passing it over as insignificant, no less than the imbecility of hailing it as essentially glorious and successful. We must remember that the imagination of our race has been

subject to a double discipline. It has been formed partly in the school of classic literature and polity, and partly in the school of Christian piety. This duality of inspiration, this contradiction between the two accepted methods of rationalizing the world, has been a chief source of that incoherence, that romantic indistinctness and imperfection, which largely characterize the products of the modern arts. A man cannot serve two masters; yet the conditions have not been such as to allow him wholly to despise the one or wholly to obey the other. To be wholly Pagan is impossible after the dissolution of that civilization which had seemed universal, and that empire which had believed itself eternal. To be wholly Christian is impossible for a similar reason, now that the illusion and cohesion of Christian ages is lost, and for the further reason that Christianity was itself fundamentally eclectic. Before it could succeed and dominate men even for a time, it was obliged to adjust itself to reality, to incorporate many elements of Pagan wisdom, and to accommodate itself to many habits and passions at variance with its own ideal.

In these latter times, with the prodigious growth of material life in elaboration and of mental life in diffusion, there has supervened upon this old dualism a new faith in man's absolute power, a kind of return to the inexperience and self-assurance of youth. This new inspiration has made many minds indifferent to the two traditional disciplines; neither is seriously accepted by them, for the reason, excellent from their own point of view, that no discipline whatever is needed. The memory of ancient disillusion has faded with time. Ignorance of the past has bred contempt for the lessons which the past might teach. Men prefer to repeat the old experiment without knowing that they repeat it.

I say advisedly ignorance of the past, in spite of the unprecedented historical erudition of our time; for life is an art not to be learned by observation, and the most minute and comprehensive studies do not teach us what the spirit of man should have learned by its long living. We study the past as a dead object, as a ruin, not as an authority and as an experiment. One reason why history was less interesting to former ages

was that they were less conscious of separation from the past. The perspective of time was less clear because the synthesis of experience was more complete. The mind does not easily discriminate the successive phases of an action in which it is still engaged; it does not arrange in a temporal series the elements of a single perception, but posits them all together as constituting a permanent and real object. Human nature and the life of the world were real and stable objects to the apprehension of our forefathers; the actors changed, but not the characters or the play. Men were then less studious of derivations because they were more conscious of identities. They thought of all reality as in a sense contemporary, and in considering the maxims of a philosopher or the style of a poet, they were not primarily concerned with settling his date and describing his environment. The standard by which they judged was eternal; the environment in which man found himself did not seem to them subject of any essential change.

To us the picturesque element in history is more striking because we feel ourselves the children of our own age only, an age which being itself singular and revolutionary, tends to read its own character into the past, and to regard all other periods as no less fragmentary and effervescent than itself. The changing and the permanent elements are, indeed, everywhere present, and the bias of the observer may emphasize the one or the other as it will: the only question is whether we find the significance of things in their variations or in their similarities.

Now the habit of regarding the past as effete and as merely a stepping-stone to something present or future, is unfavorable to any true apprehension of that element in the past which was vital and which remains eternal. It is a habit of thought that destroys the sense of the moral identity of all ages, by virtue of its very insistence on the mechanical derivation of one age from another. Existences that cause one another exclude one another; each is alien to the rest inasmuch as it is the product of new and different conditions. Ideas that cause nothing unite all things by giving them a common point of reference and a single standard of value.

The classic and the Christian systems were both systems of ideas, attempts to seize the

eternal morphology of reality and describe its unchanging constitution. The imagination was summoned thereby to contemplate the highest objects, and the essence of things being thus described, their insignificant variations could retain little importance and the study of these variations might well seem superficial. Mechanical science, the science of causes, was accordingly neglected, while the science of values, with the arts that express these values, was exclusively pursued. The reverse has now occurred and the spirit of life, innocent of any rationalizing discipline and deprived of an authoritative and adequate method of expression, has relapsed into miscellaneous and shallow exuberance. Religion and art have become short-winded. They have forgotten the old maxim that we should copy in order to be copied and remember in order to be remembered. It is true that the multiplicity of these incompetent efforts seems to many a compensation for their ill success, or even a ground for asserting their absolute superiority. Incompetence, when it flatters the passions, can always find a greater incompetence to approve of it. Indeed, some people would have regarded the Tower of Babel as the best academy of eloquence on account of the variety of oratorical methods prevailing there.

It is thus that the imagination of our time has relapsed into barbarism. But discipline of the heart and fancy is always so rare a thing that the neglect of it need not be supposed to involve any very terrible or obvious loss. The triumphs of reason have been few and partial at any time, and perfect works of art are almost unknown. The failure of art and reason, because their principle is ignored, is therefore hardly more conspicuous than it was when their principle, although perhaps acknowledged, was misunderstood or disobeyed. Indeed, to one who fixes his eye on the ideal goal, the greatest art often seems the greatest failure, because it alone reminds him of what it should have been. Trivial stimulations coming from vulgar objects, on the contrary, by making us forget altogether the possibility of a deep satisfaction, often succeed in interesting and in winning applause. The pleasure they give us is so brief and superficial that the wave of essential dis-

appointment which would ultimately drown it has not time to rise from the heart.

The poetry of barbarism is not without its charm. It can play with sense and passion the more readily and freely in that it does not aspire to subordinate them to a clear thought or a tenable attitude of the will. It can impart the transitive emotions which it expresses; it can find many partial harmonies of mood and fancy; it can, by virtue of its red-hot irrationality, utter wilder cries, surrender itself and us to more absolute passion, and heap up a more indiscriminate wealth of images than belong to poets of seasoned experience or of heavenly inspiration. Irrational stimulation may tire us in the end, but it excites us in the beginning; and how many conventional poets, tender and prolix, have there not been, who tire us now without ever having excited anybody? The power to stimulate is the beginning of greatness, and when the barbarous poet has genius, as he well may have, he stimulates all the more powerfully on account of the crudity of his methods and the recklessness of his emotions. The defects of such art—lack of distinction, absence of beauty, confusion of ideas, incapacity permanently to please—will hardly be felt by the contemporary public, if once its attention is arrested; for no poet is so undisciplined that he will not find many readers, if he finds readers at all, less disciplined than himself.

These considerations may perhaps be best enforced by applying them to two writers of great influence over the present generation who seem to illustrate them on different planes—Robert Browning and Walt Whitman. They are both analytic poets—poets who seek to reveal and express the elemental as opposed to the conventional; but the dissolution has progressed much farther in Whitman than in Browning, doubtless because Whitman began at a much lower stage of moral and intellectual organization; for the good will to be radical was present in both. The elements to which Browning reduces experience are still passions, characters, persons; Whitman carries the disintegration further and knows nothing but moods and particular images. The world of Browning is a world of history with civilization for its setting and with the conventional passions for its motive forces.

The world of Whitman is innocent of these things and contains only far simpler and more chaotic elements. In him the barbarism is much more pronounced; it is, indeed, avowed, and the "barbaric yawp" is sent "over the roofs of the world" in full consciousness of its inarticulate character; but in Browning the barbarism is no less real though disguised by a literary and scientific language, since the passions of civilized life with which he deals are treated as so many "barbaric yawps," complex indeed in their conditions, puffings of an intricate engine, but aimless in their vehemence and mere ebullitions of lustiness in adventurous and profoundly ungoverned souls.

Irrationality on this level is viewed by Browning with the same satisfaction with which, on a lower level, it is viewed by Whitman; and the admirers of each hail it as the secret of a new poetry which pierces to the quick and awakens the imagination to a new and genuine vitality. It is in the rebellion against discipline, in the abandonment of the ideals of classic and Christian tradition, that this rejuvenation is found. Both poets represent, therefore, and are admired for representing, what may be called the poetry of barbarism in the most accurate and descriptive sense of this word. For the barbarian is the man who regards his passions as their own excuse for being; who does not domesticate them either by understanding their cause or by conceiving their ideal goal. He is the man who does not know his derivations nor perceive his tendencies, but who merely feels and acts, valuing in his life its force and its filling, but being careless of its purpose and its form. His delight is in abundance and vehemence; his art, like his life, shows an exclusive respect for quantity and splendor of materials. His scorn for what is poorer and weaker than himself is only surpassed by his ignorance of what is higher.

II

WALT WHITMAN

THE works of Walt Whitman offer an extreme illustration of this phase of genius, both by their form and by their substance. It was the singularity of his literary form—the challenge it threw to the conventions of

verse and of language—that first gave Whitman notoriety: but this notoriety has become fame, because those incapacities and solecisms which glare at us from his pages are only the obverse of a profound inspiration and of a genuine courage. Even the idiosyncrasies of his style have a side which is not mere perversity or affectation; the order of his words, the procession of his images, reproduce the method of a rich, spontaneous, absolutely lazy fancy. In most poets such a natural order is modified by various governing motives—the thought, the metrical form, the echo of other poems in the memory. By Walt Whitman these conventional influences are resolutely banished. We find the swarms of men and objects rendered as they might strike the retina in a sort of waking dream. It is the most sincere possible confession of the lowest—I mean the most primitive—type of perception. All ancient poets are sophisticated in comparison and give proof of longer intellectual and moral training. Walt Whitman has gone back to the innocent style of Adam, when the animals filed before him one by one and he called each of them by its name.

In fact, the influences to which Walt Whitman was subject were as favorable as possible to the imaginary experiment of beginning the world over again. Liberalism and transcendentalism both harbored some illusions on that score; and they were in the air which our poet breathed. Moreover he breathed this air in America, where the newness of the material environment made it easier to ignore the fatal antiquity of human nature. When he afterward became aware that there was or had been a world with a history, he studied that world with curiosity and spoke of it not without a certain shrewdness. But he still regarded it as a foreign world and imagined, as not a few Americans have done, that his own world was a fresh creation, not amenable to the same laws as the old. The difference in the conditions blinded him, in his merely sensuous apprehension, to the identity of the principles.

His parents were farmers in central Long Island and his early years were spent in that district. The family seems to have been not too prosperous and somewhat nomadic; Whitman himself drifted through boyhood without much guidance. We find him now at

school, now helping the laborers at the farms, now wandering along the beaches of Long Island, finally at Brooklyn working in an apparently desultory way as a printer and sometimes as a writer for a local newspaper. He must have read or heard something, at this early period, of the English classics; his style often betrays the deep effect made upon him by the grandiloquence of the Bible, of Shakespeare, and of Milton. But his chief interest, if we may trust his account, was already in his own sensations. The aspects of Nature, the forms and habits of animals, the sights of cities, the movement and talk of common people, were his constant delight. His mind was flooded with these images, keenly felt and afterward to be vividly rendered with bold strokes of realism and imagination.

Many poets have had this faculty to seize the elementary aspects of things, but none has had it so exclusively; with Whitman the surface is absolutely all and the underlying structure is without interest and almost without existence. He had had no education and his natural delight in imbibing sensations had not been trained to the uses of practical or theoretical intelligence. He basked in the sunshine of perception and wallowed in the stream of his own sensibility, as later at Camden in the shallows of his favorite brook. Even during the Civil War, when he heard the drum-taps so clearly, he could only gaze at the picturesque and terrible aspects of the struggle, and linger among the wounded day after day with a canine devotion; he could not be aroused either to clear thought or to positive action. So also in his poems; a multiplicity of images pass before him and he yields himself to each in turn with absolute passivity. The world has no inside; it is a phantasmagoria of continuous visions, vivid, impressive, but monotonous and hard to distinguish in memory, like the waves of the sea or the decorations of some barbarous temple, sublime only by the infinite aggregation of parts.

This abundance of detail without organization, this wealth of perception without intelligence and of imagination without taste, makes the singularity of Whitman's genius. Full of sympathy and receptivity, with a wonderful gift of graphic characterization and an occasional rare grandeur of

diction, he fills us with a sense of the individuality and the universality of what he describes—it is a drop in itself yet a drop in the ocean. The absence of any principle of selection or of a sustained style enables him to render aspects of things and of emotion which would have eluded a trained writer. He is, therefore, interesting even where he is grotesque or perverse. He has accomplished, by the sacrifice of almost every other good quality, something never so well done before. He has approached common life without bringing in his mind any higher standard by which to criticize it; he has seen it, not in contrast with an ideal, but as the expression of forces more indeterminate and elementary than itself; and the vulgar, in this cosmic setting, has appeared to him sublime.

There is clearly some analogy between a mass of images without structure and the notion of an absolute democracy. Whitman, inclined by his genius and habits to see life without relief or organization, believed that his inclination in this respect corresponded with the spirit of his age and country, and that Nature and society, at least in the United States, were constituted after the fashion of his own mind. Being the poet of the average man, he wished all men to be specimens of that average, and being the poet of a fluid Nature, he believed that Nature was or should be a formless flux. This personal bias of Whitman's was further encouraged by the actual absence of distinction in his immediate environment. Surrounded by ugly things and common people, he felt himself happy, ecstatic, overflowing with a kind of patriarchal love. He accordingly came to think that there was a spirit of the New World which he embodied, and which was in complete opposition to that of the Old, and that a literature upon novel principles was needed to express and strengthen this American spirit.

Democracy was not to be merely a constitutional device for the better government of given nations, not merely a movement for the material improvement of the lot of the poorer classes. It was to be a social and a moral democracy and to involve an actual equality among all men. Whatever kept them apart and made it impossible for them to be messmates together was to be discarded. The literature of democracy was to ignore all

extraordinary gifts of genius or virtue, all distinction drawn even from great passions or romantic adventures. In Whitman's works, in which this new literature is foreshadowed, there is accordingly not a single character nor a single story. His only hero is Myself, the "single separate person," endowed with the primary impulses, with health, and with sensitiveness to the elementary aspects of Nature. The perfect man of the future, the prolific begetter of other perfect men, is to work with his hands, chanting the poems of some future Walt, some ideally democratic bard. Women are to have as nearly as possible the same character as men: the emphasis is to pass from family life and local ties to the friendship of comrades and the general brotherhood of man. Men are to be vigorous, comfortable, sentimental, and irresponsible.

This dream is, of course, unrealized and unrealizable, in America as elsewhere. Undeniably there are in America many suggestions of such a society and such a national character. But the growing complexity and fixity of institutions necessarily tends to obscure these traits of a primitive and crude democracy. What Whitman seized upon as the promise of the future was in reality the survival of the past. He sings the song of pioneers, but it is in the nature of the pioneer that the greater his success the quicker must be his transformation into something different. When Whitman made the initial and amorphous phase of society his ideal, he became the prophet of a lost cause. That cause was lost, not merely when wealth and intelligence began to take shape in the American Commonwealth, but it was lost at the very foundation of the world, when those laws of evolution were established which Whitman, like Rousseau, failed to understand. If we may trust Mr. Herbert Spencer, these laws involve a passage from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, and a constant progress at once in differentiation and in organization—all, in a word, that Whitman systematically deprecated or ignored. He is surely not the spokesman of the tendencies of his country, although he describes some aspects of its past and present condition: nor does he appeal to those whom he describes, but rather to the *dilettanti* he despises. He is regarded as representative

chiefly by foreigners, who look for some grotesque expression of the genius of so young and prodigious a people.

Whitman, it is true, loved and comprehended men; but this love and comprehension had the same limits as his love and comprehension of Nature. He observed truly and responded to his observation with genuine and pervasive emotion. A great gregariousness, an innocent tolerance of moral weakness, a genuine admiration for bodily health and strength, made him bubble over with affection for the generic human creature. Incapable of an ideal passion, he was full of the milk of human kindness. Yet, for all his acquaintance with the ways and thoughts of the common man of his choice, he did not truly understand him. For to understand people is to go much deeper than they go themselves; to penetrate to their characters and disentangle their inmost ideals. Whitman's insight into man did not go beyond a sensuous sympathy; it consisted in a vicarious satisfaction in their pleasures, and an instinctive love of their persons. It never approached a scientific or imaginative knowledge of their hearts.

Therefore Whitman failed radically in his dearest ambition: he can never be a poet of the people. For the people, like the early races whose poetry was ideal, are natural believers in perfection. They have no doubts about the absolute desirability of wealth and learning and power, none about the worth of pure goodness and pure love. Their chosen poets, if they have any, will be always those who have known how to paint these ideals in lively even if in gaudy colors. Nothing is farther from the common people than the corrupt desire to be primitive. They instinctively look toward a more exalted life, which they imagine to be full of distinction and pleasure, and the idea of that brighter existence fills them with hope or with envy or with humble admiration.

If the people are ever won over to hostility to such ideals, it is only because they are cheated by demagogues who tell them that if all the flowers of civilization were destroyed its fruits would become more abundant. A greater share of happiness, people think, would fall to their lot could they destroy everything beyond their own possible possessions. But they are made thus envious

and ignoble only by a deception: what they really desire is an ideal good for themselves which they are told they may secure by depriving others of their preëminence. Their hope is always to enjoy perfect satisfaction themselves; and therefore a poet who loves the picturesque aspects of labor and vagrancy will hardly be the poet of the poor. He may have described their figure and occupation, in neither of which they are much interested; he will not have read their souls. They will prefer to him any sentimental story-teller, any sensational dramatist, any moralizing poet; for they are hero-worshippers by temperament, and are too wise or too unfortunate to be much enamored of themselves or of the conditions of their existence.

Fortunately, the political theory that makes Whitman's principle of literary prophecy and criticism does not always inspire his chants, nor is it presented, even in his prose works, quite bare and unadorned. In *Democratic Vistas* we find it clothed with something of the same poetic passion and lighted up with the same flashes of intuition which we admire in the poems. Even there the temperament is finer than the ideas and the poet wiser than the thinker. His ultimate appeal is really to something more primitive and general than any social aspirations, to something more elementary than an ideal of any kind. He speaks to those minds and to those moods in which sensuality is touched with mysticism. When the intellect is in abeyance, when we would "turn and live with the animals, they are so placid and self-contained," when we are weary of conscience and of ambition, and would yield ourselves for a while to the dream of sense, Walt Whitman is a welcome companion. The images he arouses in us, fresh, full of light and health and of a kind of frankness and beauty, are prized all the more at such a time because they are not choice, but drawn perhaps from a hideous and sordid environment. For this circumstance makes them a better means of escape from convention and from that fatigue and despair which lurk not far beneath the surface of conventional life. In casting off with self-assurance and a sense of fresh vitality the distinctions of tradition and reason a man may feel, as he sinks back comfortably to a lower level of sense and instinct, that he is returning to

Nature or escaping into the infinite. Mysticism makes us proud and happy to renounce the work of intelligence, both in thought and in life, and persuades us that we become divine by remaining imperfectly human. Walt Whitman gives a new expression to this ancient and multiform tendency. He feels his own cosmic justification and he would lend the sanction of his inspiration to all loafers and holiday-makers. He would be the congenial patron of farmers and factory hands in their crude pleasures and pieties, as Pan was the patron of the shepherds of Arcadia: for he is sure that in spite of his hairiness and animality, the gods will acknowledge him as one of themselves and smile upon him from the serenity of Olympus.

III

ROBERT BROWNING

If we would do justice to Browning's work as a human document, and at the same time perceive its relation to the rational ideals of the imagination and to that poetry which passes into religion, we must keep, as in the case of Whitman, two things in mind. One is the genuineness of the achievement, the sterling quality of the vision and inspiration; these are their own justification when we approach them from below and regard them as manifesting a more direct or impassioned grasp of experience than is given to mildly blatant, convention-ridden minds. The other thing to remember is the short distance to which this comprehension is carried, its failure to approach any finality, or to achieve a recognition even of the traditional ideals of poetry and religion.

In the case of Walt Whitman such a failure will be generally felt; it is obvious that both his music and his philosophy are those of a barbarian, nay, almost of a savage. Accordingly there is need of dwelling rather on the veracity and simple dignity of his thought and art, on their expression of an order of ideas latent in all better experience. But in the case of Browning it is the success that is obvious to most people. Apart from a certain superficial grotesqueness to which we are soon accustomed, he easily arouses and engages the reader by the pithiness of his phrase, the volume of his passion, the vigor of his moral judgment, the liveliness of

his historical fancy. It is obvious that we are in the presence of a great writer, of a great imaginative force, of a master in the expression of emotion. What is perhaps not so obvious, but no less true, is that we are in the presence of a barbaric genius, of a truncated imagination, of a thought and an art inchoate and ill-digested, of a volcanic eruption that tosses itself quite blindly and ineffectually into the sky.

The points of comparison by which this becomes clear are perhaps not in every one's mind, although they are merely the elements of traditional culture, æsthetic and moral. Yet even without reference to ultimate ideals, one may notice in Browning many superficial signs of that deepest of all failures: the failure in rationality and the indifference to perfection. Such a sign is the turgid style, weighty without nobility, pointed without naturalness or precision. Another sign is the "realism" of the personages, who, quite like men and women in actual life, are always displaying traits of character and never attaining character as a whole. Other hints might be found in the structure of the poems, where the dramatic substance does not achieve a dramatic form; in the metaphysical discussion, with its confused prolixity and absence of result; in the moral ideal, where all energies figure without their ultimate purposes; in the religion, which breaks off the expression of this life in the middle, and finds in that suspense an argument for immortality. In all this, and much more that might be recalled, a person coming to Browning with the habits of a cultivated mind might see evidence of some profound incapacity in the poet; but more careful reflection is necessary to understand the nature of this incapacity, its cause, and the peculiar accent which its presence gives to those ideas and impulses which Browning stimulates in us.

There is the more reason for developing this criticism (which might seem needlessly hostile and which time and posterity will doubtless make in their own quiet and decisive fashion) in that Browning did not keep within the sphere of drama and analysis, where he was strong, but allowed his own temperament and opinions to vitiate his representation of life, so that he sometimes turned the expression of a violent passion

into the last word of what he thought a religion. He had a didactic vein, a habit of judging the spectacle he evoked and of loading the passions he depicted with his visible sympathy or scorn.

Now a chief support of Browning's popularity is that he is, for many, an initiator into the deeper mysteries of passion, a means of escaping from the moral poverty of their own lives and of feeling the rhythm and compulsion of the general striving. He figures, therefore, distinctly as a prophet, as a bearer of glad tidings, and it is easy for those who hail him as such to imagine that, knowing the labor of life so well, he must know something also of its fruits, and that in giving us the feeling of existence, he is also giving us its meaning. There is serious danger that a mind gathering from his pages the raw materials of truth, the unthreshed harvest of reality, may take him for a philosopher, for a rationalizer of what he describes. Awakening may be mistaken for enlightenment, and the galvanizing of torpid sensations and impulses for wisdom.

Against such fatuity reason should raise her voice. The vital and historic forces that produce illusions of this sort in large groups of men are indeed beyond the control of criticism. The ideas of passion are more vivid than those of memory, until they become memories in turn. They must be allowed to fight out their desperate battle against the laws of Nature and reason. But it is worth while in the meantime, for the sake of the truth and of a just philosophy, to meet the varying though perpetual charlatanism of the world with a steady protest. As soon as Browning is proposed to us as a leader, as soon as we are asked to be not the occasional patrons of his art, but the pupils of his philosophy, we have a right to express the radical dissatisfaction which we must feel, if we are rational, with his whole attitude and temper of mind.

The great dramatists have seldom dealt with perfectly virtuous characters. The great poets have seldom represented mythologies that would bear scientific criticism. But by an instinct which constituted their greatness they have cast these mixed materials furnished by life into forms congenial to the specific principles of their art, and by this transformation they have made accept-

able in the æsthetic sphere things that in the sphere of reality were evil or imperfect: in a word, their works have been beautiful as works of art. Or, if their genius exceeded that of the technical poet and rose to prophetic intuition, they have known how to create ideal characters, not possessed, perhaps, of every virtue accidentally needed in this world, but possessed of what is ideally better, of internal greatness and perfection. They have also known how to select and reconstruct their mythology so as to make it a true interpretation of moral life. When we read the maxims of Iago, Falstaff, or Hamlet, we are delighted if the thought strikes us as true, but we are not less delighted if it strikes us as false. These characters are not presented to us in order to enlarge our capacities of passion nor in order to justify themselves as processes of redemption; they are there, clothed in poetry and imbedded in plot, to entertain us with their imaginable feelings and their interesting errors. The poet, without being especially a philosopher, stands by virtue of his superlative genius on the plane of universal reason, far above the passionate experience which he overlooks and on which he reflects; and he raises us for the moment to his own level, to send us back again, if not better endowed for practical life, at least not unacquainted with speculation.

With Browning the case is essentially different. When his heroes are blinded by passion and warped by circumstance, as they almost always are, he does not describe the fact from the vantage-ground of the intellect and invite us to look at it from that point of view. On the contrary, his art is all self-expression or satire. For the most part his hero, like Whitman's, is himself; not appearing, as in the case of the American bard, *in puris naturalibus*, but masked in all sorts of historical and romantic finery. Sometimes, however, the personage, like Guido in *The Ring and the Book* or the "frustrate ghosts" of other poems, is merely a Marsyas, shown flayed and quivering to the greater glory of the poet's ideal Apollo. The impulsive utterances and the crudities of most of the speakers are passionately adopted by the poet as his own. He thus perverts what might have been a triumph of imagination into a failure of reason.

This circumstance has much to do with the fact that Browning, in spite of his extraordinary gift for expressing emotion, has hardly produced works purely and unconditionally delightful. They not only portray passion, which is interesting, but they betray it, which is odious. His art was still in the service of the will. He had not attained, in studying the beauty of things, that detachment of the phenomenon, that love of the form for its own sake, which is the secret of contemplative satisfaction. Therefore, the lamentable accidents of his personality and opinions, in themselves no worse than those of other mortals, passed into his art. He did not seek to elude them: he had no free speculative faculty to dominate them by. Or, to put the same thing differently, he was too much in earnest in his fictions, he threw himself too unreservedly into his creations. His imagination, like the imagination we have in dreams, was merely a vent for personal preoccupations. His art was inspired by purposes less simple and universal than the ends of imagination itself. His play of mind consequently could not be free or pure. The creative impulse could not reach its goal or manifest in any notable degree its own organic ideal.

We may illustrate these assertions by considering Browning's treatment of the passion of love, a passion to which he gives great prominence and in which he finds the highest significance.

Love is depicted by Browning with truth, with vehemence, and with the constant conviction that it is the supreme thing in life. The great variety of occasions in which it appears in his pages and the different degrees of elaboration it receives, leave it always of the same quality—the quality of passion. It never sinks into sensuality; in spite of its frequent extreme crudeness, it is always, in Browning's hands, a passion of the imagination, it is always love. On the other hand it never rises into contemplation: mingled as it may be with friendship, with religion, or with various forms of natural tenderness, it always remains a passion; it always remains a personal impulse, a hypnotization, with another person for its object or its cause. Kept within these limits it is represented, in a series of powerful sketches, which are for most readers the gems of the Browning

gallery, as the last word of experience, the highest phase of human life.

The woman yonder, there's no use in life
But just to obtain her! Heap earth's woes in one
And bear them—make a pile of all earth's joys
And spurn them, as they help or help not this;
Only, obtain her!

When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
Either hand
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
Of my face,
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
Each on each. . . .
O heart, O blood that freezes, blood that burns!
Earth's returns
For whole centuries of folly, noise, and sin—
Shut them in—
With their triumphs and their follies and the rest.
Love is best.

In the piece called *In a Gondola* the lady says to her lover:

Heart to heart
And lips to lips! Yet once more, ere we part,
Clasp me and make me thine, as mine thou art.

And he, after being surprised and stabbed in her arms, replies:

It was ordained to be so, sweet!—and best
Comes now, beneath thine eyes, upon thy dreast:
Still kiss me! Care not for the cowards; care
Only to put aside thy beauteous hair
My blood will hurt! The Three I do not scorn
To death, because they never lived, but I
Have lived indeed, and so—(yet one more kiss)—
can die.

We are not allowed to regard these expressions as the cries of souls blinded by the agony of passion and lust. Browning unmistakably adopts them as expressing his own highest intuitions. He so much admires the strength of this weakness that he does not admit that it is a weakness at all. It is with the strut of self-satisfaction, with the sensation, almost, of muscular Christianity, that he boasts of it through the mouth of one of his heroes, who is explaining to his mistress the motive of his faithful services as a minister of the queen:—

She thinks there was more cause
In love of power, high fame, pure loyalty?
Perhaps she fancies men wear out their lives
Chasing such shades. . . .
I worked because I want you with my soul.

Readers of the fifth chapter of this volume¹ need not be reminded here of the contrast which this method of understanding love offers to that adopted by the real masters of passion and imagination. They began with that crude emotion with which Browning ends; they lived it down, they exalted it by thought, they extracted the pure gold of it in a long purgation of discipline and suffering. The fierce paroxysm which for him is heaven, was for them the proof that heaven cannot be found on earth, that the value of experience is not in experience itself but in the ideals which it reveals. The intense, voluminous emotion, the sudden, overwhelming self-surrender in which he rests was for them the starting-point of a life of rational worship, of an austere and impersonal religion, by which the fire of love, kindled for a moment by the sight of some creature, was put, as it were, into a censer, to burn incense before every image of the Highest Good. Thus love ceased to be a passion and became the energy of contemplation: it diffused over the universe, natural and ideal, that light of tenderness and that faculty of worship which the passion of love often is first to quicken in a man's breast.

Of this art, recommended by Plato and practiced in the Christian Church by all adepts of the spiritual life, Browning knew absolutely nothing. About the object of love he had no misgivings. What could the object be except somebody or other? The important thing was to love intensely and to love often. He remained in the phenomenal sphere: he was a lover of experience; the ideal did not exist for him. No conception could be farther from his thought than the essential conception of any rational philosophy, namely, that feeling is to be treated as raw material for thought, and that the destiny of emotion is to pass into objects which shall contain all its value while losing all its formlessness. This transformation of sense and emotion into objects agreeable to the intellect, into clear ideas and beautiful things, is the natural work of reason; when it has been accomplished very imperfectly, or not at all, we have a barbarous mind, a mind full of chaotic sensations, objectless passions, and un-

digested ideas. Such a mind Browning's was, to a degree remarkable in one with so rich a heritage of civilization.

The nineteenth century, as we have already said, has nourished the hope of abolishing the past as a force while it studies it as an object; and Browning, with his fondness for a historical stage setting and for the gossip of history, rebelled equally against the Pagan and the Christian discipline. The "Soul" which he trusted in was the barbarous soul, the "Spontaneous Me" of his half-brother Whitman. It was a restless personal impulse, conscious of obscure depths within itself which it fancied to be infinite, and of a certain vague sympathy with wind and cloud and with the universal mutation. It was the soul that might have animated Attila and Alaric when they came down into Italy, a soul not incurious of the tawdriness and corruption of the strange civilization it beheld, but incapable of understanding its original spirit; a soul maintaining in the presence of that noble, unappreciated ruin all its own lordliness and energy, and all its native vulgarity.

Browning, who had not had the education traditional in his own country, used to say that Italy had been his university. But it was a school for which he was ill prepared, and he did not sit under its best teachers. For the superficial ferment, the worldly passions, and the crimes of the Italian Renaissance he had a keen interest and intelligence. But Italy has been always a civilized country, and beneath the trappings and suits of civilization which at that particular time it flaunted so gayly, it preserved a civilized heart to which Browning's insight could never penetrate. There subsisted in the best minds a trained imagination and a cogent ideal of virtue. Italy had a religion, and that religion permeated all its life, and was the background without which even its secular art and secular passions would not be truly intelligible. The most commanding and representative, the deepest and most appealing of Italian natures are permeated with this religious inspiration. A Saint Francis, a Dante, a Michael Angelo, breathe hardly anything else. Yet for Browning these men and what they represented may be said not to have existed. He saw, he studied, and he painted a decapitated Italy.

¹ The chapter is entitled *Platonic Love in Some Italian Poets*.

His vision could not mount so high as her head.

One of the elements of that higher tradition which Browning was not prepared to imbibe was the idealization of love. The passion he represents is lava hot from the crater, in no way molded, smelted, or refined. He had no thought of subjugating impulses into the harmony of reason. He did not master life, but was mastered by it. Accordingly the love he describes has no wings; it issues in nothing. His lovers "extinguish sight and speech, each on each"; sense, as he says elsewhere, drowning soul. The man in the gondola may well boast that he can die; it is the only thing he can properly do. Death is the only solution of a love that is tied to its individual object and inseparable from the alloy of passion and illusion within itself. Browning's hero, because he has loved intensely, says that he has lived; he would be right, if the significance of life were to be measured by the intensity of the feeling it contained, and if intelligence were not the highest form of vitality. But had that hero known how to love better and had he had enough spirit to dominate his love, he might perhaps have been able to carry away the better part of it and to say that he could not die; for one half of himself and of his love would have been dead already and the other half would have been eternal, having fed—

On death, that feeds on men;
And death once dead, there's no more dying then.

The irrationality of the passions which Browning glorifies, making them the crown of life, is so gross that at times he cannot help perceiving it.

How perplexed
Grows belief! Well, this cold clay clod
Was man's heart:
Crumble it, and what comes next? Is it God?

Yes, he will tell us. These passions and follies, however desperate in themselves and however vain for the individual, are excellent as parts of the dispensation of Providence:

Be hate that fruit or love that fruit,
It forwards the general deed of man,
And each of the many helps to recruit
The life of the race by a general plan,
Each living his own to boot.

If we doubt, then, the value of our own experience, even perhaps of our experience of love, we may appeal to the interdependence of goods and evils in the world to assure ourselves that, in view of its consequences elsewhere, this experience was great and important after all. We need not stop to consider this supposed solution, which bristles with contradictions; it would not satisfy Browning himself, if he did not back it up with something more to his purpose, something nearer to warm and transitive feeling. The compensation for our defeats, the answer to our doubts, is not to be found merely in a proof of the essential necessity and perfection of the universe; that would be cold comfort, especially to so uncontentplative a mind. No: that answer and compensation are to come very soon and very vividly to every private bosom. There is another life, a series of other lives, for this to happen in. Death will come, and—

I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new,
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to endue.

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the element's rage, the fiend-voices that rave
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again
And with God be the rest!

Into this conception of continued life Browning has put, as a collection of further passages might easily show, all the items furnished by fancy or tradition which at the moment satisfied his imagination—new adventures, reunion with friends, and even, after a severe strain and for a short while, a little peace and quiet. The gist of the matter is that we are to live indefinitely, that all our faults can be turned to good, all our unfinished business settled, and that therefore there is time for anything we like in this world and for all we need in the other. It is in spirit the direct opposite of the philosophic maxim of regarding the end, of taking care to leave a finished life and a perfect character behind us. It is the oppo-

site, also, of the religious *ememento mori*, of the warning that the time is short before we go to our account. According to Browning, there is no account: we have an infinite credit. With an unconscious and characteristic mixture of heathen instinct with Christian doctrine, he thinks of the other world as heaven, but of the life to be led there as of the life of Nature.

Aristotle observes that we do not think the business of life worthy of the gods, to whom we can only attribute contemplation; if Browning had had the idea of perfecting and rationalizing this life rather than of continuing it indefinitely, he would have followed Aristotle and the Church in this matter. But he had no idea of anything eternal; and so he gave, as he would probably have said, a filling to the empty Christian immortality by making every man busy in it about many things. And to the irrational man, to the boy, it is no unpleasant idea to have an infinite number of days to live through, an infinite number of dinners to eat, with an infinity of fresh fights and new love-affairs, and no end of last rides together.

But it is a mere euphemism to call this perpetual vagrancy a development of the soul. A development means the unfolding of a definite nature, the gradual manifestation of a known idea. A series of phases, like the successive leaps of a water-fall, is no development. And Browning has no idea of an intelligible good which the phases of life might approach and with reference to which they might constitute a progress. His notion is simply that the game of life, the exhilaration of action, is inexhaustible. You may set up your tenpins again after you have bowled them over, and you may keep up the sport for ever. The point is to bring them down as often as possible with a master-stroke and a big bang. That will tend to invigorate in you that self-confidence which in this system passes for faith. But it is unmeaning to call such an exercise heaven, or to talk of being "with God" in such a life, in any sense in which we are not with God already and under all circumstances. Our destiny would rather be, as Browning himself expresses it in a phrase which Attila or Alaric might have composed, "bound dizzily to the wheel of change to slake the thirst of God."

Such an optimism and such a doctrine of immortality can give no justification to experience which it does not already have in its detached parts. Indeed, those dogmas are not the basis of Browning's attitude, not conditions of his satisfaction in living, but rather overflowings of that satisfaction. The present life is presumably a fair average of the whole series of "adventures brave and new" which fall to each man's share; were it not found delightful in itself, there would be no motive for imagining and asserting that it is reproduced *in infinitum*. So too if we did not think that the evil in experience is actually utilized and visibly swallowed up in its good effects, we should hardly venture to think that God could have regarded as a good something which has evil for its condition and which is for that reason profoundly sad and equivocal. But Browning's philosophy of life and habit of imagination do not require the support of any metaphysical theory. His temperament is perfectly self-sufficient and primary; what doctrines he has are suggested by it and are too loose to give it more than a hesitant expression; they are quite powerless to give it any justification which it might lack on its face.

It is the temperament, then, that speaks; we may brush aside as unsubstantial, and even as distorting, the web of arguments and theories which it has spun out of itself. And what does the temperament say? That life is an adventure, not a discipline; that the exercise of energy is the absolute good, irrespective of motives or of consequences. These are the maxims of a frank barbarism; nothing could express better the lust of life, the dogged unwillingness to learn from experience, the contempt for rationality, the carelessness about perfection, the admiration for mere force, in which barbarism always betrays itself. The vague religion which seeks to justify this attitude is really only another outburst of the same irrational impulse.

In Browning this religion takes the name of Christianity, and identifies itself with one or two Christian ideas arbitrarily selected; but at heart it has far more affinity to the worship of Thor or of Odin than to the religion of the Cross. The zest of life becomes a cosmic emotion; we lump the whole together and cry, "Hurrah for the Universe!" A faith

which is thus a pure matter of lustiness and inebriation rises and falls, attracts or repels, with the ebb and flow of the mood from which it springs. It is invincible because unseizable; it is as safe from refutation as it is rebellious to embodiment. But it cannot enlighten or correct the passions on which it feeds. Like a servile priest, it flatters them in the name of Heaven. It cloaks irrationality in sanctimony; and its admiration for every bluff folly, being thus justified by a theory, becomes a positive fanaticism, eager to defend any wayward impulse.

Such barbarism of temper and thought could hardly, in a man of Browning's independence and spontaneity, be without its counterpart in his art. When a man's personal religion is passive, as Shakespeare's seems to have been, and is adopted without question or particular interest from the society around him, we may not observe any analogy between it and the free creations of that man's mind. Not so when the religion is created afresh by the private imagination; it is then merely one among many personal works of art, and will naturally bear a family likeness to the others. The same individual temperament, with its limitations and its bias, will appear in the art which has appeared in the religion. And such is the case with Browning. His limitations as a poet are the counterpart of his limitations as a moralist and theologian; only in the poet they are not so regrettable. Philosophy and religion are nothing if not ultimate; it is their business to deal with general principles and final aims. Now it is in the conception of things fundamental and ultimate that Browning is weak; he is strong in the conception of things immediate. The pulse of the emotion, the bobbing up of the thought, the streaming of the reverie—these he can note down with picturesque force or imagine with admirable fecundity.

Yet the limits of such excellence are narrow, for no man can safely go far without the guidance of reason. His long poems have no structure—for that name cannot be given to the singular mechanical division of *The Ring and the Book*. Even his short poems have no completeness, no limpidity. They are little torsos made broken so as to stimulate the reader to the restoration of their missing legs and arms. What is admirable in them is

pregnancy of phrase, vividness of passion and sentiment, heaped-up scraps of observation, occasional flashes of light, occasional beauties of versification,—all like

the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match.

There is never anything largely composed in the spirit of pure beauty, nothing devotedly finished, nothing simple and truly just. The poet's mind cannot reach equilibrium; at best he oscillates between opposed extravagances; his final word is still a *boutade*, still an explosion. He has no sustained nobility of style. He affects with the reader a confidential and vulgar manner, so as to be more sincere and to feel more at home. Even in the poems where the effort at impersonality is most successful, the dramatic disguise is usually thrown off in a preface, epilogue or parenthesis. The author likes to remind us of himself by some confidential wink or genial poke in the ribs, by some little interlarded sneer. We get in these tricks of manner a taste of that essential vulgarity, that indifference to purity and distinction, which is latent but pervasive in all the products of this mind. The same disdain of perfection which appears in his ethics appears here in his verse, and impairs its beauty by allowing it to remain too often obscure, affected, and grotesque.

Such a correspondence is natural: for the same powers of conception and expression are needed in fiction, which, if turned to reflection, would produce a good philosophy. Reason is necessary to the perception of high beauty. Discipline is indispensable to art. Work from which these qualities are absent must be barbaric; it can have no ideal form and must appeal to us only through the sensuousness and profusion of its materials. We are invited by it to lapse into a miscellaneous appreciativeness, into a subservience to every detached impression. And yet, if we would only reflect even on these disordered beauties, we should see that the principle by which they delight us is a principle by which an ideal, an image of perfection, is inevitably evoked. We can have no pleasure or pain, nor any preference whatsoever, without implicitly setting up a standard of excellence, an ideal of what would satisfy us there. To make these implicit ideals explicit,

to catch their hint, to work out their theme, and express clearly to ourselves and to the world what they are demanding in the place of the actual—that is the labor of reason and the task of genius. The two cannot be divided. Clarification of ideas and disentanglement of values are as essential to æsthetic activity as to intelligence. A failure of reason is a failure of art and taste.

The limits of Browning's art, like the limits of Whitman's, can therefore be understood by considering his mental habit. Both poets had powerful imaginations, but the type of their imaginations was low. In Whitman imagination was limited to marshaling sensations in single file; the embroideries he made around that central line were simple and insignificant. His energy was concentrated on that somewhat animal form of contemplation, of which, for the rest, he was a great, perhaps an unequaled master. Browning rose above that level; with him sensation is usually in the background; he is not particularly a poet of the senses or of ocular vision. His favorite subject-matter is rather the stream of thought and feeling in the mind; he is the poet of soliloquy. Nature and life as they really are, rather than as they may appear to the ignorant and passionate participant in them, lie beyond his range. Even in his best dramas, like *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* or *Colombe's Birthday*, the interest remains in the experience of the several persons as they explain it to us. The same is the case in *The Ring and the Book*, the conception of which, in twelve monstrous soliloquies, is a striking evidence of the poet's predilection for this form.

The method is, to penetrate by sympathy rather than to portray by intelligence. The most authoritative insight is not the poet's or the spectator's, aroused and enlightened by the spectacle, but the various heroes' own, in their moment of intensest passion. We therefore miss the tragic relief and exaltation, and come away instead with the uncomfortable feeling that an obstinate folly is apparently the most glorious and choice-worthy thing in the world. This is evidently the poet's own illusion, and those who do not happen to share it must feel that if life were really as irrational as he thinks it, it would be not only profoundly discouraging, which it often is, but profoundly disgusting,

which it surely is not; for at least it reveals the ideal which it fails to attain.

This ideal Browning never disentangles. For him the crude experience is the only end, the endless struggle the only ideal, and the perturbed "Soul" the only organon of truth. The arrest of his intelligence at this point, before it has envisaged any rational object, explains the arrest of his dramatic art at soliloquy. His immersion in the forms of self-consciousness prevents him from dramatizing the real relations of men and their thinkings to one another, to Nature, and to destiny. For in order to do so he would have had to view his characters from above (as Cervantes did, for instance), and to see them not merely as they appeared to themselves, but as they appear to reason. This higher attitude, however, was not only beyond Browning's scope, it was positively contrary to his inspiration. Had he reached it, he would no longer have seen the universe through the "Soul," but through the intellect, and he would not have been able to cry, "How the world is made for each one of us!" On the contrary, the "Soul" would have figured only in its true conditions, in all its ignorance and dependence, and also in its essential teachableness, a point against which Browning's barbaric willfulness particularly rebelled. Rooted in his persuasion that the soul is essentially omnipotent and that to live hard can never be to live wrong, he remained fascinated by the march and method of self-consciousness, and never allowed himself to be weaned from that romantic fatuity by the energy of rational imagination, which prompts us not to regard our ideas as mere filling of a dream, but rather to build on them the conception of permanent objects and overruling principles, such as Nature, society, and the other ideals of reason. A full-grown imagination deals with these things, which do not obey the laws of psychological progression, and cannot be described by the methods of soliloquy.

We thus see that Browning's sphere, though more subtle and complex than Whitman's, was still elementary. It lay far below the spheres of social and historical reality in which Shakespeare moved; far below the comprehensive and cosmic sphere of every great epic poet. Browning did not even reach the intellectual plane of such

contemporary poets as Tennyson and Matthew Arnold, who, whatever may be thought of their powers, did not study consciousness for itself, but for the sake of its meaning and of the objects which it revealed. The best things that come into a man's consciousness are the things that take him out of it—the rational things that are independent of his personal perception and of his personal existence. These he approaches with his reason, and they, in the same measure, endow him with their immortality. But precisely these things—the objects of science and of the constructive imagination—Browning always saw askance, in the outskirts of his field of vision, for his eye was fixed and riveted on the soliloquizing Soul. And this Soul being, to his apprehension, irrational, did not give itself over to those permanent objects which might otherwise have occupied it, but ruminated on its own accidental emotions, on its love-affairs, and on its hopes of going on so ruminating for ever.

The pathology of the human mind—for the normal, too, is pathological when it is not referred to the ideal—the pathology of the human mind is a very interesting subject, demanding great gifts and great ingenuity in its treatment. Browning ministers to this interest, and possesses this ingenuity and these gifts. More than any other poet he keeps a kind of speculation alive in the now large body of sentimental, eager-minded people, who no longer can find in a definite religion a form and language for their imaginative life. That this service is greatly appreciated speaks well for the ineradicable tendency in man to study himself and his destiny. We do not deny the achievement when we point out its nature and limitations. It does not cease to be something because it is taken to be more than it is.

In every imaginative sphere the nineteenth century has been an era of chaos, as it has been an era of order and growing organization in the spheres of science and of industry. An ancient doctrine of the philosophers asserts

that to chaos the world must ultimately return. And what is perhaps true of the cycles of cosmic change is certainly true of the revolutions of culture. Nothing lasts for ever: languages, arts, and religions disintegrate with time. Yet the perfecting of such forms is the only criterion of progress; the destruction of them the chief evidence of decay. Perhaps fate intends that we should have, in our imaginative decadence, the consolation of fancying that we are still progressing, and that the disintegration of religion and the arts is bringing us nearer to the protoplasm of sensation and passion. If energy and actuality are all that we care for, chaos is as good as order, and barbarism as good as discipline—better, perhaps, since impulse is not then restrained within any bounds of reason or beauty. But if the powers of the human mind are at any time adequate to the task of digesting experience, clearness and order inevitably supervene. The molds of thought are imposed upon Nature, and the conviction of a definite truth arises together with the vision of a supreme perfection. It is only at such periods that the human animal vindicates his title of rational. If such an epoch should return, people will no doubt retrace our present gropings with interest and see in them gradual approaches to their own achievement. Whitman and Browning might well figure then as representatives of our time. For the merit of being representative cannot be denied them. The mind of our age, like theirs, is choked with materials, emotional, and inconclusive. They merely aggravate our characteristics, and their success with us is due partly to their own absolute strength and partly to our common weakness. If once, however, this imaginative weakness could be overcome, and a form found for the crude matter of experience, men might look back from the height of a new religion and a new poetry upon the present troubles of the spirit; and perhaps even these things might then be pleasant to remember.

PAUL ELMER MORE (1864-)

Mr. More was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on 12 December, 1864. He was graduated from Washington University in 1887. Five years later he received a master's degree from that institution, and in 1893 he received the same degree from Harvard University, after a period of advanced study there. He did not proceed to take a doctorate of philosophy, because, as he has said, he wished to learn as much as possible during his period of study. (He has since received several honorary doctoral degrees, and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.) In 1894-1895 he taught Sanskrit at Harvard, and during the two following academic years taught both Sanskrit and Greek at Bryn Mawr College. But, though he had become an oriental and classical philologist, he had pursued his studies not as ends in themselves, but as means to a disciplined and full understanding of life, and he was not content to pass his days in college class-rooms as the painstaking slave of indifferent youth. He had already, in fact, determined upon a literary career, and had, in 1890, published a slender volume of poems, the result of unsatisfying experiments with that medium of expression, and also, in 1894, another small experimental volume, *The Great Refusal*, in which meditative verse and prose were combined under the form of a series of letters addressed to a lady by "a dreamer in Gotham." He now, in 1897, abandoned teaching and spent the following two years in retirement from the world, living in a modest hermitage near Shelburne, New Hampshire. He withdrew from society because, "having found it impossible to educe any meaning from the tangled habits of mankind while he himself was whirled about in the imbroglio, he had determined to try the efficacy of undisturbed meditation at a distance. . . . He had been deafened by the 'indistinguishable roar' of the streets, and could make no sense of the noisy jargon of the market place." He later confessed that "he returned to civilization as ignorant of its meaning as when he left it," but his object also was to increase his self-knowledge, and in this he was probably more successful, while, in addition, he determined that his work was to be that of a critic of life and letters. During this period he published his third volume, *A Century of Indian Epigrams* (1898), verse-translations "chiefly from the Sanskrit of Bhartrihari," a delightful little book, the product not only of an accomplished scholar, but also of one who had now attained a command of his delicate medium well-nigh perfect for the purpose in hand.

In 1899 Mr. More left Shelburne. In 1901 he became the literary editor of *The Independent*, in 1903 literary editor of the New York *Evening Post*, and in 1909 editor of *The Nation*. The first volume of his essays in criticism appeared in 1904, over the title *Shelburne Essays*—a title which has been kept for succeeding volumes, of which ten have been published at intervals since 1904, so that at present the essays fill eleven volumes. They form a body of criticism which is unrivaled in America not merely because of its quantity, but because of its remarkable quality—its informed maturity, urbanity, and scrupulousness, its capable and often felicitous style, and its depth of philosophic background which has insured steadily sober and weighty judgments and a criticism not narrowly literary, but one embracing and illuminating life as well.

In 1914 Mr. More resigned his editorship of *The Nation*, and since then has lived in Princeton, New Jersey, where he has in recent years given an annual course of lectures in the University. His chief work during these years, however, has been the composition of a series of volumes (still in progress) entitled *The Greek Tradition*. In his student days he became a lover and follower of Plato as well as of the wisdom of Indian sages, and the Platonic element in his criticism has been one of its notable and strengthening characteristics. Years of study and reflection bred in him the conviction that the Platonic conception of human nature as dual and related in one of its branches to a realm of immaterial reality, to which we may attain by the purgation and discipline of the soul, was one which "lies behind all our Western philosophy and religion," and one without which we should have remained barbarians. He concluded, at the same time, that this Platonic realization of an immaterial life had been corrupted and perverted during recent centuries, and is now, with the disappearing authority of Christian dogma, in danger of being lost to us, opening us to the peril of a relapse to barbarism. Hence he determined upon the composition of a series of studies, setting forth what he regards as the central and fruitful elements in Platonism, tracing their fortunes through the later philosophical schools of Greece, examining their fusion with early Christianity, and perhaps treating of certain modern attempts at securing and continuing the tradition. An introductory volume, *Platonism*, was published in 1917, and there have since followed *The Religion of Plato* (1921), *Hellenistic Philosophies* (1923), and *The Christ of the*

New Testament (1924). These volumes constitute a memorable achievement not only because of the importance of the effort to rescue and illumine afresh that spiritual conception of life which lies at the base of our civilization, but also because in an age of blind specialism they are the work of a man who, not merely a competent classical scholar, is a man of letters as well, with an easy command of a fine and beautiful style. In both form and content, indeed, Mr. More's essays and his later volumes are wisely calculated for a long life of steady influence in the direction of sanity, sobriety, and the profound illumination alike of the central nature and of the higher possibilities of our distinctively human lives.

LAFCADIO HEARN ¹

THERE was something almost as romantic in Mr. Hearn's life as in his books. He was, I believe, the child of an Irish father and a woman of the Greek islands; his early manhood he passed in this country, and then converted himself into a subject of the Mikado, taking a Japanese wife and adopting the customs and religion of the land. On his death this winter (1904) he was buried with full Buddhist rites, being the first foreigner so distinguished in Japan; and almost his last act was to pass by cablegram on the final proofs of his most serious attempt to transfer the illusive mystery of the Orient into Western speech. His *Japan, an Interpretation* thus rounded out what must be deemed one of the most extraordinary artistic achievements of modern days. For it is as an art of strange subtlety that we should regard his literary work, an art that, like some sympathetic menstruum, has fused into one compound three elements never before brought together.

In the mere outward manner of this art there is, to be sure, nothing mysterious. One recognizes immediately throughout his writing that sense of restraint joined with a power of after-suggestion, which he has described as appertaining to Japanese poetry, but which is no less his own by native right. There is a term, *ittakkiri*, it seems, meaning "all gone," or "entirely vanished," which is applied contemptuously by the Japanese

to verse that tells all and trusts nothing to the reader's imagination. Their praise they reserve for compositions that leave in the mind the thrilling of a something unsaid. "Like the single stroke of a bell, the perfect poem should set murmuring and undulating, in the mind of the hearer, many a ghostly aftertone of long duration." Now these ghostly reverberations are precisely the effect of the simplest of Mr. Hearn's pictures. Let him describe, for instance, the impression produced by walking down the deep cañon of Broadway, between those vast structures, beautiful but sinister, where one feels depressed by the mere sensation of enormous creative life without sympathy and of un-resting power without pity,—let him describe this terror of Broadway, and in a few words he shall set ringing within you long pulsations of emotion which reach down to the depths of experience. Or, let him relate by mere allusion the story of hearing a girl say, "Good-night" to some one parting from her in a London park, and there shall be awakened in your mind ghostly aftertones that bring back memories of the saddest separations and regrets of life. He employs the power of suggestion through perfect restraint.

But this self-restraint and suggestive style is merely the instrument, the manner, so to speak, of his art. If we examine the actual substance of his writings, we shall discover that it is borrowed from three entirely distinct, in fact almost mutually destructive, philosophies, any one of which alone would afford material for the genius of an ordinary writer. He stands and proclaims his mysteries at the meeting of three ways. To the religious instinct of India,—Buddhism in particular,—which history has engrafted on the æsthetic sense of Japan, Mr. Hearn brings the interpreting spirit of Occidental science; and these three traditions (Hindu, Japanese, and European) are fused by the peculiar sympathies of his mind into one rich and novel compound,—a compound so rare

¹ This and the two following essays are here reprinted by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers. The present essay comes from *Shelburne Essays*, Second Series (1905). It was originally published, in slightly different form, in *The Atlantic Monthly* (February, 1903) before Hearn's death. Hearn was not on good terms with the house which then published the *Atlantic*, and which had formerly published several of his books, but was so highly pleased with this essay when he saw it that he forgot his resentment and not only wrote to the editor (Bliss Perry) to tell of his pleasure, but also sent him a story for the *Atlantic*, which he said he hoped he would accept, with or without payment.

as to have introduced into literature a psychological sensation unknown before. More than any other recent author, he has added a new thrill to our intellectual experience.

Of Japan, which gives the most obvious substratum to Mr. Hearn's work, it has been said that her people, since the days of ancient Greece, are the only genuine artists of the world; and in a manner this is true. There was a depth and pregnancy in the Greek imagination which made of Greek art something far more universally significant than the frail loveliness of Japanese creation, but not the Greeks themselves surpassed, or even equaled, the Japanese in their all-embracing love of decorative beauty. To read the story of the daily life of these people, as recorded by Mr. Mortimer Menpes and other travelers, is to be brought into contact with a national temperament so far removed from Western comprehension as to seem to most of us a tale from fairyland. When, for instance, Mr. Menpes, with a Japanese friend, visited Danjuro, he found a single exquisite *kakemono*, or painting, displayed in the great actor's chamber. On admiring its beauty, he was told by the friend that Danjuro had taken pains to learn the precise character of his visitor's taste, and only then had exhibited this particular picture. To the Japanese the hanging of a *kakemono* or the arranging of a bough of blossoms is a serious function of life. The placing of flowers is indeed an exact science, to the study of which a man may devote seven years, even fourteen years, before he will be acknowledged a master. Nature herself is subjected to this elaborate system of training, and often what in a Japanese landscape seems to a foreigner the exuberance of natural growth is really the work of patient human artifice.

There is no accident [writes Mr. Menpes] in the beautiful curves of the trees that the globe-trotter so justly admires: these trees have been trained and shaped and forced to form a certain decorative pattern, and the result is—perfection. We in the West labor under the delusion that if Nature were to be allowed to have her sweet way, she would always be beautiful. But the Japanese have gone much farther than this: they realize that Nature does not always do the right thing; they know that occasionally trees will grow up to form ugly lines; and they know exactly how to adapt and

help her. She is to them like some beautiful musical instrument, finer than any ever made by human hands, but still an instrument, with harmonies to be coaxed out.

And the same æsthetic delicacy, touched with artificiality if you will, pervades the literature of this people. We are accustomed, and rightly, to regard the Japanese as a nation of imitators. But their poetry, we are assured by Mr. Hearn, is the one original art which they have not borrowed from China, or from any other country; and nowhere better than in their poetry can we observe the swiftness and dexterity of their imagination and that exquisite reserve with its haunting echo in the memory. To reproduce in English the peculiar daintiness of these poems is, we are told and can well believe, quite an impossibility; but from the seemingly careless translations scattered through Mr. Hearn's pages we do at least form some notion of their art in the original. Many of these stanzas are mere bits of folklore or the work of unknown singers, like this tiny picture of the cicada:

Lo! on the topmost pine, a solitary cicada
Vainly attempts to clasp one last red beam of sun.

That is light enough in English, but even one entirely ignorant of the Japanese language can see that, in comparison with the rhythm of the original,¹ it is like the step of a quadruped compared with the fluttering of a moth. It contains only sixteen syllables in the original; and indeed all these poems are wrought into the brief compass of a stanza, like certain fragile little vases painted inside and out which are so highly prized by connoisseurs. Yet these tiny word-paintings, by virtue of their cunning restraint, are capable at times of gathering into their loveliness echoes of emotion as wide-reaching as love and as deep as the grave:

Perhaps a freak of the wind—yet perhaps a sign
of remembrance,—
This fall of a single leaf on the water I pour for
the dead.

.

I whispered a prayer at the grave: a butterfly rose
and fluttered—

Thy spirit, perhaps, dear friend!

¹ Sémi hitotsu
Matsu no yū-hi wo
Kakaé-keri. (Author's note.)

To have been able to convey through the coarser medium of English prose something of this æsthetic grace, this deftness of touch, and this suggestiveness of restraint, would in itself deserve no slight praise. But beneath all this artistic delicacy lies some reminiscence of India's austere religious thought, a sense of the nothingness of life strangely exiled among this people of graceful artists, yet still more strangely assimilated by them; and this, too, Mr. Hearn has been able to reproduce. We feel this shadow of India's faith lurking in the sunshine of many of the lightest of the stanzas,—a touch of swift exotic poignancy, if nothing more. We feel it still more strongly in such poems as these, which are inspired by the consciousness of endless change and of unceasing birth and death and again birth:

All things change, we are told, in this world of
change and sorrow;
But love's way never changes of promising never
to change.

Even the knot of the rope tying our boats together
Knotted was long ago by some love in a former
birth.

Endless change, a ceaseless coming and going, and the past throwing its shadow on into the future,—that is the very essence of Hindu philosophy; but how the tone of this philosophy has itself become altered in passing from the valley of the Ganges to the decorated island of the Mikado! Over and over again Buddha repeats the essential law of being, that all things are made up of constituent parts and are subject to flux and change, that all things are impermanent. It is the *All things pass and nothing abides* of the Greek philosopher, deepened with the intensity of emotion that makes of philosophy a religion. In this ever-revolving wheel of existence one fact only is certain, *karma*, the law of cause and effect which declares that every present state is the effect of some previous act and that every present act must inevitably bear its fruit in some future state. As a man soweth so shall he reap. We are indeed the creatures of a fate which we ourselves have builded by the deeds of a former life. We are bound in chains which we ourselves have riveted, yet still our desires are free, and as our desires

shape themselves, so we act and build up our coming fate, our karma; and as our desires abnegate themselves, so we cease to act and become liberated from the world. Endless change subject to the law of cause and effect—not even our personality remains constant in this meaningless flux, for it too is made up of constituent parts and is dissolved at death as the body is dissolved, leaving only its karma to build up the new personality with the new body. From the perception of this universal impermanence springs the so-called "Truth" of Buddhism, that sorrow is the attribute of all existence. Birth is sorrow, old age is sorrow, death is sorrow, every desire of the heart is sorrow; and the mission of Buddha was to deliver men out of the bondage of this sorrow as from the peril of a burning house. The song of victory uttered by Gotama when the great enlightenment shone upon him, and he became the Buddha, was the cry of a man who has escaped a great evil.

But because the Buddhist so dwells on the impermanence and sorrow of existence, he is not therefore properly called a pessimist. On the contrary, the one predominant note of Buddhism is joy, for it too is a gospel of glad tidings. The builders who rear these prison houses of life are nothing other than the desires of our own hearts, and these we may control though all else is beyond our power. To the worldly this teaching of Buddha may seem wrapped in pessimistic gloom, for deliverance to them must be only another name for annihilation; but to the spiritually minded it brought ineffable joy, for they knew that deliverance meant the passing out of the bondage of personality into a freedom of whose nature no tongue could speak. It is an austere faith, hardly suited, in its purer form, for the sentimental and vacillating,—austere in its recognition of sorrow, austere in its teaching of spiritual joy.

Yet the wonderful adaptability of Buddhism is shown by its acceptance among the Japanese, certainly of all peoples the most dissimilar in temperament to the ancient Hindus. Here the brooding of the Hindu over the law of impermanence melts into the peculiar sensitiveness to fleeting impressions so characteristic of the Japanese, and the delicacy of their æsthetic taste is

enhanced by this half-understood spiritual insight. And it deepens their temperament: I think that the feeling awakened by all these dainty stanzas of something not said but only hinted, that the avoidance of *ittakkiri* to which Mr. Hearn alludes, the echoing reverberations that haunt us after the single stroke of the bell, are due to the residuum of Hindu philosophy left in these vases of Japanese art. "Buddhism," writes Mr. Hearn, "taught that nature was a dream, an illusion, a phantasmagoria; but it also taught men [men of Japan, he should say] how to seize the fleeting impressions of that dream, and how to interpret them in relation to the highest truth."

Buddhism when it passed over to Japan came into contact with the national religion of Shinto, a kind of ancestor-worship, which proclaimed that the world of the living was directly governed by the world of the dead. On this popular belief the doctrine of karma was readily engrafted, and the two flourished henceforth side by side. Faith in the protecting presence of ancestors and faith in the present efficacy of our own multitudinous preëxistence were inextricably confused. To the Japanese Buddhist the past does not die, but lives on without end, involving the present in an infinite web of invisible influences not easily comprehensible to the Western mind.

And the Indian horror of impermanence and the rapture of deliverance have suffered like transformation with their causes. First of all, the sharp contrast between the horror and the joy is lightened. The sorrow fades to a fanciful feeling of regret for the beauty of the passing moment,—the same regret that speaks through a thousand Western songs such as Herrick's "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may," and Malherbe's "*Et rose elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses*," but touched here in Japanese poetry with a little mystery and made more insistent by some echo of Hindu brooding. And the joy, severed from its spiritual sustenance, loses its high ecstasy and becomes almost indistinguishable from regret. Sorrow, too, and joy are impermanent, and the enlightened mind dwells lingeringly and fondly on each fair moment garnered from the waste of Time. Here is no longer the spiritual exaltation, the *dhyâna*, of the Indian monk, but the

charmed impressions of the artist. The religion of the Ganges has assumed in Japan the mask of æsthetic emotionalism.

Now this refinement of emotionalism Mr. Hearn by his peculiar temperament has been able to reproduce almost miraculously in the coarser fiber of English. But more specially he has sought to interpret the deeper influence of India on Japan,—the thoughts and images in which we see the subtlety of the Japanese turned aside into a strange new psychology. One may suppose that some tendency to mingle grace and beauty with haunting suggestions was inherent in the Japanese temper from the beginning, but certainly the particular form of imagination that runs through most of the tales Mr. Hearn has translated is not the product of Japan alone. Nor is it purely Hindu: the literature of India includes much that is grotesque but hardly a touch of the weird or ghostly, for its religious tone is too austere and lacks the suggestive symbolism which that quality demands. Out of the blending of the stern sense of impermanence and moral responsibility with the flower-like beauty of Japan there arises this new feeling of the weird. How intimately the two tempers are blended and how rare their product is, may be seen in such sketches as that called *Ingwa-banashi: A Tale of Karma*.

Had it been that Mr. Hearn's art sufficed only to reproduce the delicacy and haunting strangeness of Japanese tales, he would have performed a notable but scarcely an extraordinary service to letters. But into the study of these byways of Oriental literature he has carried a third element, the dominant idea of Occidental science; and this element he has wedded with Hindu religion and Japanese æstheticism in a union as bewildering as it is voluptuous. In this triple combination lies his real claim to high originality.

Now the fact is well known to those who have studied Buddhism at its genuine sources that our modern conception of evolution fits into Buddhist psychology more readily and completely than into any dogmatic theology of the West. It is natural, therefore, that the Western authors quoted most freely by Mr. Hearn in support of his Oriental meditations should be Huxley and Herbert Spencer. For the most part these allusions to Western science are merely made in passing. But in

one essay, that on *The Idea of Preëxistence*, he endeavors with something of philosophic system to develop the harmony between evolution and the Buddhist conception of previous existences, a conception which, as he shows, has little in common with the crude form of metempsychosis embodied by Wordsworth in such poems as *Fidelity* and *Intimations of Immortality*. To justify his theory he turns to Professor Huxley and quotes these words: "None but very hasty thinkers will reject it on the ground of inherent absurdity. Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the world of reality; and it may claim such support as the great argument from analogy is capable of supplying." Again, in his essay on *Nirvâna* he compares the doctrine of impermanence, out of which the conception of Nirvâna springs as a natural corollary, with similar ideas in evolutionary science. "Every feeling and thought," so he quotes from Herbert Spencer, "being but transitory; nay, the objects amid which life is passed, though less transitory, being severally in the course of losing their individualities, whether quickly or slowly,—we learn that the one thing permanent is the Unknowable Reality hidden under all these changing shapes."

The parallel is at once apt and misleading. In both Oriental faith and Occidental science we do indeed have the conception of all phenomena, including that ultimate phenomenon which we name our personality,—we do indeed have the conception of these as suffering endless flux and change behind which lies a permanent inexpressible Reality. The parallel so far is close and makes possible the peculiar blending of traditions which, as I have said, is the chief mark of originality in Mr. Hearn's essays. But in the next step the two diverge as far as the rising sun is from the setting. To Mr. Spencer and all the spokesmen of science it is the impermanent sphere of phenomena that is alone knowable, whereas the permanent Reality hidden from the eyes is the great Unknowable. To the Buddhist on the contrary, all impermanence is wrapped in illusion, as indeed the very meaning of the word would seem to imply, whereas the permanent Reality, though inexpressible, is alone knowable. The difference is of great importance when

we come to consider the effect of interpreting Japanese ideas in Occidental terms. It even seems that Mr. Hearn himself is not aware of the gulf set between these two methods of viewing existence, and that consequently he has never measured the full originality of this realm of sensation which his art has opened by spanning a bridge between the two. In the fusion of Mr. Hearn's thought the world of impermanent phenomena is at once knowable and unknowable: it is the reality of Western cognition, and therefore is invested with an intensity of influence and fullness of meaning impossible to an Oriental writer; and at the same time it is the unreality of Eastern philosophy, and hence is involved in illusion and subtle shadows into which it threatens momentarily to melt away. It is a realm of half reality, this phenomenal world, a realm of mingled spirit and matter, seeming now to tantalize the eyes with colors of unimaginable beauty that fade away when we gaze on them too intently, and again to promise the Soul that one long-sought word which shall solve the riddle of her existence in this land of exile. It is a new symbolism that troubles while it illumines. It leads the artist to dwell on the weirder, more impalpable phases of Japanese literature, and to lend to these subconscious motives a force of realism which they could never possess in the original. The perception of impermanence is accompanied with a depth of yearning regret quite beyond the frailer beauty of the songs of the East which could see little gravity of meaning in phenomena dis severed from the spirit, and equally beyond the songs of the West composed before science had carried the law of material mutability into the notion of personality. From this union with science the Oriental belief in the indwelling of the past now receives a vividness of present actuality that dissolves the Soul into ghostly intimacy with the mystic unexplored background of life. As a consequence of this new sense of impermanence and of this new realism lent to the indwelling past, all the primitive emotions of the heart are translated into a strange language, which, when once it lays hold of the imagination, carries us into a region of dreams akin to that world which our psychologists dimly call the subliminal or subconscious. The far-reaching

results of this psychology on literature it is not easy to foresee. Mr. Hearn has nowhere treated systematically this new interpretation of human emotions, but by bringing together scattered passages from his essays we may form some notion of its scope and efficacy.

Beauty itself, which forms the essence of Mr. Hearn's art as of all true art, receives a new content from this union of the East and the West. So standing before a picture of nude beauty we might, in our author's words, question its meaning. That nudity which is divine, which is the abstract of beauty absolute,—what power, we ask, resides within it or within the beholder that causes this shock of astonishment and delight, not unmixed with melancholy? The longer one looks, the more the wonder grows, since there appears no line, or part of a line, whose beauty does not surpass all memory of things seen. Plato explained the shock of beauty as being the Soul's sudden half-remembrance of the World of Divine Ideas: "They who see here any image or resemblance of the things which are there receive a shock like a thunderbolt, and are, after a manner, taken out of themselves." The positive psychology of Spencer declares in our own day that the most powerful of human passions, first love, when it makes its appearance, is absolutely antecedent to all individual experience. Thus do ancient thought and modern—metaphysics and science—accord in recognizing that the first deep sensation of human beauty known to the individual is not individual at all. Must not the same truth hold of that shock which supreme art gives? The emotion of beauty, like all our emotions, is certainly the inherited product of unimaginably countless experiences in an immeasurable past. In every æsthetic sensation is the stirring of trillions of trillions of ghostly memories buried in the magical soil of the brain. And each man carries within him an ideal of beauty which is but an infinite composite of dead perceptions of form, color, grace, once dear to look upon. It is dormant, this ideal,—potential in essence,—cannot be evoked at will before the imagination; but it may light up electrically at any perception by the living outer sense of some vague affinity. Then is felt that weird, sad, delicious thrill, which accompanies the sudden

backward-flowing of the tides of life and time.

So, again, to follow Mr. Hearn, it is easy to infer how this perception of the indwelling of the past gives a wonderful significance to the thralldom of love,—to first love most of all, when the shock of emotion comes untroubled by worldly calculations of the present. What is the glamour, we ask with our author, that blinds the lover in its sweet bewildering light when first he meets the woman of his involuntary choice? Whose the witchcraft? Is it any power in the living idol? Rather it is the power of the dead within the idolater. The dead cast the spell. Theirs the shock in the lover's heart; theirs the electric shiver that tingled through his veins at the first touch of one girl's hand. We look into the eyes of love and it is as though, through some intense and sudden stimulation of vital being, we had obtained—for one supercelestial moment—the glimpse of a reality never before imagined, and never again to be revealed. There is, indeed, an illusion. We seem to view the divine; but this divine itself, whereby we are dazzled and duped, is a ghost. Our mortal sight pierces beyond the surface of the present into profundities of myriads of years,—pierces beyond the mask of life into the enormous night of death. For a moment we are made aware of a beauty and a mystery and a depth unutterable: then the Veil falls again forever. The splendor of the eyes that we worship belongs to them only as brightness to the morning star. It is a reflex from beyond the shadow of the Now,—a ghost-light of vanished suns. Unknowingly within that maiden-gaze we meet the gaze of eyes more countless than the hosts of heaven,—eyes elsewhere passed into darkness and dust.

And if we turn to another and purer form of love, it is the same force we behold. So long as we supposed the woman soul one in itself,—a something specially created to fit one particular physical being,—the beauty and the wonder of mother-love could never be fully revealed to us. But with deeper knowledge we must perceive that the inherited love of numberless millions of dead mothers has been treasured up in one life;—that only thus can be interpreted the infinite sweetness of the speech which the infant

hears,—the infinite tenderness of the look of caress which meets its gaze.

So too when we listen to the harmonies of instrumental music or the melody of the human voice, there arises a strange emotion within us which seems to magnify us out of ourselves into some expanse of illimitable experiences, to lift us above the present cares of our petty life into some vast concern—so vast that the soul is lost between the wonderings of divine hope and divine fear. Great music is a psychical storm, agitating to fathomless depths the mystery of the past within us. Or we might say that it is a prodigious incantation. There are tones that call up all ghosts of youth and joy and tenderness;—there are tones that evoke all phantom pain of perished passion;—there are tones that resurrect all dead sensations of majesty and might and glory,—all expired exultations,—all forgotten magnanimities. Well may the influence of music seem inexplicable to the man who idly dreams that his life began less than a hundred years ago! He who has been initiated into the truth knows that to every ripple of melody, to every billow of harmony, there answers within him, out of the Sea of Death and Birth, some eddying immeasurable of ancient pleasure and pain.

Genius itself, the master of music and poetry and all art that enlarges mortal life, genius itself is nothing other than the reverberation of this enormous past on the sounding-board of some human intelligence, so finely wrought as to send forth in purity the echoed tones which from a grosser soul come forth deadened and confused by the clashing of the man's individual impulses.

Is it not proper to say, after reading such passages as these, that Mr. Hearn has introduced a new element of psychology into literature? We are indeed living in the past, we who foolishly cry out that the past is dead. In one remarkable study of the emotions awakened by the baying of a gaunt white hound, Mr. Hearn shows how even the very beasts whom we despise as unreasoning and unremembering are filled with an inarticulate sense of this dark backward and abysm of time, whose shadow falls on their sensitive souls with the chill of a vague dread,—dread, I say, for it must begin to be evident that this new psychology is

fraught with meanings that may well trouble and awe the student. In the ghostly residuum of these meditations we may perceive a vision dimly foreshadowing itself which mankind for centuries, nay for thousands of years, has striven half unwittingly to keep veiled. I do not know, but it seems to me that the foreboding of this dreaded disclosure may account for many things in the obscure history of the race. By reason of this terror the savage trembled before the magician who seemed to have penetrated the mysteries of nature about him. Among the free-hearted Greeks it showed itself in many ways, even in persecutions and deaths, as later among the Christians. It expressed itself mythologically in the haunting legend of Prometheus, who, by stealing the celestial fire (a symbol of forbidden prying into natural laws), brought on himself torment and chains and on mankind a life of brutal labor.

But more particularly in the Christian world this formless terror has taken to itself a body and a name; it is the heart of the inquisition, which has always followed with excommunications and tortures the unveiling of the recondite powers of nature. It has thus made of itself a potent factor of civilization—some would say against civilization, yet he is a very bold man or a very ignorant man who would brush away this long protest of religion against scientific discoveries as the mere vaporings of superstition. If we examine this bitter warfare between science and revelation, we shall find the Church actuated throughout by one ever-present, obscure dread, and when the source of this dread is made clear to us we shall be slow to condemn her conduct. We shall at least have sympathy with her in the struggle, for if she has been a persecutor, she has also been the champion of a losing cause.

At the first, indeed, she was victorious. In the conflict with what remained of Greek philosophy and science the prophets of the new revelation were easily victors. "Ignorance is the mother of devotion," was the motto of Gregory, and ignorance won the day. We love to think of the bright naturalism of antiquity as suffering martyrdom with Hypatia, philosopher and mathematician,—

Hypatia, fair embodiment
Of learning's great delight.

And the picture of her naked body torn to pieces by oyster shells in the hands of a bigoted mob is a true emblem of the dismemberment of the old nature-worship. Man was no longer to be an integral part of the world; he was set apart and raised above it.

But the Church did not fare so well in the ceaseless conflict with learning, when, at the time of the Renaissance, she laid violent hands on the followers of Copernicus. It may seem to us now a futile crime that Giordano Bruno should have been burned at the stake for teaching the infinity of space and the revolution of the earth about the sun, and that Galileo should have languished in prison for the same cause. But at bottom the question was one of vital importance to religion; and Bruno may have been right in saying that the sentence was pronounced against him with greater fear than he received it. Despite the narrow bigotry displayed, it was a sublime contest for the integrity of the human soul,—for who would believe that the divine drama of redemption was wrought out for a race of puny creatures inhabiting a mere atom in the illimitable expanse of space? Copernicus and his followers disabused us of the old belief that the universe revolved about the home of man. Henceforth the history of the earth was the insignificant story of one of the least of a countless multitude of worlds. The supremacy and lordship of man in creation were no longer conceivable, and in the triumph of science our personal pride received a blow from which it has never fully recovered.

Custom and time, however, did in a way heal the wound, and things went well until the forces of science rallied once again under the banner of evolution. Volumes have been written to prove that the new belief only adds to the dignity of man, and Darwin himself professed never to understand the widespread opposition to his theory. But the new terror that aroused theological hostility was as firmly grounded as it was against the invasion of Copernicus centuries before. There is no place for Providence or for the divine prerogatives of the human soul in the law of evolution. We are made a brother to the brute and akin to unclean things that crawl in the dust. Yet this quarrel also was

adjusted after a fashion, as the quarrels before it had been composed. What though ignorance is necessary to obscure our kinship with living nature, as Pope Gregory declared; what though our home is but a point in space; what though we are inheritors of a past of brutal degradation;—still our consciousness has no recking of these things, and dwells serene in its assumption of divine supremacy and isolation.

But now at the last we are shocked out of our security. We are made conscious of the shame of the hidden past, and the ancient haunting terror is revealed in all its hideous nakedness. Have you ever by chance strayed through a museum where the relics of old-world life are gathered together,—filthy amphibians armed with impenetrable scales, grotesque serpents eight fathoms long that churned the seas, huge reptiles that beat the air with wings of nightmare breadth? The imagination recoils from picturing what the world must have been when Nature exhausted herself to fashion these abhorrent monstrosities. We have burrowed the soil and brought into the light of day these reluctant hidden records of bestial growths. Consider for a moment what it would mean if some new geology should lay bare the covered strata of memory in our own brain corresponding to these records of the earth; for there is nothing lost, and in some mysterious way the memories of all that obscure past are stored up within us. If evolution be true, we are the inheritors in our soul of the experience and life of those innumerable generations whose material forms lie molded in the bed-rock of earth. Consider the horror of beholding in our own consciousness the remembrance of such fears and frenzies, such cruel passions and wallowing desires as would correspond to those gigantic and abortive relics of antiquity. Would not the world in its shame cry out for some Lethean draught of sleep, though it were as profound as the oblivion of Nirvâna? This is the terror, then, that from the beginning has beset the upholders of religion, and has caused them to attack the revelations of natural science; for what faith or beauty of holiness can abide after such an uncovering? None, unless to obtain spiritual grace the whole memory and personality of a man be blotted out, and the spirit be severed from the experiences of the

body by an impassable gulf. And I think the shadow of this dread is typified in the curse which Noah laid upon his son Ham.

The final outcome of this dread in all its nakedness we see foreshadowed in these fantasies and essays of an author, who, as I have attempted to show, has brought together into indissoluble union our Western theory of Darwin and that strange doctrine of metempsychosis which was carried to Japan with Buddhism and is so curiously engrafted on the laughing fancies of the people of the Mikado. To understand the tremendous realism of horror and gloom connected with this doctrine of everlasting birth and death, and re-birth, one must go to the burning valley of the Ganges, where the conception first laid hold of the human mind. But overpowering as this notion of endless unrest may be, a new shadow would seem to be added to it by contact with the scientific hypothesis of evolution which has been developed in the Occident. Evolution is a theory, drawn from the observation of outer phenomena, that man is the last product of myriads of generations of life reaching back into the past; but evolution has forborne to make any appeal to the inner consciousness of the human soul. Metempsychosis, on the contrary, is a half-mystical theory evolved out of the consciousness of the soul, which in a dim way seems to carry remembrance of illimitable existence before its present birth. But this symbolic faith of the Orient has never sought confirmation in scientific study of the outer world. Now comes the blending of these two theories, and the result is a laying bare of those hideous realities (pray heaven they prove pseudo-realities in the end) that mankind has instinctively shunned and denounced.

It is because I see in Mr. Hearn's sketches and translations a suggestion of the incalculable influences that may spring from this union of the East and the West, that I have treated them with a seriousness that will seem to many readers greater than they deserve. The skeptical I would refer, in conclusion, to that little essay on the *Nightmare-Touch*, which attempts to account for the shuddering fear of seizure that so often troubles our dreams, and to associate that fear with the widespread superstitious dread of being *touched* by a ghost. The closing

words of the essay have the sinister beauty and acrid odor of the flowers in some Rappaccini's garden:

Furthermore, through all the course of evolution, heredity would have been accumulating the experience of such feeling. Under those forms of imaginative pain evolved through reaction of religious beliefs, there would persist some dim survival of savage primitive fears, and again, under this, a dimmer, but incomparably deeper, substratum of ancient animal-terrors. In the dreams of the modern child all these latencies might quicken—one below another—unfathomably—with the coming and the growing of nightmare.

It may be doubted whether the phantasms of any particular nightmare have a history older than the brain in which they move. But the shock of the touch would seem to indicate *some point of dream-contact with the total race-experience of shadowy seizure*. It may be that profundities of Self—abysses never reached by any ray from the life of sun—are strangely stirred in slumber, and that out of their blackness immediately responds a shuddering of memory, measureless even by millions of years.

THE NEW MORALITY¹

SOME ten or twelve years ago a certain young woman, then fresh from the hands of an esteemed but erratic professor of English literature, wrote a novel the plot of which was roughly as follows. A college graduate suddenly finds himself the inheritor of a shoe factory in a New England town. Filled with the benevolent ideas absorbed in the academic contemplation of economics, he undertakes to introduce profit-sharing with his employees and otherwise to conduct his business for the benefit of the community. So far, good. But hard times follow, and his competitors by lowering wages and reducing labor are able to undersell him. Now there is in his control a considerable sum of money which a widow had entrusted to his father to invest for her, and the question arises whether he shall shut down his mills and inflict suffering upon his men, or shall divert this trust fund to his business and so try to tide over the period of stress. He yields to his sympathies and virtually embezzles the trust fund; but fails nevertheless, and with his own loss brings ruin upon

¹ From *Aristocracy and Justice, Shelburne Essays*, Ninth Series (1915). Originally printed in *The Unpopular Review*.

the widow. The story was called *The Burden of Christopher*, with the implication that the hero was a bearer of Christ in his misfortune, and the author indicates pretty clearly her sentiment that in surrendering his personal integrity for the expected good of his working people he was following the higher of two conflicting codes of ethics.

The book no doubt has gone its own way to the "limbo large and broad," where the heroes of ancient fiction wander with

Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars;

but it made a lasting impression on one reader at least as the first popular presentation to come under his notice of a theory which now confronts him wherever he turns his eyes. There has, in fact, been an astonishing divulgation in the past decade of what is called, with magnificent audacity, the New Morality.

Perhaps the most honored teacher of this code is the mistress of Hull House, who by her devoted life and her services to the people of Chicago in various times of need has won the right to speak with a certain authority for the striving generation of the day. And in one of her books, the *Newer Ideals of Peace*, Miss Addams tells of an actual occurrence and infers a moral which points in the same direction as the novel of *Christopher*. A family of five children is left motherless. The father, a drunkard, disappears, and the household is left to the care of a feeble old grandmother. Thereupon work is found for the oldest boy, "a fine, manly little fellow" of twelve, who feels keenly "his obligation to care for the family." But after a time he becomes "listless and indifferent," and at sixteen turns to professional tramping. "It was through such bitter lessons as these," observes Miss Addams, "we learned that good intentions and the charitable impulse do not always work for righteousness." As the story is told there is a plain implication that to find work for a boy under such circumstances is "cruel and disastrous" (her own comment), and that society, and not his own nature, was responsible for his relapse. One would suppose that scarcely an honest workman, or prosperous merchant, or successful professional man had ever taken up the burden of a family in youth or childhood. Doubtless hardships and waste

often come from the exigencies of life, but there is not a single word in Miss Addams's account to indicate that she has felt the need of developing in the future citizen a sensitiveness to the peculiar duties that will confront him, or has reflected on the evil that might have been done the boy if he had been relieved of his natural obligations and supported by society. "Our democracy," as she says with approval, "is making inroads upon the family, the oldest of human institutions."

This is not an isolated case in Miss Addams's works, nor does it in any wise misrepresent her. In another book, *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets*, the thesis is maintained and reiterated, that crime is for the most part merely the result of repressing a wholesome "love for excitement" and "desire for adventure." In the year 1909 "there were arrested and brought into court [in Chicago] fifteen thousand young people under the age of twenty, who had failed to keep even the common law of the land. Most of these young people had broken the law in their blundering efforts to find adventure." The inference to be drawn here and throughout the book is that one need only relieve the youth of the land from the necessity of "assuming responsibility prematurely," affording them meanwhile abundant amusement, and the instincts of lawlessness and the pursuit of criminal pleasure will vanish, or almost vanish, of themselves—as if there were no Harry Thaws¹ and the sons of the rich were all virtuous.

But it must not be supposed that Hull House occupies a place of lonely isolation as the fountain of these ideas. From every self-authorized center of civic virtue in which a typewriter is at work, the stream proceeds. The very presses groan, as we used to say when those machines were still in the mythological stage, at their labor of supplying the world with the new intellectual pabulum. At this moment there lies before the writer of this essay a pile of books, all recently published, which are devoted more or less specifically to the subject, and from all of which, if he had courage to go through them, he might cull abundant examples and

¹ The murderer of Stanford White, the architect.

quotations. He was, indeed, about to enter this "hollow cave, amid the thickest woods," when, an unvaliant knight, he heard the warning of the lady Una:

Yea but (quoth she) the perill of this place
I better wot then you, though now too late
To wish you backe returne with foule disgrace,
Yet wisdomes warnes, whilst foot is in the gate,
To stay the steppe, ere forcèd to retrate.

We have in fact to deal with the consummation of a long and deep-seated revolution, and there is no better way to understand the true character of the movement than by turning aside a moment to glance at its historical sources. This attempt to find some basis of conduct to take the place of the older conception of personal integrity, as we see it exemplified in the works of Miss Jane Addams and a host of other modern writers, is in fact only one aspect of the slow drift from medieval religion to humanitarianism. For a thousand years and well into the second thousand the ethical feeling of Christian Europe may be said to have taken its color from the saying, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"—which in extreme cases was interpreted as if it read, If he *reform* the whole world; and on the other, kindred saying, "Sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shall have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me"—in which the command of charity was held to be not so much for the benefit of the poor as for the liberation of the giver's own soul from the powers of this world. Such was the law, and its binding force was confirmed by the conception of a final day of wrath when the souls of men should stand before a merciless tribunal and be judged to everlasting joy or everlasting torment. The vivid reality of the fear that haunted men, at least in their moments of reflection, may be understood from the horrors of such a picture as Michael Angelo's *Last Judgment*, or from the meditations of one of the most genial of English cavaliers. In his little treatise on *Man in Darkness*—appropriate title—Henry Vaughan puts the frank question to himself:

And what madness then is it, for the enjoying
of one minute's pleasure for the satisfaction of our
sensual corrupt appetite, to lie forever in a bed of

burning brass, in the lake of eternal and unquenchable fire? "Suppose," saith the same writer [Drexelius], "that this whole globe of earth were nothing else but a huge mass or mountain of sand, and that a little wren came but once in every thousand years to fetch away but one grain of that huge heap; what an innumerable number of years would be spent before that world of sand could be so fetched away! And yet, alas! when the damned have lain in that fiery lake so many years as all those would amount to, they are no nearer coming out than the first hour they entered in."

No doubt practice and precept were at variance then, as to a certain extent they are at all times, and there were many texts in the Bible which might be taken to mitigate the harsher commands; but such in its purest, highest form was the law, and in the more sensitive minds this conception of the soul naked before a judging God must have created a tremendous anxiety. Morality was obedience and integrity; it scorned the world for an ideal of inner righteousness; it created a sense of individual responsibility for every word and deed; and, say what we will, there is something magnificent in this contempt for the reckoning of other men beside that eternal fame which

. . . lives and speaks aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove.

But there was also in this law something repellent and even monstrous. Who has not shuddered with amazement at the inscription which Dante set over the portal of Hell: *E 'L PRIMO AMORE?* Was it Love that prepared those winding coils of torture to enclose for endless time the vast majority of mankind? Was it even justice to make the everlasting doom of a soul depend on its grasp of truth in these few years spent in a world of shadows and illusions? There is something repulsively irrational in the notion of an unchanging eternity suspended on the action in a moment of time—*ex hoc momento pendet æternitas*. It should seem to be unthinkable, if it had not actually been thought. As a matter of fact the rigor and crudity of this doctrine had been mitigated in the Middle Ages by the interposition between man and God of the very human institution of the Church, with its substitution of temporal penances and pardons and an interposed Purgatory in place of the

terrible paradox of irrevocable judgment. It remained for the Reformation, and particularly for the Calvinistic Puritans, to tear away those veils of compromise and bring man face to face with the awful abstraction he had created. The result was for a while a great hardening and strengthening of character, salutary indeed after what may be called the almost hypocritical compromise of Catholicism; but in the end human nature could not endure the rigidity of its own logic, and in revolting turned not to another compromise but to questioning the very hypothesis of its faith.

The inevitable reaction from the intolerable logic of the Protestants was Deism, in which God was stripped altogether of his judicial and moral attributes and reduced to a kind of immanent, all-benevolent force in nature. "But now comes a modern Sage," says Warburton of Bolingbroke, "... who tells us 'that they made the Basis of Religion far too wide; that men have no further concern with GOD than TO BELIEVE THAT HE IS, which his *physical attributes* make fully manifest; but, that he is a *rewarder of them who diligently seek him*, Religion doth not require us to believe, since this depends on GOD'S MORAL ATTRIBUTES, of which we have no conception.'" But the deistic position was manifestly untenable, for it left no place for the undeniable existence of evil in this world and life. From the unaccountable distribution of wrong and suffering the divine had argued the certainty of adjustment in a future state; the deist had flown in the face of facts by retaining the belief in a benevolent Providence while taking from it the power of supernatural retribution; the atheist was more logical, he denied the existence of Providence altogether and turned the universe over to chance or blind law. Such was the progress of thought from Baxter to Bolingbroke and from Bolingbroke to Hume.

The positive consequences of this evolution are written large in the literature of the eighteenth century. With the idea of an avenging deity and a supernatural test there disappeared also the sense of deep personal responsibility; the very notion of a radical and fundamental difference between good and evil was lost. The evil that is apparent in character comes to be regarded

merely as the result of the restraining and thwarting institutions of society as these exist—why, no one can explain. Envy and jealousy and greed and the sheer lust of power, all those traits which were summed up in the single Greek word *pleonexia*, the desire to have more, are not inherent in the human heart, but are artificially introduced by property and a false civilization. Change these institutions or release the individual entirely from restrictions, and his nature will recoil spontaneously to its natural state of virtue. He needs only follow the impulse of his instinctive emotions to be sound and good. And as a man feels of himself, so he feels of others. There is no real distinction between the good and the evil, but all are naturally good and the superficial variations we see are caused by the greater or less freedom of development. Hence we should condemn no man even as we do not condemn ourselves. There is no place for sharp judgment, and the laws which impose penalties and restrictions and set up false discriminations between the innocent and the criminal are subject to suspicion and should be made as flexible as possible. In place of judgment we are to regard all mankind with sympathy; a sort of emotional solidarity becomes the one great virtue, in which are included, or rather sunk, all the law and the prophets.

It was the great work of the eighteenth century, beginning in England and developing in France, to formulate this change and indoctrinate with it the mind of the unthinking masses. Here is not the place to follow the development in detail, and those who care to see its outcome may be referred to the keen and unjustly neglected chapters on the *philosophes* in La Harpe's *Lycée*. To those, indeed, who are acquainted with the philosophical writings that preceded and introduced the French Revolution, the epithet "new" as it is attached to our present-day morality may seem a bit presumptuous; for it would be difficult to find a single fundamental idea in current literature on this subject which could not be closely paralleled by a quotation from Rousseau, or Diderot, or Helvétius, or one of their compeers. Thus, in our exaltation of sympathy above judgment and of the unrestrained emotions generally as the final

rule of character, we are but following Diderot's philosophy of the heart: "*Les passions amorties dégradent les hommes extraordinaires*"; and when we read in Ellen Key and a host of other feminist liberators the apotheosis of love as higher than any divine or human obligations, we are but meeting again with Toussaint's religion a little disguised: "*On aime de même Dieu et sa maîtresse*." Our revolt from constitutional law as a power imposed by the slower reflection of men upon their own immediate desires and opinions is essentially the same as the restlessness consecrated by the French *économistes* in the phrase, "*le despotisme légal*." And, to return whence we began, the economics of Hull House flow only too easily from Helvétius's definition of virtue as "*le désir du bien public*," and from his more specific statement: "The integrity which is related to an individual or to a small society is not the true integrity; integrity considered in relation to the public is the only kind that really deserves and generally obtains the name."

Miss Addams herself has been disturbed by these reminiscences. Thus she quotes from one of the older humanitarians a characteristic saying: "The love of those whom a man does not know is quite as elemental a sentiment as the love of those whom a man does know," and repudiates it as vague and unpractical beside the New Morality. She ought to know, and may be right; yet it is not easy to see wherein her own ethics are any less vague when she deplores the act of a boy who goes to work for his starving grandmother because in doing so he is unfitting himself for future service to society. And as for effectiveness, it might seem that the French Revolution was a practical result fairly equivalent in magnitude to what has been achieved by our college settlements. But Miss Addams is by no means peculiar in this assumption of originality. Nothing is more notable in the humanitarian literature of the day than the feeling that our own age is severed from the past and opens an entirely new epoch in history. "*The race has now crossed the great divide of human history!*" exclaims an hysterical doctor of divinity in a book just published. "The tendency of the long past has been toward *diversity*, that of the longer

future will be toward *oneness*. The change in this stream of tendency is not a temporary deviation from its age-long course—a new bend in the river. It is an actual reversal of the current, which beyond a peradventure will prove permanent." To this ecstatic watcher the sudden reversal took place at no remote date, but yesterday; and by a thousand other watchers the same miracle is vociferously heralded. Beyond a peradventure! Not a little of this flattering assumption is due to the blind and passionate hope of the human heart clamoring against the voice of experience. So many prophets before now have cried out, looking at the ever-flowing current of time, and having faith in some Thessalian magic:

Cessavere vices rerum.

. . . . Amnisque cucurrit

*Non qua pronus erat.*¹

So often the world has been disappointed; but at last we have seen—beyond a peradventure. If the vicissitudes of fate have not ceased, yet at least we have learned to look with complacency on the very law of mutation from which the eyes of men had hitherto turned away in bewildered horror, at last the stream has turned back upon its sources, and change itself is carrying us no longer toward diversity, but toward the consummation of a divine oneness.

But it would equally be an error to insist too dogmatically on the continuity of the present-day movement with that of the eighteenth century; for one generation is never quite as another. We must not forget that for a hundred years or thereabout there was a partial reaction against the doctrines of the *philosophes*, during which time the terrors of the Revolution lay like a warning nightmare in the imagination of the more thoughtful men. A hundred years is a long period for the memory to bridge, particularly in a time when the historical sense has been weakened. Superficially, too, the application of the theory is in some respects different from what it was; the law of social sympathy has been developed into different conceptions of socialism, and we have devised fresh schemes for giving efficacy to the immediate will of the people.

¹ Things have ceased from changing, and the river from flowing as it was wont to do.

Even deeper is the change that has come over the attitude of religious organizations toward the movement. In the age of the Revolution the Church, both Catholic and Protestant, was still strongly intrenched in the old beliefs and offered a violent resistance to the substitutions of humanitarianism for responsibility to the priest and to God. Now this last barrier has been almost swept away. Indeed, not the least remarkable feature of this literature is the number of clergymen who are contributing to it, with their constant appeal to the New Morality as the test of faith. Open one of these books before us—let us take *The Christian Reconstruction of Modern Life*, for the promise of its title—and you will be pretty likely to come upon such a passage as this: "Faith's fellowship with Jesus is one with the realization of our fellowship in humanity"; or, on another page: "If the fundamental of the true philosophy cannot be found by common men, what advantage in any man's finding it? If life's secret, direction, and power . . . is not attainable by the lowliest, then a man of this age, living in the social passion of our time, is forced to be indifferent to that which would be the monopoly of a few gifted souls." If such a social passion means anything, it means the reconstruction of life to the level of the gutter. It is the modern sham righteousness which would have called from Jesus the same utter scorn as that which he poured upon the Pharisaical cant of his own day. Yet it is not in religious books alone that you will meet with this sort of irreligion. For one sermon you will hear on the obligation of the individual soul to its maker and judge, and on the need of personal regeneration and the beauty of holiness, you will hear a score on the relation of a man to his fellows and on the virtue of social sympathy. In effect, the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind," has been almost forgotten for the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Worship in the temple is no longer a call to contrition and repentance, but an organized flattery of our human nature, and the theological seminary is fast becoming a special school for investigating poverty and spreading agnosticism. In

this sense, or degree, that humanitarianism is no longer opposed by organized religion, but has itself usurped the place of the Church, the New Morality may really justify its name.

What are the results of this glorification of humanity? What does the New Morality mean in life and conduct? Well, of such matters it is wise to speak cautiously. The actual morals of an age are an extremely complicated and elusive network of facts, and it is only too easy to generalize from incomplete observation. On the other hand we must guard against allowing ourselves to be deceived by the fallacy everywhere heard, that, because the preacher has always, even from the remotest record of Egypt, bewailed his own times as degenerate, therefore no age has fallen off in morality from its predecessor. Such an argument is a complete *non-sequitur*: there have been periods of degeneration, and there may yet be. As for our own age, only a fool would dogmatize; we can only balance and surmise. And in the first place a certain good must almost certainly be placed to the credit of humanitarianism. It has softened us and made us quicker to respond to the sufferings of others; the direct and frightful cruelty that runs through the annals of history like a crimson line has been largely eliminated from civilization, and with it a good deal of the brutality of human nature. We sometimes hear the present age compared with the later Roman Republic and the Empire, and in some respects speciously, but the callousness of the greater Romans to human misery and their hardness are almost unthinkable to-day. Consider a sentence or two from Appian: "The head and hand of Cicero were suspended for a long time from the rostra in the forum where formerly he had been accustomed to make public speeches, and more people came together to behold this spectacle than had previously come to listen to him. It is said that even at his meals Antony placed the head of Cicero before his table, until he became satiated with the horrid sight." Such an episode scarcely stands out from the hideous story of the Civil Wars; to the modern reader it brings a feeling almost of physical sickness. So much we seem to have gained, and the change in this respect even from our

own seventeenth century shows that the credit is due in no small part to the general trend of humanitarianism.

But in other directions the progress is not so clear. Statistics are always treacherous witnesses, but so far as we can believe them and interpret them we can draw no comfort from the prevalence of crime and prostitution and divorce and insanity and suicide. At least, whatever may be the cause of this inner canker of society, our social passion seems to be powerless to cure it. Some might even argue that the preaching of any doctrine which minimizes personal responsibility is likely to increase the evil. Certainly a teacher who, like Miss Jane Addams, virtually attributes the lawless and criminal acts of our city hoodlums to a wholesome desire of adventure which the laws unrighteously repress, would appear to be encouraging the destructive and sensual proclivities which are too common in human nature, young and old. Nor are the ways of honesty made clear by a well-known humanitarian judge of Denver, who refused to punish a boy for stealing a Sunday-school teacher's pocketbook, for the two good reasons, as his honor explained in a public address, "that the boy was not responsible and, secondly, that there were bigger thieves in the pews upstairs." So, too, a respectable woman of New York who asks whether it may not be a greater wrong for a girl to submit to the slavery of low wages than to sell herself in the street, is manifestly not helping the tempted to resist. She is even doing what she can with her words to confuse the very bounds of moral and physical evil.

There is, in fact, a terrible confusion hidden in the New Morality, an ulcerous evil that is ever working inward. Sympathy, creating the desire for even-handed justice, is in itself an excellent motive of conduct, and the stronger it grows, the better the world shall be. But sympathy, spoken with the word "social" prefixed, as it commonly is on the platforms of the day, begins to take on a dangerous connotation. And "social sympathy" erected into a theory which leaves out of account the responsibility of the individual and seeks to throw the blame of evil on the laws and on society, though it may effect desirable reforms here

and there in institutions, is bound to leave the individual weakened in his powers of resistance against the temptations which can never be eliminated from human life. The whole effect of calling sympathy justice and putting it in the place of judgment is to relax the fiber of character and nourish the passions at the expense of reason and the will. And undoubtedly the conviction is every day gaining ground among cool observers of our life that the manners and morals of the people are beginning to suffer from this relaxation in many insidious ways apart from acts which come into the cognizance of the courts. The sensuality of the prevailing music and dancing, the plays that stir the country as organs of moral regeneration, the exaggeration of sex in the clothing seen in the street, are but symptoms more or less ominous to our mind as we do or do not connect them with the regnant theory of ethics. And in the end this form of social sympathy may itself quite conceivably bring back the brutality and cruelty from which it seems to have delivered us. The Roman who gloated over the head of his and the people's enemy lived two thousand years ago, and we think such bloodthirstiness is no longer possible in public life. Yet not much more than a century ago the preaching of social sympathy could send a Lebon and his kind over France with an insatiable lust for killing, complicated with Sadism, while in Paris the leader of the government of the most civilized country of Europe was justifying such a régime on the pious principle that, "when the sovereign people exercises its power, we can only bow before it; in all it does all is virtue and truth, and no excess, error, or crime is possible." The animal is not dead within us, but only asleep. If you think he has been really conquered, read what he has been doing in Congo and to the Putumayo Indians, or among the redeemers of the Balkan States. Or if you wish to get a glimpse of what he may yet do under the spur of social sympathy, consider the callous indifference shown by the labor unions to the revelation, if it deserves the name, of the system of dynamiting and murder employed in the service of "class-consciousness." These things are to be taken into account, not as bugbears, for society

at large is no doubt sound at heart and will arouse itself at last against its false teachers, but as symptoms to warn and prepare.¹

To some few the only way out of what seems a state of moral blindness is through a return to an acknowledgment of the responsibility of the individual soul to its maker and inflexible judge. They may be right. Who can tell what reversal of belief may lie before us or what religious revolution may be preparing in the heart of infidelity? But for the present, at least, that supernatural control has lost its general efficacy and even from the pulpit has only a slight and intermittent appeal. Nor does such a loss appear without its compensations when we consider the harshness of medieval theology or the obliquities of superstition that seem to be inherent in the purest of religions. Meanwhile, the troubled individual, whatever his skepticism may be, need not be withheld from confirming his moral faith by turning from the perverted doctrine of the "Enlightenment" and from its recrudescence in modern humanitarianism to a larger and higher philosophy. For there is a faith which existed long before the materialism of the eighteenth century and before the crude earlier anthropomorphism, and which persisted unchanged, though often half-concealed, through those ages and still persists as a kind of shamefast inheritance of truth. It is not necessary to go to ancient books to recover that faith. Let a man cease for a moment to look so strenuously upon what is right for his neighbors. Let him shut out the voices of the world and disregard the stream of informing books which pour upon him from the modern press, as the "flood of poison" was spewed upon Spenser's Knight from "Errours den":

Her fruitful cursèd spawn of serpents small.

Let him retire into himself, and in the silence of such recollection examine his own motives and the sources of his self-approval and discontent. He will discover there in that dialogue with himself, if his

abstraction is complete and sincere, that his nature is not simple and single, but dual, and the consequences to him in his judgment of life and in his conduct will be of incalculable importance. He will learn, with a conviction which no science or philosophy falsely so-called can shake, that beside the passions and wandering desires and blind impulses and the cravings for pleasure and the prod of sensations there is something within him and a part of him, rather in some way his truer self, which controls and checks and knows and pronounces judgment, unmoved amid all motion, unchanged amid continual change, of everlasting validity above the shifting valuations of the moment. He may not be able to express this insight in terms that will satisfy his own reason or will convince others, but if his insight is true he will not waver in loyalty to it, though he may sin against it times without number in spoken word and impulsive deed. Rather, his loyalty will be confirmed by experience. For he will discover that there is a happiness of the soul which is not the same as the pleasure of fulfilled desires, whether these be for good or for ill, a happiness which is not dependent upon the results of this or that choice among our desires, but upon the very act itself of choice and self-control, and which grows with the habit of staying the throng of besetting and conflicting impulses always until the judicial *fiat* has been pronounced. It is thus that happiness is the final test of morality, bringing with it a sense of responsibility to the supernatural command within the soul of the man himself, as binding as the laws of religion and based on no disputable revelation or outer authority. Such a morality is neither old nor new, and stands above the varying customs of society. It is not determined essentially by the relation of a man to his fellows or by their approval, but by the consciousness of rightness in the man's own breast,—in a word, by character. Its works are temperance, truth, honesty, trustworthiness, fortitude, magnanimity, elevation; and its crown is joy.

Then, under the guidance of this intuition, a man may turn his eyes upon the world with no fear of being swayed by the ephemeral winds of doctrine. Despite the clamor

¹ All this was written and printed, I need scarcely say, before the outbreak of the European war. I should not to-day refer to the Congo and the Putumayo Indians for the savagery underlying civilization. (Author's note.)

of the hour he will know that the obligation to society is not the primal law and is not the source of personal integrity, but is secondary to personal integrity. He will believe that social justice is in itself desirable, but he will hold that it is far more important to preach first the responsibility of each man to himself for his own character. He will admit that equality of opportunity is an ideal to be aimed at, but he will think this a small thing in comparison with the universality of duty. In his attitude toward mankind he will not deny the claims of sympathy, but he will listen first to the voice of judgment:

Away with charity that soothes a lie,
And thrusts the truth with scorn and anger by.

He will be sensitive to the vast injustices of life and its widespread sorrows, but he will not be seduced by that compassion into the hypocrisy of saying that "the love of those whom a man does not know is quite as elemental a sentiment as the love of those whom a man does know." Nor, in repudiating such a falsehood, will he, like the mistress of Hull Hall, lose his power of discrimination under the stress of "those vast and dominant suggestions of a new peace and holiness," that is "to issue forth from broken human nature itself, out of the pathetic striving of ordinary men." Rather, he will, at any cost, strive to clear away the clouds of cant, and so open his mind to the dictates of the everlasting morality.

THE SPIRIT AND POETRY OF EARLY NEW ENGLAND¹

THE refuge of the Puritans on this side of the ocean was not exactly a nest of singing birds; but it had a character and self-conscious spirit which sought expression in verse as well as in sermons, and, at least, if not poetical, it resounded with the psalmody of the saints. In judging the strength and weakness of those early poets, to grant them the title by courtesy, we should remember first of all that for the most part they belonged to the class who were leaders in breaking away from the full current of

English life, and spoke for a people who brought with them to these lands a civilization rent and shorn by what rightly may be called one of the huge mischances of history.

It is, I know, the teaching of a certain school of scientific historians that the changes of civilization are produced by large impersonal laws under whose sway the will of the individual sinks into insignificance. That theory is, perhaps, not quite so common now as it was a few years ago. And surely, if any great event can be referred to the character of individual men, it was the crime of the seventeenth century in England, with its consequent train of evils. In that month of spring in the year 1603 when James Stuart was riding south to take up his crown in London, a prophetic eye might have foreseen the troubles he and his son were to cause. On the way the so-called Millenary Petition was presented to him by a band of moderate and conforming Puritans, who desired only a few unimportant changes in the service and Prayer Book; one of the first acts of James at Hampton Court was to deny the Petition and to abuse the petitioners with a threat to "harry them out of the land." After that the history of England for two generations was a series of *ifs*, depending on the actions of a small group of men. Thus, if Prince Henry, with his objection to a Catholic marriage, had not imprudently overheated himself on the tennis court, and so left the throne to his brother Charles; if Charles at the beginning of his reign had not been bribed to accept the Petition of Right and so to bind his hands; if Wentworth had been kept in England to raise a standing army, instead of being called back from Ireland when too late, and if Henrietta Maria by meddling with the soldiers had not brought him to the scaffold; if Charles had married a Protestant instead of a Bourbon princess; if he had chosen a wiser prelate than Laud; if he had not attempted to seize the five members of Parliament, or had planned the attempt more secretly; if the navy had not been wantonly alienated;—If, in a word, James and Charles had not been at once so obstinate and so weak, either they might have succeeded in establishing, for a time at least, a monarchy like that raised in France on the ruin of the Fronde and the

¹ From *A New England Group and Others*, Shelburne Essays, Eleventh Series (1921).

Reformation, or they might have guided their people through a bloodless and healthy revolution. But for the fanaticism of the King the opposing fanaticism of Pym and Lilburne and Cromwell would never have come to the top, crushing between them the moderate men who were the real strength and, in the end, the salvation of England. And so I, for one, cannot look back upon that period without shuddering at its passion of violent extremes, and without a feeling of amazement that so much evil in the world can be traced to the temper of a few fanatics who, by the whim of Fortune, had the destiny of the English people in their hands.

Old England, though her richer and completer development was perhaps forever marred by the harsh divisions of that age, did nevertheless in a manner quickly shake herself into balance. But we must remember that the New England colonists, driven from their homes by the Laudian persecution, came almost exclusively from one of the national factions. They did not bring with them the full temper of the English people, or even that part of its character which has given us Chaucer and Shakespeare and Dryden and Swift and Johnson and Byron and Tennyson. Their poetry therefore must be criticized, not as belonging to the main current of English literature, but as a slender branch, so to speak, running to one side, and deprived of the broader nourishment of tradition. It is the prolongation of a mood that had been tortured into excess by the goading stings of Accident; nor must we forget that at home under the sway of this same mood the imagination was distrusted, the theaters were closed, the picture collections of Charles dispersed or destroyed, the churches made barren of their beauty, the courtly poets silenced or driven into obscure places—that the land was for a time, in the language of Strafford, “frequent in combustions, full of massacres and the tragical ends of princes.”

It would be unjust, of course, to say that with this iconoclasm all the charm of life was banished by the Puritans. Even leaving out of account the supreme achievement of Milton, no one can go through the writings of these men without finding passages that have a grace entirely their own.

One recalls, for instance, the scene in Bunyan's pilgrimage, when Christian, having twice climbed the Hill Difficulty, comes to the Palace Beautiful, and is there entertained by the maidens Piety, Prudence, and Charity. “Thus they discoursed together till late at night,” the narrative proceeds, “and after they had committed themselves to their Lord for protection, they betook themselves to rest. The Pilgrim they laid in a large upper chamber, whose window opened towards the sunrising; the name of the chamber was Peace, where he slept till break of day; and then he awoke and sang.” I shall not repeat the words of the Pilgrim's song, for Bunyan, with all his genius, endured the confinement of Bedford Gaol better than the shackles of rhyme; but no candid reader will fail to respond to the peculiar beauty of that chamber of peace. In this chastened loveliness, won by the exclusion of a whole half of life, the Puritan literature is not wanting. One foresees in it much that long afterwards will charm the ear in the poems of Longfellow and Whittier.

And in one respect the Puritans brought no diminution to the field of art and literature, but effected rather a return to the main line of tradition from which England for a while had been partially diverted by the seductions of the Renaissance. I mean that sense of something central and formative in man, of character as distinguished from the mere portrayal of unrelated passions, which was so lamentably lacking in most of the dramatists, and which since the advent of Puritanism has been the chief honor of British letters. With this subject I have already dealt at some length in the preceding series of these essays¹—as in fact I have touched here and there on the various other origins of the New England spirit—and need not repeat the argument; but it is highly important to remember this positive side of Puritanism when reckoning up the devastating effects of its rigid and combative morality on the imagination.

Now the very conditions of existence in New England exaggerated the seclusions of the half-civilization which the people brought over with them in their exile. Not only were the colonists withdrawn from contact with

¹ In the essay on Beaumont and Fletcher, in *With the Wits*, *Shelburne Essays*, Tenth Series.

the secular tradition which makes itself so deeply felt in the art of a Milton, but the inevitable hardships of their state intensified their belief that life is a perpetual battle with the powers of evil, to whom no concession must be granted. In the dark unredeemed forests that surrounded them there lurked tribes of savage people whose appearance and habits were such as to warrant the notion that here indeed Satan was unchained and held undisputed sway. One of the first voyagers to the new continent, William Strachey, carried back this report of devil worship to credulous ears. "There is yet in Virginia," he wrote in 1618, "no place discovered so savadge and simple, in which the inhabitants have not a religion and the use of bow and arrows. All things they conceive able to do them hurt beyond their prevention, they adore with their kind of divine worship, as the fire, water, lightning, thunder, our ordinaunce pieces, horses, *etc.*; but their chief god they worship is no other, indeed, than the devill, whom they make presentments of, and shadow under the form of an idol, which they entitle Okeus." Naturally the settlers, looking out into the infinite wilderness, saw visions of dread and heard sounds of preternatural portent. Even the redoubtable Captain John Smith was sufficiently troubled to express his apprehensions in doggerel rhyme:

But his waking mind in hideous dreams did oft see
wondrous shapes
Of bodies strange, and huge in growth, and of stupendous makes.

This may have been a passing sentiment in Virginia, but in Massachusetts it became a rooted conviction. It is the excuse, if any excuse be possible, for the wild delusion of witchcraft that for a time drove the leaders of Boston and Salem into a mania of fear and persecution. "The New Englanders," wrote Cotton Mather, "are a people of God settled in those which were once the devil's territories. . . . An army of devils is horribly broke in upon the place which is the center and, after a sort, the first-born of our English settlements; and the houses of the good people there are fill'd with the doleful shrieks of their children and servants, tormented by invisible hands, with tortures

altogether preternatural." If we were discussing the prose of America as well as the poetry, we should find in the after-effects of this superstition, this *deisidaimonia* in the true sense of the word, turned now from a religious conviction into a kind of haunting mood of the imagination, the sources of Hawthorne's dark psychology and no small part of that awe which Thoreau felt in the presence of the mountains and lonely forests.

Meanwhile we can see something of its influence in contracting the poetry of the colonists within still narrower bounds of religious sentiment. The first volume printed in this country was the *Bay Psalm Book*, translated from the Hebrew by Richard Mather, Thomas Welde, and John Eliot in 1640. In the preface Mather made this candid statement: "If therefore the verses are not alwaies so smooth and elegant as some may desire or expect, let them consider that God's altar needs not pollishings." And indeed the polishings are conspicuous by their absence, as any specimen of this notable book will show. For instance, the great nineteenth Psalm is thus rendered for the satisfaction of the faithful:

The heavens doe declare
The majesty of God:
also the firmament shows forth
his handy-work abroad.
Day speaks to day, knowledge
night hath to night declar'd.
There neither speach nor language is
where their voyce is not heard.

It would not be easy outside of Puritans to find a great religion divesting itself so heroically not only of the smoothness and elegance but of the manifold traditions of life. But if the oracles of God were thus delivered through the nose, they could convey the menace of wrath as well as the upliftings of holiness. Perhaps the best known of the early New England poets is that Michael Wigglesworth who, for one fearless theological line, has obtained a kind of immortality in obloquy. Possibly a few of my readers will be unacquainted with Master Wigglesworth's picture of the terrors of the damned, when God at the Day of Doom has pronounced judgment upon them, and a merciful Christ has begun to consume the universe in fire:

Then might you hear them rend and tear
 The air with their outcries;
 The hideous noise of their sad voice
 Ascendeth to the skies.
 They wring their hands, their caitiff-hands,
 And gnash their teeth for terror;
 They cry, they roar, for anguish sore,
 And gnaw their tongues for horror.

But get away without delay;
 Christ pities not your cry:
 Depart to hell, there you may yell
 And roar eternally.

With iron bands they bind their hands
 And cursèd feet together;
 And cast them all, both great and small,
 Into that lake forever;
 Where day and night, without respite,
 They wail and cry and howl,
 For torturing pain which they sustain,
 In body and in soul.

For day and night, in their despite,
 Their torment's smoke ascendeth;
 Their pain and grief have no relief,
 Their anguish never endeth.
 There must they lie and never die,
 Though dying every day;
 There must they, dying, ever lie,
 And not consume away.

Say what one will, there is a grim sincerity in these lines which lifts them out of the commonplace and gives them something of the ring of poetry; and after all, if you are going to depict an eternal hell, there's no use in being finicky about the benevolence of your deity. It is only when our prophet of the New World vouchsafes to make concessions to human sympathy that he becomes odious. You know the words with which the Almighty Judge is supposed to condemn the little pleading souls of unbaptized infants:

You sinners are, and such a share
 As sinners, may expect;
 Such you shall have, for I do save
 None but mine own elect.
 Yet to compare your sin with their
 Who lived a longer time,
 I do confess yours is much less,
 Though every sin's a crime.

A crime it is; therefore in bliss
 You may not hope to dwell;
 But unto you I shall allow
 The easiest room in hell.

We shudder at that concession, "the easiest room in hell"; it really is odious. And yet, again, if we are to permit logic to deal with these matters, what possible difference does it make whether those chosen by God of His own free will for eternal damnation pass into this state after a few days of life or after many years? In either case their evil fate was imposed upon them at their birth. The only condemnation we can pronounce upon Wigglesworth is that, having allowed his natural human emotions to enter into the question at all, he stopped short halfway and did not revolt from the whole logical scheme of Calvinistic theology. I am disposed to feel a certain respect for this doggerel Dante of the New England meeting-house; though his power of expression was crude, there is in him, as in Jonathan Edwards and others of the line, an appalling energy and straightforwardness of the imagination. And if a late New Englander, Oliver Wendell Holmes, thought no decent man could really hold the doctrine of free grace and election without going mad, we must remember that Wigglesworth spoke the honest and deep-rooted conviction of his contemporaries—and they were not mad. And there is this, too, to be said for his unflinching sense of the awful consequences of sin, that it bears on the actual problems of life. One recalls that story of a farmer of the present day who was asked by a troubled clergyman why the village churches were left empty, and who replied with Yankee candor and shrewdness: "Wall, sir, I callate it is about like this: since you preachers have stopped preaching hell fire, we country folk have made up our minds that we might as well take our chances on t'other world."

But if the older theological taste had about it a prevailing odor of the pit, we must not infer that life in the colonies, gray in color though it may have been, was entirely bleak and without those chambers toward the sunrise. Much of the verse produced may have been of the kind described by Captain Edward Johnson:

From silent night true Register of moans,
 From saddest soul consum'd in deepest sin,
 From heart quite rent with sighs and heavy groans,
 My wailing muse her woful work begins,
 And to the world brings tunes of sad lament,
 Sounding naught else but sorrow's sad relent—

Much of the verse produced was of this nasal quality; but not all. Cotton Mather, he of the witchcraft fame, tells of a certain friend whose custom it was, "when he first arose in the morning, to repair into his study: a study well perfumed with the meditations and supplications of an holy soul." Can any scholar to-day hear that sentence without a thrill of envy at the thought of the long uninterrupted hours which those old divines contrived to pass in the earnest and unrepentant searching of mighty books? Ah, that study well perfumed with the meditations and supplications of an holy soul—how many a student of our age, distracted by the multitude of conflicting intellectual interests, disturbed by doubts of the value of learning in itself, when he enters his work-room of a morning, can breathe that atmosphere of assured content, as it were the palpable memory greeting him of similar days past? And this quiet satisfaction of a life devoted to retired scholarship and public teaching found due expression in literature. Nothing is more characteristic of the prose and poetry of the day than the innumerable eulogies of good men and women, to some of which the *pax theologica* lends an element of passionate sincerity. One of the best known of these is Urian Oakes's *Elegy on the Death of Thomas Shepard*, a saintly minister of Charlestown, who died in 1677. A few of the concluding stanzas will indicate the quality of the piece:

If to have solid judgment, pregnant parts,
A piercing wit, and comprehensive brain;
If to have gone the round of all the arts,
Immunity from death could gain; . . .

If holy life, and deeds of charity,
If grace illustrious, and virtue tried,
If modest carriage, rare humility,
Could have bribed Death, good Shepard had not
died. . . .

Farewell, dear Shepard! Thou art gone before,
Made free of heaven, where thou shalt sing loud
hymns
Of high triumphant praises evermore,
In the sweet choir of saints and seraphims. . . .

My dearest, inmost, bosom-friend is gone!
Gone is my sweet companion, soul's delight!
Now in an huddling crowd I'm all alone,

And almost could bid all the world—Good-night.
Blest be my Rock! God lives; O let him be,
As He is All, so All in All to me!

We need not magnify the virtues of such an elegy as this, which would in fact appear poor enough if compared with Milton's superb lines on the reception of Edward King into the

. . . solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,

or with Cowley's learned lament for his Cambridge companion in philosophy. Yet we shall miss the truth if we fail to discover in Oakes's less polished muse the charm of a friendship built upon a sure sympathy in the hopes of the spirit. As he himself wrote in one of the Latin verses whose elegance won the applause of his contemporaries,

*Parvum parva decent, sed inest sua gratia
parvis.*¹

From these by-products of the theological laboratory we may turn aside to say something of the first and most ambitious of the professional poets of the age, the stupendous Anne Bradstreet, whose volume of verse was heralded to the world with this overwhelming title-page:

The Tenth Muse lately sprung up in America; or Several Poems, compiled with great variety of wit and learning, full of delight; wherein especially is contained a complete discourse and description of the four elements, constitutions, ages of man, seasons of the year; together with an exact epitome of the four monarchies, viz., the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, Roman; also, a dialogue between Old England and New concerning the late troubles; with divers other pleasant and serious poems. By a gentlewoman in those parts. Printed at London, for Stephen Bowtell, at the sign of the Bible, in Pope's Head Alley, 1650.

Well, Mistress Anne was in sooth a memorable and characteristic figure of the New World. Though born and married in England, she migrated at the early age of eighteen to this country, and through her children became the fountain head of one of the purest streams of the so-called Brahminism. One of her descendants was Richard Henry Dana, another Oliver Wendell

¹ Small things beseech the small man, but small things bring their own satisfaction.

Holmes. John Norton of Hingham, ancestor of the present Nortons and Adamsses, whose line also was to intermarry with the Eliots, gave vent to his admiration of the dead poetess in resounding couplets:

Virtue ne'er dies: time will a poet raise,
Born under better stars, shall sing thy praise.
Praise her who list, yet he shall be a debtor;
For Art ne'er feigned nor Nature framed, a better.
Her virtues were so great, that they do raise
A work to trouble fame, astonish praise.

I do not know that time has yet raised a poet to celebrate her works to the taste of the pastor of Hingham, but one of his descendants, the late Charles Eliot Norton, edited the poems of the matchless gentlewoman, and in his introduction wrote of her character in his most genial vein.

All, indeed, that we know of Anne Bradstreet from contemporary sources and from her own autobiographical sketch justifies us in revering her as one of those large-minded women of the seventeenth century who managed somehow, in ways that seem inexplicable to their daughters, to combine the manifold cares of a household with indefatigable study and sober unhurried reflection. But the outpourings of her muse, it must be acknowledged, remind us too forcibly of one of her own aphorisms: "A ship that bears much sail, and little or no ballast, is easily upset." She is seen perhaps at her best in such stanzas as these:

I heard the merry grasshopper then sing,
The black-clad cricket bear a second part,
They kept one tune, and played on the same string,
Seeming to glory in their little art.
Shall creatures abject thus their voices raise?
And in their kind resound their Maker's praise:
Whilst I, as mute, can warble forth no higher lays.

When I behold the heavens as in their prime,
And then the earth (though old) still clad in green,

The stones and trees, insensible of time,
Nor age nor wrinkle on their front are seen;
If winter come, and greenness then do fade,
A spring returns, and they more youthful made;
But man grows old, lies down, remains where once
he's laid.

O Time, the fatal wreck of mortal things,
That draws oblivion's curtains over kings,
Their sumptuous monuments, men know them not,
Their names without a record are forgot,

Their parts, their ports, their pomps all laid in
th' dust,

Nor wit, nor gold, nor buildings 'scape time's rust;
But he whose name is grav'd in the white stone
Shall last and shine when all of these are gone.

Professor Barrett Wendell, who quotes these stanzas, remarks aptly that in seventeenth-century New England the author "stands alone, without forerunners or followers; and if you compare her poetry with that of the old country, you will find it very much like such then antiquated work as the *Nosce Teipsum* of Sir John Davies, published in 1599, the year which gave us the final version of *Romeo and Juliet*." The female prodigy of New England, in fact, belongs to that strain of literary Puritanism which is more distinctly British than American, and which was already becoming outworn in the old home.

The names of Mrs. Bradstreet's more poetical descendants serve to remind us how intimately all this New England society was knit together, and how its spirit was handed down from generation to generation as a kind of family possession. Her own contemporary fame may call our attention to the fact that women played no inconsiderable part in creating the peculiar tone of the New World literature. And their influence was felt in two ways. In the first place that sturdiness and uprightness of character, which was one of the great, the very great, compensations of Puritanism, not only made itself heard in the eulogies pronounced over those who died in the harness of virtue, but was active in the family relations of the living. Saintliness, I know, does not invariably make for comfort. Sometimes the Puritan hardness of character dominated too tyrannically the softer traits of affection and compliance, bringing what might be called a desolation of sanctity into the home. But there were other households—and these I believe the majority—in which the tenderness to every duty, the sense of due subordination, the competence of training, the repose of a clear conscience, must have evoked an atmosphere of serene and equitable joy. The very discipline of the passions, the renunciation of the wider sweep of human experience, would put a stamp of sacredness on those chaster pleasures which knit a family together in contented unison. In a

way all of New England may be said to have been snow-bound, in creed as well as in climate, but in the shelter of the hearth there was warmth for the body and there was comfort for the soul. Whittier was recalling a true incident of his childhood, and was writing also an allegory of New England's inner life, when he described that night of storm and snow:

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat.

One can find in the older literature abundant evidence of these protected comforts of the home. Take for instance Cotton Mather's life of John Eliot. There, if anywhere, you have one of the stalwarts. So diligent was Eliot in study that he took to sleeping in his library, in order that he might get to his beloved books at some unearthly hour in the morning without disturbing the household. So fervid was he in piety that he is described as "perpetually 'jogging the wheel of prayer.'" Now the habit of perpetually jogging the wheel of prayer does not, I admit, sound alluring to our modern unsanctified ears; the appearance of a reverend jogger in our parlor would probably cause a little constraint, but then—other times other manners. And of Eliot we are assured by his biographer that "he was indeed sufficiently pleasant and witty in company, and he was affable and facetious in conversation." His affability, I doubt not, was only a part of the large charity of his nature. When an old man he said to one who questioned him about his state: "Alas, I have lost everything; my understanding leaves me, my memory fails me, my utterance fails me; but, I thank God, my *charity* holds out still; I find that rather grows than fails!" And his charity and affability, as well as his prayerfulness, were exercised at home, as sometimes in this strange world they are not. Of his relations with his wife it is said: "His whole conversation with her had that *sweetness*, and that *gravity* and *modesty* beautifying it, that every one called them Zachary and Elizabeth." The biographer continues: "God

made her a rich blessing, not only to her *family*, but also to her *neighborhood*; and when she died, I heard and saw her aged husband, who else very rarely wept, yet now with tears over the coffin, before the good people, a vast confluence of which were come to her funeral, say, 'Here lies my dear, faithful, pious, prudent, prayerful wife; I shall go to her, and she not return to me.'" These are the commonplaces of life, you may think, and perhaps they are, although I am not sure that peace and self-control are ever quite commonplace; but it is just these softer aspects of the old New England that we are likely to forget.

Now in the making of this home spirit the woman naturally played an important rôle. Thomas Shepard, for example, he whose own elegy was sung so enthusiastically by Urian Oakes, had written a *Character of Mistress Joanna Shepard*, his wife, wherein he had portrayed her as "a woman of incomparable meekness of spirit, toward myself especially, and very loving; of great prudence to take care for and order my family affairs, being neither too lavish nor sordid in anything, so that I knew not what was under her hands. She had an excellency to reprove sin, and discern the evils of men." Incomparable meekness of spirit may not be precisely the sort of eulogy a modern wife would desire in her epitaph, however some husbands might desire it in her life—but, again, other times other manners. And if one is inclined to shudder a little at the thought of her excellency to reprove sin and discover the evils of men, one may suspect that this sharp-edged knowledge was useful in protecting her bookish and busy husband from the inroads of fraudulent beggars and evil mischief-makers. At any rate one may be certain that the house of Mistress Joanna Shepard much resembled the Palace Beautiful of Bunyan, where the maidens Piety, Prudence, and Charity kept watch and ward, and where there was a large upper chamber of peace whose window opened toward the sunrising. Certainly also the peaceful affections of home, the cool and quiet places of rest out of the turmoil of the world's contentions, came to be a marked trait of New England literature. There are traces of it in the early poets; in the works of Whittier and Longfellow it was to blossom into some-

thing exceedingly precious, however it may lack the more dazzling qualities of the imagination. The other side of this truth is that you will find no love poetry, as the word is commonly understood, in those primitive days—at least I know of none—and there is a minimum of it in the later age. That is an extraordinary fact, when you stop to think of it, and to some may seem a sad lack. Let such critics turn elsewhere; heaven knows the erotic Muse has been vocal enough in other sections of the world. For my part I still prefer James Russell Lowell's *Under the Willows* to the self-advertised passion of a certain living poetess who bears his family name.

That was one way in which the influence of women was felt. In another way they brought not peace but conflict into colonial life. The orthodoxy of the New England church was of a hard Calvinistic hue; it was eminently logical and intellectual, the creation and delight of strong men who, however they may have been possessed by a "boiling zeal" for saving souls, yet, like John Cotton, thought twelve hours of continuous study a "scholar's day" and true service to God. Against the virility, and one must add rigidity, of this religious dominion there were inevitably, almost from the beginning, movements of revolt. And it was natural that the good women of the colony should be conspicuous in rebellion as well as in meekness. Not all the great men of the land were as fortunate in their helpmates as were Thomas Shepard and John Eliot. In Winthrop's *History of New England from 1630 to 1649* there is an amusing story of one woman to whom much, and not a little, learning was a dangerous thing. "Mr. Hopkins, the governor of Hartford upon Connecticut," we there read, "came to Boston, and brought his wife with him (a godly woman, and of special parts), who was fallen into a sad infirmity, the loss of her understanding and reason, which had been growing upon her divers years, by reason of her giving herself wholly to reading and writing, and had written many books. Her husband, being very loving and tender of her, was loath to grieve her; but he saw his error, when it was too late. For if she had attended her household affairs, and such things as belong to women, and not gone out of her

way and calling to meddle in such things as are proper to men, whose minds are stronger, etc., she had kept her wits." I do not know by what stages this learned lady fell into her sad infirmity, but I suspect she betook herself to her books as a refuge from her spouse, the worthy governor, of whom it is related "that he frequently fell a bleeding at the nose, through the agony of spirit with which he labored in them [his prayers]." Neither do I know what was in her many books—even the all-embracing Tyler does not mention them—but my guess is that she wrote verse and tampered with the man-made mysteries of religion.

At least this second form of audacity was what brought trouble between another "godly woman" and the rulers of the State. The story of the conflict may be read in Thomas Welde's *Heresies of Anne Hutchinson*, from which it would appear that this strong-minded female had the pious, and in those days obligatory, habit of going regularly to meeting, but added the very bad habit of collecting a company of critical folk after service and of expounding to them the sermon in a spirit of contumely and contradiction. Now the colonists had a high sense of the value of liberty, as was natural in men who had suffered so much in its cause—so high a sense that, in the words of Governor Winthrop, they would have it only "maintained and exercised in a way of subjection to authority." But this was not the view of Anne Hutchinson and her coterie. Liberty to them meant the freedom of the individual, not to follow the truth, but to choose the truth; it was the kind described by Winthrop as making "men grow more evil, and in time to be worse than brute beasts: *omnes sumus licentia deteriores*,"¹ and as "that great enemy of truth and peace, that wild beast, which all the ordinances of God are bent against, to restrain and subdue it."

We will not now enter into the question of truth as it lay between the preachers of the Commonwealth and Mistress Hutchinson, but there is no doubt of the fact that her manner of prophesying did not bring peace. The result of her lectures among the women is thus denounced by Thomas Welde:

¹ We are all the worse for license. (Terence.)

Now, oh their boldness, pride, insolency, alienations from their old and dearest friends, the disturbances, divisions, contentions they raised amongst us, both in church and State, and in families, setting division between husband and wife! . . .

Now the faithful ministers of Christ must have dung cast on their faces, and be no better than legal preachers, Baal's priests, popish factors, scribes, Pharisees, and opposers of Christ himself.

And it was not only against the persons of the clergy that Anne Hutchinson lifted her terrible prophetic voice; she struck at the very dogmatic center of their authority. She lays a profane hand on the intellectual and traditional basis of theology;—as the horrified author of the *Wonder-Working Providence* exclaimed: she is a "woman that preaches better than any of your black-coats that have been at the Ninneversity." Her heresy is analysed at length by Thomas Welde, but it is really summed up in the single charge: "This witness of the Spirit is merely immediate, without any respect to the word, or any concurrence with it." That is to say, she was sent into exile for teaching exactly what two centuries afterwards was to be the doctrine of Emerson's essays and Whittier's most exquisite work. Her proclamation of the witness speaking in the breast of each man, and requiring no confirmation from revealed book or ordained interpreter, was a signal of the course to be pursued by her people, starting with rebellion against institutions and rites and ending in rejection of all authority and tradition and the very principle of organization. She was the first, and remains the typical, "come-outer."

Lowell remembered these passages at arms when, in his *Biglow Papers*, he described the troubles caused by the townswomen of the good pastor of Jaalam:

The painful divisions in the First Parish, A.D. 1844, occasioned by the wild notions of (what Mr. Wilbur, so far as concerned the reasoning faculty, always called) the unfairer part of creation, put forth by Miss Parthenia Almira Fitz, are too well known to need more than a passing allusion. It was during these heats, long since happily allayed, that Mr. Wilbur remarked that "the Church had more trouble in dealing with one *sheresiarch* than with twenty *heresiarchs*," and that the men's *conscia recti*, or certainty of being right, was nothing to the women's.

It is a pity, I often think, that Lowell, who could have translated Cotton Mather into puns without depriving him of his Puritan savor, lived too early to try a fling at New England's latest *sheresiarch*—the feminine counterpart of Emerson's refusal to face the reality of evil in the world.

It remained for Whittier, who as a Quaker found it easier to give free expression to the inner voice which had supplanted the religion of reason, to do justice, or more than justice, to those feminine flails of the man-made church. Often in his ballads Whittier makes use of the heresies that filled the early divines with terror, as if in prospect of the coming dissolution of their iron-bound creeds. And it is the women of Boston who are chiefly remembered by him for introducing the leaven of rebellion. Cassandra Southwick, who was threatened with exile and slavery for entertaining Quakers and neglecting divine service, is one of his heroines. Another is Margaret Brewster, who suffered worse than threatenings for coming into the South Church barefoot and in sackcloth, and crying out against the rulers and magistrates of the town.

She shook the dust from her naked feet,
And her sackcloth closer drew,
And into the porch of the awe-hushed church,
She passed like a ghost from view.

They whipped her away at the tail o' the cart
Through half the streets of the town,
But the words she uttered that day nor fire
Could burn nor water drown.

And now the aisles of the ancient church
By equal feet are trod,
And the bell that swings in its belfry rings
Freedom to worship God!

So did the spirit and poetry of early New England become an inheritance; out of the strong was to come sweetness, out of the uncouth grace. It will be objected, I fear, that in my treatment of the subject I have said much of the spirit and little of the poetry of the age; but in truth poets in those days were something like the historian's snakes in Ireland: there weren't any. As the first satirist, and not the worst, of the colony, Nathaniel Ward, the Simple Cobbler of Agawam, declared:

Poetry's a gift wherein but few excel,
He doth very ill, that doth not passing well.

Enough has been quoted from the primitive verse-makers to show that none of them did passing well; but enough also has been said, I trust, to show that some acquaintance with their spirit is a profitable, almost a necessary, preparation for approaching that fine and ephemeral thing, the flowering of New England in the first half of the nineteenth century.

It is rather the fashion, I am aware, among a certain coterie of enlightened critics to condemn the later poetry of New England as almost equally negligible with that of the men and women we have been considering. And indeed no rightly informed person will rank the outpourings of Concord and Cambridge with the supreme creations of the older centers of civilization. We are not likely to fall into that error of over-praise; but we may be tempted by the clamor of our emancipated youth, hailing largely from strange lands in the dark map of Europe, to

miss the more fragile beauty of what after all is the fairest thing this country has produced. At its best the poetry of New England is one of the very desirable possessions of the world, and not to appreciate it is to prove one's self dulled and vulgarized by the strident conceit of modernity. It is limited no doubt, and for reasons which I have tried to set forth. But limitation is not always and altogether a vice. At least out of the limitations fixed by the origin of New England grew the peculiar attitude of the later writers toward nature, the charm of their portrayal of the less passionate affections of the home and the family, the absence of erotic appeal, the depth and sincerity, but the perilous independence also, of their religious intuition, the invincible rightness of their character. We may laugh as we will at old Wigglesworth and at the asthmatic Muse of the other Puritan divines; they have been justified of their children.

THEODORE DREISER (1871-)

Mr. Dreiser was born at Terre Haute, Indiana, on 27 August, 1871. His family later removed to Warsaw, Indiana, and afterwards to Chicago. He received his education in the public schools of Warsaw and at Indiana University. Education, however, apparently did not prevent him from growing into a young man entirely innocent both of ideas and of the world. He was stimulated about 1890 by what he calls the romance of Chicago—by its bigness, variety, energy, and confidence in its future—to want to write something about it, though what he did not know, nor how he was to do it. He was then a collector for an easy-payment furniture shop, and a reader of Eugene Field's column, *Sharps and Flats*, in the *Chicago Daily News*. Other reading had left him cold, but Field dealt, in a fragmentary, haphazard way, mostly with Chicago, and turned in a literary direction the stimulus which the city had given to Mr. Dreiser's feelings—scarcely, as yet at least, to his imagination. He decided that he wanted to become a newspaper reporter, and that thus he might learn to write. In the course of time, after rebuffs which involved the beginnings of disillusionment, he obtained a position on the *Chicago Daily Globe* (June, 1892), and thus began his real education and his literary career. His success as a journalist was not remarkable, but he made his way. In 1892-1893 he was dramatic editor and traveling correspondent of the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, and in 1893 he became a traveling correspondent of the *St. Louis Republic*. From 1895 until 1898 he was the editor of a literary and musical periodical called *Every Month*, and thereafter for some years he went from one position to another on the staffs of several periodicals—*Harper's Magazine*, *McClure's Magazine*, *The Century*, *The Cosmopolitan*, and *Munsey's Magazine*. Meanwhile in 1900 his first novel, *Sister Carrie*, had been published, but had not brought him either reputation or money. If it had become well known it would probably, in 1900, have brought him only abuse, but even this opportunity was denied him; for very few copies were sold, the greater part of the edition being stored away when some one connected with his publishing house made the belated discovery that *Sister Carrie* was an "improper" book. And Mr. Dreiser, remaining practically unknown, continued for ten years after the publication of this novel to work for periodicals. In 1905 he became editor of *Smith's Magazine*, in 1906 managing editor of the *Broadway Magazine*, and from 1907 until 1910 he was editor-in-chief of the Butterick publications—*The Delineator*, *The Designer*, *The New Idea*, and *The English Delineator*.

Mr. Dreiser's second novel, *Jennie Gerhardt*, was published in 1911, and since then he has devoted himself entirely to writing. A group of three novels followed *Jennie Gerhardt* in rapid succession, *The Financier* (1912), *The Titan* (1914), and *The Genius* (1915), and his sixth and most recent novel, *An American Tragedy* (2 vols.) appeared in 1925. In the interval he published a number of books of varied character. *A Traveler at Forty* had appeared in 1913. In 1916 appeared some experiments in dramatic writing, *Plays of the Natural and the Supernatural*, and also another volume of impressions, *A Hoosier Holiday*. Two years later a volume of tales was published, *Free and Other Stories*, and in 1919 a series of biographical studies, *Twelve Men*, and also a tragedy, *The Hand of the Potter*. A volume of essays followed in 1920, *Hey Rub-a-Dub-Dub*; and in 1922 *A Book about Myself*, and in 1923 *The Color of a Great City*.

Mr. Dreiser is now generally regarded not only as the courageous and notable leader of the naturalistic school of American fiction writers, but also as the greatest of living American novelists, regardless of so-called schools. Under the influence of the French naturalistic writer, Émile Zola, he has carried on with complete fearlessness and thoroughness the work which Stephen Crane and a few less important writers of the 1890's began in America. And, not only because of Crane's early death, but also because of the relatively sketchy and innocuous character of the work which Crane did in reaction from the sentimental and romantic writing then popular and largely unaffected by the polite realism of Howells, Mr. Dreiser has been regarded as the pioneer of naturalism in American fiction, has been the center of bitter and long-continued controversy during which he has endured the hardships of the pioneer, and has thus made the way far easier for a number of followers. He has, moreover, won his present position despite great handicaps. He is unconscionably prolix; he has no sense of proportion and no conscious faculty of selection, but must write down everything in his mind in (as one is made to think) the greatest possible number of words. His style is heavy, labored, and often inadequate for what he wishes to say. He can deal confidently only with what is broadly obvious or elementary, and betrays himself when he

tries to picture subtle or well-bred people and when he attempts to reveal inobvious beauty. He is a slow, confused thinker—he has himself confessed that he is one of those people who can never make up their minds—and, his confusion heightened by the nightmare of newspaper reporting, he is able to see life only as a chaos of warring elements where cruelty, injustice, and blind accident flourish, and is able to see life's rewards, bestowed by accident or won by unscrupulous combat, only in terms of material power or sensual pleasure. "Life itself was not so bad; it was just higgledy-piggledy, catch-as-catch-can, that was all. If one were clever, like myself, it was all right." (*A Book about Myself*, 146.) What balances these grave defects of artistry, intellect, and insight? Some who at present revere Mr. Dreiser appear to do so chiefly because he has been influential in breaking down barriers against the free treatment in literature of vulgarity, tawdriness, and immorality. He is, they euphemistically say, honest, sincere, and fearless;—and they are right, and Mr. Dreiser deserves all that may be said in his favor on this score. But these qualities, while they are a *sine qua non* of great literature, do not suffice to produce it. The same things can equally be said of many bank clerks, for example. Other rebellious spirits praise him for the very ignorance and confusion which have led him into a largely unconscious skepticism concerning all of the cohesive forces of society. In this, it need not be said, they scarcely do him a service; but, too, he has been praised, and justly praised, for a tender comprehension of his characters which has enabled him to picture them with an altogether remarkable completeness and truthfulness, and for a quality of deep and sustained feeling which he seldom fails to communicate to his readers despite all of his difficulties with his medium. And this, his impartially sympathetic, tender understanding of elementary, vulgar humanity, coupled with his singularly moving delineation of all the circumstances of his characters' lives, is the real measure of his greatness and power as a writer of fiction.

THE SECOND CHOICE ¹

SHIRLEY DEAR:

You don't want the letters. There are only six of them, anyhow, and think, they're all I have of you to cheer me on my travels. What good would they be to you—little bits of notes telling me you're sure to meet me—but me—think of me! If I send them to you, you'll tear them up, whereas if you leave them with me I can dab them with musk and ambergris and keep them in a little silver box, always beside me.

Ah, Shirley dear, you really don't know how sweet I think you are, how dear! There isn't a thing we have ever done together that isn't as clear in my mind as this great big skyscraper over the way here in Pittsburgh, and far more pleasing. In fact, my thoughts of you are the most precious and delicious things I have, Shirley.

But I'm too young to marry now. You know that, Shirley, don't you? I haven't placed myself in any way yet, and I'm so restless that I don't know whether I ever will, really. Only yesterday, old Roxbaum—that's my new employer here—came to me and wanted to know if I would like an assistant overseership on one of his coffee plantations in Java, said there would not be much money in it for a year or two, a bare

living, but later there would be more—and I jumped at it. Just the thought of Java and going there did that, although I knew I could make more staying right here. Can't you see how it is with me, Shirl? I'm too restless and too young. I couldn't take care of you right, and you wouldn't like me after a while if I didn't.

But ah, Shirley sweet, I think the dearest things of you! There isn't an hour, it seems, but some little bit of you comes back—a dear, sweet bit—the night we sat on the grass in Tregore Park and counted the stars through the trees; that first evening at Sparrows Point when we missed the last train and had to walk to Langley. Remember the tree-toads, Shirl? And then that warm April Sunday in Atholby woods! Ah, Shirl, you don't want the six notes! Let me keep them. But think of me, will you, sweet, wherever you go and whatever you do? I'll always think of you, and wish that you had met a better, saner man than me, and that I really could have married you and been all you wanted me to be. By-by, sweet. I may start for Java within the month. If so, and you would want them, I'll send you some cards from there—if they have any.

Your worthless,
ARTHUR.

She sat and turned the letter in her hand, dumb with despair. It was the very last

¹ Reprinted from *Free and Other Stories* (1918) with the permission of Messrs. Boni and Liveright, Inc.

letter she would ever get from him. Of that she was certain. He was gone now, once and for all. She had written him only once, not making an open plea but asking him to return her letters, and then there had come this tender but evasive reply, saying nothing of a possible return but desiring to keep her letters for old times' sake—the happy hours they had spent together.

The happy hours! Oh, yes, yes, yes—the happy hours!

In her memory now, as she sat here in her home after the day's work, meditating on all that had been in the few short months since he had come and gone, was a world of color and light—a color and a light so transfiguring as to seem celestial, but now, alas, wholly dissipated. It had contained so much of all she had desired—love, romance, amusement, laughter. He had been so gay and thoughtless, or headstrong, so youthfully romantic, and with such a love of play and change and to be saying and doing anything and everything. Arthur could dance in a gay way, whistle, sing after a fashion, play. He could play cards and do tricks, and he had such a superior air, so genial and brisk, with a kind of innate courtesy in it and yet an intolerance for slowness and stodginess or anything dull or dingy, such as characterized — But here her thoughts fled from him. She refused to think of any one but Arthur.

Sitting in her little bedroom now, off the parlor on the ground floor in her home in Bethune Street, and looking out over the Kessels' yard, and beyond that—there being no fences in Bethune Street—over the "yards" or lawns of the Pollards, Bakers, Cryders, and others, she thought of how dull it must all have seemed to him, with his fine imaginative mind and experiences, his love of change and gayety, his atmosphere of something better than she had ever known. How little she had been fitted, perhaps, by beauty or temperament to overcome this—the something—dullness in her work or her home, which possibly had driven him away. For, although many had admired her to date, and she was young and pretty in her simple way and constantly receiving suggestions that her beauty was disturbing to some, still, he had not cared for her—he had gone.

And now, as she meditated, it seemed that this scene, and all that it stood for—her

parents, her work, her daily shuttling to and fro between the drug company for which she worked and this street and house—was typical of her life and what she was destined to endure always. Some girls were so much more fortunate. They had fine clothes, fine homes, a world of pleasure and opportunity in which to move. They did not have to scrimp and save and work to pay their own way. And yet she had always been compelled to do it, but had never complained until now—or until he came, and after. Bethune Street, with its commonplace front yards and houses nearly all alike, and this house, so like the others, room for room and porch for porch, and her parents, too, really like all the others, had seemed good enough, quite satisfactory, indeed, until then. But now, now!

Here, in their kitchen, was her mother, a thin, pale, but kindly woman, peeling potatoes and washing lettuce, and putting a bit of steak or a chop or a piece of liver in a frying-pan day after day, morning and evening, month after month, year after year. And next door was Mrs. Kessel doing the same thing. And next door Mrs. Cryder. And next door Mrs. Pollard. But, until now, she had not thought it so bad. But now—now—oh! And on all the porches or lawns all along this street were the husbands and fathers, mostly middle-aged or old men like her father, reading their papers or cutting the grass before dinner, or smoking and meditating afterward. Her father was out in front now, a stooped, forbearing, meditative soul, who had rarely anything to say—leaving it all to his wife, her mother, but who was fond of her in his dull, quiet way. He was a pattern-maker by trade, and had come into possession of this small, ordinary home via years of toil and saving, her mother helping him. They had no particular religion, as he often said, thinking reasonably human conduct a sufficient passport to heaven, but they had gone occasionally to the Methodist Church over in Nicholas Street, and she had once joined it. But of late she had not gone, weaned away by the other commonplace pleasures of her world.

And then in the midst of it, the dull drift of things, as she now saw them to be, he had come—Arthur Bristow—young, energetic, good-looking, ambitious, dreamful, and in-

stanter, and with her never knowing quite how, the whole thing had been changed. He had appeared so swiftly—out of nothing, as it were.

Previous to him had been Barton Williams, stout, phlegmatic, good-natured, well-meaning, who was, or had been before Arthur came, asking her to marry him, and whom she allowed to half assume that she would. She had liked him in a feeble, albeit, as she thought, tender way, thinking him the kind, according to the logic of her neighborhood, who would make her a good husband, and, until Arthur appeared on the scene, had really intended to marry him. It was not really a love-match, as she saw now, but she thought it was, which was much the same thing, perhaps. But, as she now recalled, when Arthur came, how the scales fell from her eyes! In a trice, as it were, nearly, there was a new heaven and a new earth. Arthur had arrived, and with him a sense of something different.

Mabel Gove had asked her to come over to her house in Westleigh, the adjoining suburb, for Thanksgiving eve and day, and without a thought of anything, and because Barton was busy handling a part of the work in the dispatcher's office of the Great Eastern and could not see her, she had gone. And then, to her surprise and strange, almost ineffable delight, the moment she had seen him, he was there—Arthur, with his slim, straight figure and dark hair and eyes and clean-cut features, as clean and attractive as those of a coin. And as he had looked at her and smiled and narrated humorous bits of things that had happened to him, something had come over her—a spell—and after dinner they had all gone round to Edith Barringer's to dance, and there as she had danced with him, somehow, without any seeming boldness on his part, he had taken possession of her, as it were, drawn her close, and told her she had beautiful eyes and hair and such a delicately rounded chin, and that he thought she danced gracefully and was sweet. She had nearly fainted with delight. "Do you like me?" he had asked in one place in the dance, and, in spite of herself, she had looked up into his eyes, and from that moment she was almost mad over him, could think of nothing else but his hair and eyes and his smile and his graceful figure.

Mabel Gove had seen it all, in spite of her determination that no one should, and on their going to bed later, back at Mabel's home, she had whispered:

"Ah, Shirley, I saw. You like Arthur, don't you?"

"I think he's very nice," Shirley recalled replying, for Mabel knew of her affair with Barton and liked him, "but I'm not crazy over him." And for this bit of treason she had sighed in her dreams nearly all night.

And the next day, true to a request and a promise made by him, Arthur had called again at Mabel's to take her and Mabel to a "movie" which was not so far away, and from there they had gone to an ice-cream parlor, and during it all, when Mabel was not looking, he had squeezed her arm and hand and kissed her neck, and she had held her breath, and her heart had seemed to stop.

"And now you're going to let me come out to your place to see you, aren't you?" he had whispered.

And she had replied, "Wednesday evening," and then written the address on a little piece of paper and given it to him.

But now it was all gone, gone!

This house, which now looked so dreary—how romantic it had seemed that first night *he* called—the front room with its commonplace furniture, and later in the spring, the veranda, with its vines just sprouting, and the moon in May. Oh, the moon in May, and June and July, when he was here! How she had lied to Barton to make evenings for Arthur, and occasionally to Arthur to keep him from contact with Barton. She had not even mentioned Barton to Arthur because—because—well, because Arthur was so much better, and somehow (she admitted it to herself now) she had not been sure that Arthur would care for her long, if at all, and then—well, and then, to be quite frank, Barton might be good enough. She did not exactly hate him because she had found Arthur—not at all. She still liked him in a way—he was so kind and faithful, so very dull and straightforward and thoughtful of her, which Arthur was certainly not. Before Arthur had appeared, as she well remembered, Barton had seemed to be plenty good enough—in fact, all that she desired in a pleasant, companionable way, calling for her, taking her places, bringing her flowers and candy,

which Arthur rarely did, and for that, if nothing more, she could not help continuing to like him and to feel sorry for him, and, besides, as she had admitted to herself before, if Arthur left her— . . . Weren't his parents better off than hers—and hadn't he a good position for such a man as he—one hundred and fifty dollars a month and the certainty of more later on? A little while before meeting Arthur, she had thought this very good, enough for two to live on at least, and she had thought some of trying it at some time or other—but now—now——

And that first night he had called—how well she remembered it—how it had transfigured the parlor next this in which she was now, filling it with something it had never had before, and the porch outside, too, for that matter, with its gaunt, leafless vine, and this street, too, even—dull, commonplace Bethune Street. There had been a flurry of snow during the afternoon while she was working at the store, and the ground was white with it. All the neighboring homes seemed to look sweeter and happier and more inviting than ever they had as she came past them, with their lights peeping from under curtains and drawn shades. She had hurried into hers and lighted the big red-shaded parlor lamp, her one artistic treasure, as she thought, and put it near the piano, between it and the window, and arranged the chairs, and then bustled to the task of making herself as pleasing as she might. For him she had gotten out her one best filmy house dress and done up her hair in the fashion she thought most becoming—and that he had not seen before—and powdered her cheeks and nose and darkened her eyelashes, as some of the girls at the store did, and put on her new gray satin slippers, and then, being so arrayed, waited nervously, unable to eat anything or to think of anything but him.

And at last, just when she had begun to think he might not be coming, he had appeared with that arch smile and a "Hello! It's here you live, is it? I was wondering. George, but you're twice as sweet as I thought you were, aren't you?" And then, in the little entryway, behind the closed door, he had held her and kissed her on the mouth a dozen times while she pretended to push against his coat and struggle and say that her parents might hear.

And, oh, the room afterward, with him in it in the red glow of the lamp, and with his pale handsome face made handsomer thereby, as she thought! He had made her sit near him and had held her hands and told her about his work and his dreams—all that he expected to do in the future—and then she had found herself wishing intensely to share just such a life—his life—anything that he might wish to do; only, she kept wondering, with a slight pain, whether he would want her to—he was so young, dreamful, ambitious, much younger and more dreamful than herself, although, in reality, he was several years older.

And then followed that glorious period from December to this late September, in which everything which was worth happening in love had happened. Oh, those wondrous days the following spring, when, with the first burst of buds and leaves, he had taken her one Sunday to Atholby, where all the great woods were, and they had hunted spring beauties in the grass, and sat on a slope and looked at the river below and watched some boys fixing up a sailboat and setting forth in it quite as she wished she and Arthur might be doing—going somewhere together—far, far away from all commonplace things and life! And then he had slipped his arm about her and kissed her cheek and neck, and tweaked her ear and smoothed her hair—and oh, there on the grass, with the spring flowers about her and a canopy of small green leaves above, the perfection of love had come—love so wonderful that the mere thought of it made her eyes brim now! And then had been days, Saturday afternoons and Sundays, at Atholby and Sparrows Point, where the great beach was, and in lovely Tregore Park, a mile or two from her home, where they could go of an evening and sit in or near the pavilion and have ice-cream and dance or watch the dancers. Oh, the stars, the winds, the summer breath of those days! Ah, me! Ah, me!

Naturally, her parents had wondered from the first about her and Arthur, and her and Barton, since Barton had already assumed a proprietary interest in her and she had seemed to like him. But then she was an only child and a pet, and used to presuming on that, and they could not think of saying

anything to her. After all, she was young and pretty and was entitled to change her mind; only, only—she had had to indulge in a career of lying and subterfuge in connection with Barton, since Arthur was headstrong and wanted every evening that he chose—to call for her at the store and keep her down-town to dinner and a show.

Arthur had never been like Barton, shy, phlegmatic, obedient, waiting long and patiently for each little favor, but, instead, masterful and eager, rifling her of kisses and caresses and every delight of love, and teasing and playing with her as a cat would a mouse. She could never resist him. He demanded of her her time and her affection without let or hindrance. He was not exactly selfish or cruel, as some might have been, but gay and unthinking at times, unconsciously so, and yet loving and tender at others—nearly always so. But always he would talk of things in the future as if they really did not include her—and this troubled her greatly—of places he might go, things he might do, which, somehow, he seemed to think or assume that she could not or would not do with him. He was always going to Australia sometime, he thought, in a business way, or to South Africa, or possibly to India. He never seemed to have any fixed clear future for himself in mind.

A dreadful sense of helplessness and of impending disaster came over her at these times, of being involved in some predicament over which she had no control, and which would lead her on to some sad end. Arthur, although plainly in love, as she thought, and apparently delighted with her, might not always love her. She began, timidly at first (and always, for that matter), to ask him pretty, seeking questions about himself and her, whether their future was certain to be together, whether he really wanted her—loved her—whether he might not want to marry some one else or just her, and whether she wouldn't look nice in a pearl satin wedding dress with a long creamy veil and satin slippers and a bouquet of bridal-wreath. She had been so slowly but surely saving to that end, even before he came, in connection with Barton; only, after *he* came, all thought of the import of it had been transferred to him. But now, also, she was beginning to ask herself sadly, "Would it ever be?" He

was so airy, so inconsequential, so ready to say: "Yes, yes," and "Sure, sure! That's right! Yes, indeedy; you bet! Say, kiddie, but you'll look sweet!" but, somehow, it had always seemed as if this whole thing were a glorious interlude and that it could not last. Arthur was too gay and ethereal and too little settled in his own mind. His ideas of travel and living in different cities, finally winding up in New York or San Francisco, but never with her exactly until she asked him, was too ominous, although he always reassured her gayly: "Of course! Of course!" But somehow she could never believe it really, and it made her intensely sad at times, horribly gloomy. So often she wanted to cry, and she could scarcely tell why.

And then, because of her intense affection for him, she had finally quarreled with Barton, or nearly that, if one could say that one ever really quarreled with him. It had been because of a certain Thursday evening a few weeks before about which she had disappointed him. In a fit of generosity, knowing that Arthur was coming Wednesday, and because Barton had stopped in at the store to see her, she had told him that he might come, having regretted it afterward, so enamored was she of Arthur. And then when Wednesday came, Arthur had changed his mind, telling her he would come Friday instead, but on Thursday evening he had stopped in at the store and asked her to go to Sparrows Point, with the result that she had no time to notify Barton. He had gone to the house and sat with her parents until ten-thirty, and then, a few days later, although she had written him offering an excuse, had called at the store to complain slightly.

"Do you think you did just right, Shirley? You might have sent word, mightn't you? Who was it—the new fellow you won't tell me about?"

Shirley flared on the instant.

"Supposing it was? What's it to you? I don't belong to you yet, do I? I told you there wasn't any one, and I wish you'd let me alone about that. I couldn't help it last Thursday—that's all—and I don't want you to be fussing with me—that's all. If you don't want to, you needn't come any more, anyhow."

"Don't say that, Shirley," pleaded Barton.

"You don't mean that. I won't bother you, though, if you don't want me any more."

And because Shirley sulked, not knowing what else to do, he had gone and she had not seen him since.

And then sometime later when she had thus broken with Barton, avoiding the railway station where he worked, Arthur had failed to come at his appointed time, sending no word until the next day, when a note came to the store saying that he had been out of town for his firm over Sunday and had not been able to notify her, but that he would call Tuesday. It was an awful blow. At the time, Shirley had a vision of what was to follow. It seemed for the moment as if the whole world had suddenly been reduced to ashes, that there was nothing but black charred cinders anywhere—she felt that about all life. Yet it all came to her clearly then that this was but the beginning of just such days and just such excuses, and that soon, soon, he would come no more. He was beginning to be tired of her and soon he would not even make excuses. She felt it, and it froze and terrified her.

And then, soon after, the indifference which she feared did follow—almost created by her own thoughts, as it were. First, it was a meeting he had to attend somewhere one Wednesday night when he was to have come for her. Then he was going out of town again, over Sunday. Then he was going away for a whole week—it was absolutely unavoidable, he said, his commercial duties were increasing—and once he had casually remarked that nothing could stand in the way where she was concerned—never! She did not think of reproaching him with this; she was too proud. If he was going, he must go. She would not be willing to say to herself that she had ever attempted to hold any man. But, just the same, she was agonized by the thought. When he was with her, he seemed tender enough; only, at times, his eyes wandered and he seemed slightly bored. Other girls, particularly pretty ones, seemed to interest him as much as she did.

And the agony of the long days when he did not come any more for a week or two at a time! The waiting, the brooding, the wondering, at the store and here in her

home—in the former place making mistakes at times because she could not get her mind off him and being reminded of them, and here at her own home at nights, being so absent-minded that her parents remarked on it. She felt sure that her parents must be noticing that Arthur was not coming any more, or as much as he had—for she pretended to be going out with him, going to Mabel Gove's instead—and that Barton had deserted her too, he having been driven off by her indifference, never to come any more, perhaps, unless she sought him out.

And then it was that the thought of saving her own face by taking up with Barton once more occurred to her, of using him and his affections and faithfulness and dullness, if you will, to cover up her own dilemma. Only, this ruse was not to be tried until she had written Arthur this one letter—a pretext merely to see if there was a single ray of hope, a letter to be written in a gentle-enough way and asking for the return of the few notes she had written him. She had not seen him now in nearly a month, and the last time she had, he had said he might soon be compelled to leave her awhile—to go to Pittsburgh to work. And it was his reply to this that she now held in her hand—from Pittsburgh! It was frightful! The future without him!

But Barton would never know really what had transpired, if she went back to him. In spite of all her delicious hours with Arthur, she could call him back, she felt sure. She had never really entirely dropped him, and he knew it. He had bored her dreadfully on occasion, arriving on off days when Arthur was not about, with flowers or candy, or both, and sitting on the porch steps and talking of the railroad business and of the whereabouts and doings of some of their old friends. It was shameful, she had thought at times, to see a man so patient, so hopeful, so good-natured as Barton, deceived in this way, and by her, who was so miserable over another. Her parents must see and know, she had thought at these times, but still, what else was she to do?

"I'm a bad girl," she kept telling herself. "I'm all wrong. What right have I to offer Barton what is left?" But still, somehow, she realized that Barton, if she chose to favor him, would only be too grateful for

even the leavings of others where she was concerned, and that even yet, if she but deigned to crook a finger, she could have him. He was so simple, so good-natured, so stolid and matter-of-fact, so different to Arthur whom (she could not help smiling at the thought of it) she was loving now about as Barton loved her—slavishly, hopelessly.

And then, as the days passed and Arthur did not write any more—just this one brief note—she at first grieved horribly, and then in a fit of numb despair attempted, bravely enough from one point of view, to adjust herself to the new situation. Why should she despair? Why die of agony where there were plenty who would still sigh for her—Barton among others? She was young, pretty, very—many told her so. She could, if she chose, achieve a vivacity which she did not feel. Why should she brook this unkindness without a thought of retaliation? Why shouldn't she enter upon a gay and heartless career, indulging in a dozen flirtations at once—dancing and killing all thoughts of Arthur in a round of frivolities? There were many who beckoned to her. She stood at her counter in the drug store on many a day and brooded over this, but at the thought of which one to begin with, she faltered. After her late love, all were so tame, for the present anyhow.

And then—and then—always there was Barton, the humble or faithful, to whom she had been so unkind and whom she had used and whom she still really liked. So often self-reproaching thoughts in connection with him crept over her. He must have known, must have seen how badly she was using him all this while, and yet he had not failed to come and come, until she had actually quarreled with him, and any one would have seen that it was literally hopeless. She could not help remembering, especially now in her pain, that he adored her. He was not calling on her now at all—by her indifference she had finally driven him away—but a word, a word—She waited for days, weeks, hoping against hope, and then—

The office of Barton's superior in the Great Eastern terminal had always made him an easy object for her blandishments, coming and going, as she frequently did, via this very station. He was in the office of the assistant train-dispatcher on the ground

floor, where passing to and from the local, which, at times, was quicker than a street-car, she could easily see him by peering in; only, she had carefully avoided him for nearly a year. If she chose now, and would call for a message-blank at the adjacent telegraph-window which was a part of his room, and raised her voice as she often had in the past, he could scarcely fail to hear, if he did not see her. And if he did, he would rise and come over—of that she was sure, for he never could resist her. It had been a wile of hers in the old days to do this or to make her presence felt by idling outside. After a month of brooding, she felt that she must act—her position as a deserted girl was too much. She could not stand it any longer really—the eyes of her mother, for one.

It was six-fifteen one evening when, coming out of the store in which she worked, she turned her step disconsolately homeward. Her heart was heavy, her face rather pale and drawn. She had stopped in the store's retiring-room before coming out to add to her charms as much as possible by a little powder and rouge and to smooth her hair. It would not take much to reallure her former sweetheart, she felt sure—and yet it might not be so easy after all. Suppose he had found another? But she could not believe that. It had scarcely been long enough since he had last attempted to see her, and he was really so very, very fond of her and so faithful. He was too slow and certain in his choosing—he had been so with her. Still, who knows? With this thought, she went forward in the evening, feeling for the first time the shame and pain that comes of deception, the agony of having to relinquish an ideal and the feeling of despair that comes to those who find themselves in the position of suppliants, stooping to something which in better days and better fortune they would not know. Arthur was the cause of this.

When she reached the station, the crowd that usually filled it at this hour was swarming. There were so many pairs like Arthur and herself laughing and hurrying away or so she felt. First glancing in the small mirror of a weighing scale to see if she were still of her former charm, she stopped thoughtfully at a little flower stand which stood outside, and for a few pennies purchased a tiny bunch of violets. She then went inside and stood

near the window, peering first furtively to see if he were present. He was. Bent over his work, a green shade over his eyes, she could see his stolid, genial figure at a table. Stepping back a moment to ponder, she finally went forward and, in a clear voice, asked,

"May I have a blank, please?"

The infatuation of the discarded Barton was such that it brought him instantly to his feet. In his stodgy, stocky way he rose, his eyes glowing with a friendly hope, his mouth wreathed in smiles, and came over. At the sight of her, pale, but pretty—paler and prettier, really, than he had ever seen her—he thrilled dumbly.

"How are you, Shirley?" he asked sweetly, as he drew near, his eyes searching her face hopefully. He had not seen her for so long that he was intensely hungry, and her paler beauty appealed to him more than ever. Why wouldn't she have him? he was asking himself. Why wouldn't his persistent love yet win her? Perhaps it might. "I haven't seen you in a month of Sundays, it seems. How are the folks?"

"They're all right, Bart," she smiled archly, "and so am I. How have you been? It has been a long time since I've seen you. I've been wondering how you were. Have you been all right? I was just going to send a message."

As he had approached, Shirley had pretended at first not to see him, a moment later to affect surprise, although she was really suppressing a heavy sigh. The sight of him, after Arthur, was not reassuring. Could she really interest herself in him any more? Could she?

"Sure, sure," he replied genially; "I'm always all right. You couldn't kill me, you know. Not going away, are you, Shirl?" he queried interestedly.

"No; I'm just telegraphing to Mabel. She promised to meet me to-morrow, and I want to be sure she will."

"You don't come past here as often as you did, Shirley," he complained tenderly. "At least, I don't seem to see you so often," he added with a smile. "It isn't anything I have done, is it?" he queried, and then, when she protested quickly, added: "What's the trouble, Shirl? Haven't been sick, have you?"

She affected all her old gayety and ease, feeling as though she would like to cry.

"Oh, no," she returned; "I've been all right. I've been going through the other door, I suppose, or coming in and going out on the Langdon Avenue car." (This was true, because she had been wanting to avoid him.) "I've been in such a hurry, most nights, that I haven't had time to stop, Bart. You know how late the store keeps us at times."

He remembered, too, that in the old days she had made time to stop or meet him occasionally.

"Yes, I know," he said tactfully. "But you haven't been to any of our old card-parties either of late, have you? At least, I haven't seen you. I've gone to two or three, thinking you might be there."

That was another thing Arthur had done—broken up her interest in these old store and neighborhood parties and a banjo-and-mandolin club to which she had once belonged. They had all seemed so pleasing and amusing in the old days—but now—. . . In those days Bart had been her usual companion when his work permitted.

"No," she replied evasively, but with a forced air of pleasant remembrance; "I have often thought of how much fun we had at those, though. It was a shame to drop them. You haven't seen Harry Stull or Trina Task recently, have you?" she inquired, more to be saying something than for any interest she felt.

He shook his head negatively, then added:

"Yes, I did, too; here in the waiting-room a few nights ago. They were coming downtown to a theater, I suppose."

His face fell slightly as he recalled how it had been their custom to do this, and what their one quarrel had been about. Shirley noticed it. She felt the least bit sorry for him, but much more for herself, coming back so disconsolately to all this.

"Well, you're looking as pretty as ever, Shirley," he continued, noting that she had not written the telegram and that there was something wistful in her glance. "Prettier, I think," and she smiled sadly. Every word that she tolerated from him was as so much gold to him, so much of dead ashes to her. "You wouldn't like to come down some evening this week and see *The Mouse-Trap*,

would you? We haven't been to a theater together in I don't know when." His eyes sought hers in a hopeful, doglike way.

So—she could have him again—that was the pity of it! To have what she really did not want, did not care for! At the least nod now he would come, and this very devotion made it all but worthless, and so sad. She ought to marry him now for certain, if she began in this way, and could in a month's time if she chose, but oh, oh—could she? For the moment she decided that she could not, would not. If he had only repulsed her—told her to go—ignored her—but no; it was her fate to be loved by him in this moving, pleading way, and hers not to love him as she wished to love—to be loved. Plainly, he needed some one like her, whereas she, she—. She turned a little sick, a sense of the sacrilege of gayety at this time creeping into her voice, and exclaimed:

"No, no!" Then seeing his face change, a heavy sadness come over it, "Not this week, anyhow, I mean" ("Not so soon," she had almost said). "I have several engagements this week and I'm not feeling well. But"—seeing his face change, and the thought of her own state returning—"you might come out to the house some evening instead, and then we can go some other time."

His face brightened intensely. It was wonderful how he longed to be with her, how the least favor from her comforted and lifted him up. She could see also now, however, how little it meant to her, how little it could ever mean, even if to him it was heaven. The old relationship would have to be resumed in toto, once and for all, but did she want it that way now that she was feeling so miserable about this other affair? As she meditated, these various moods racing to and fro in her mind, Barton seemed to notice, and now it occurred to him that perhaps he had not pursued her enough—was too easily put off. She probably did like him yet. This evening, her present visit, seemed to prove it.

"Sure, sure!" he agreed. "I'd like that. I'll come out Sunday, if you say. We can go any time to the play. I'm sorry, Shirley, if you're not feeling well. I've thought of you a lot these days. I'll come out Wednesday, if you don't mind."

She smiled a wan smile. It was all so

much easier than she had expected—her triumph—and so ashenlike in consequence, a flavor of dead-sea fruit and defeat about it all, that it was pathetic. How could she, after Arthur? How could he, really?

"Make it Sunday," she pleaded, naming the farthest day off, and then hurried out.

Her faithful lover gazed after her, while she suffered an intense nausea. To think—to think—it should all be coming to this! She had not used her telegraph-blank, and now had forgotten all about it. It was not the simple trickery that discouraged her, but her own future which could find no better outlet than this, could not rise above it apparently, or that she had no heart to make it rise above it. Why couldn't she interest herself in some one different to Barton? Why did she have to return to him? Why not wait and meet some other—ignore him as before? But no, no; nothing mattered now—no one—it might as well be Barton really as any one, and she would at least make him happy and at the same time solve her own problem. She went out into the train-shed and climbed into her train. Slowly, after the usual pushing and jostling of a crowd, it drew out toward Latonia, that suburban region in which her home lay. As she rode, she thought.

"What have I just done? What am I doing?" she kept asking herself as the clacking wheels on the rails fell into a rhythmic dance and the houses of the brown, dry, endless city fled past in a maze. "Severing myself decisively from the past—the happy past—for supposing, once I am married, Arthur should return and want me again—suppose! Suppose!"

Below at one place, under a shed, were some market-gardeners disposing of the last remnants of their day's wares—a sickly, dull life, she thought. Here was Rutgers Avenue, with its line of red street-cars, many wagons and tracks and counter-streams of automobiles—how often had she passed it morning and evening in a shuttle-like way, and how often would, unless she got married! And here, now, was the river flowing smoothly between its banks lined with coal-pockets and wharves—away, away to the huge deep sea which she and Arthur had enjoyed so much. Oh, to be in a small boat and drift out, out into the endless, restless, pathless

deep! Somehow the sight of this water, to-night and every night, brought back those evenings in the open with Arthur at Sparrows Point, the long line of dancers in Eckert's Pavilion, the woods at Atholby, the park, with the dancers in the pavilion—she choked back a sob. Once Arthur had come this way with her on just such an evening as this, pressing her hand and saying how wonderful she was. Oh, Arthur! Arthur! And now Barton was to take his old place again—forever, no doubt. She could not trifle with her life longer in this foolish way, or his. What was the use? But think of it!

Yes, it must be—forever now, she told herself. She must marry. Time would be slipping by and she would become too old. It was her only future—marriage. It was the only future she had ever contemplated really, a home, children, the love of some man whom she could love as she loved Arthur. Ah, what a happy home that would have been for her! But now, now—

But there must be no turning back now, either. There was no other way. If Arthur ever came back—but fear not, he wouldn't! She had risked so much and lost—lost him. Her little venture into true love had been such a failure. Before Arthur had come all had been well enough. Barton, stout and simple and frank and direct, had in some way—how, she could scarcely realize now—offered sufficient of a future. But now, now! He had enough money, she knew, to build a cottage for the two of them. He had told her so. He would do his best always to make her happy, she was sure of that. They could live in about the state her parents were living in—or a little better, not much—and would never want. No doubt there would be children, because he craved them—several of them—and that would take up her time, long years of it—the sad, gray years! But then Arthur, whose children she would have thrilled to bear, would be no more, a mere memory—think of that!—and Barton, the dull, the commonplace, would have achieved his finest dream—and why?

Because love was a failure for her—that was why—and in her life there could be no more true love. She would never love any one again as she had Arthur. It could not be, she was sure of it. He was too fascinating, too wonderful. Always, always, wherever

she might be, whoever she might marry, he would be coming back, intruding between her and any possible love, receiving any possible kiss. It would be Arthur she would be loving or kissing. She dabbed at her eyes with a tiny handkerchief, turned her face close to the window and stared out, and then as the environs of Latonia came into view, wondered (so deep is romance): What if Arthur should come back at some time—or now! Supposing he should be here at the station now, accidentally or on purpose, to welcome her, to soothe her weary heart. He had met her here before. How she would fly to him, lay her head on his shoulder, forget forever that Barton ever was, that they had ever separated for an hour. Oh, Arthur! Arthur!

But no, no; here was Latonia—here the viaduct over her train, the long business street and the cars marked "Center" and "Langdon Avenue" running back into the great city. A few blocks away in tree-shaded Bethune Street, duller and plainer than ever, was her parents' cottage and the routine of that old life which was now, she felt, more fully fastened upon her than ever before—the lawn-mowers, the lawns, the front porches all alike. Now would come the going to and fro of Barton to business as her father and she now went to business, her keeping house, cooking, washing, ironing, sewing for Barton as her mother now did these things for her father and herself. And she would not be in love really, as she wanted to be. Oh, dreadful! She could never escape it really, now that she could endure it less, scarcely for another hour. And yet she must, must, for the sake of—for the sake of—she closed her eyes and dreamed.

She walked up the street under the trees, past the houses and lawns all alike to her own, and found her father on their veranda reading the evening paper. She sighed at the sight.

"Back, daughter?" he called pleasantly.

"Yes."

"Your mother is wondering if you would like steak or liver for dinner. Better tell her."

"Oh, it doesn't matter."

She hurried into her bedroom, threw down her hat and gloves, and herself on the bed

to rest silently, and groaned in her soul. To think that it had all come to this!—Never to see him any more!—To see only Barton, and marry him and live in such a street, have four or five children, forget all her youthful companionships—and all to save her face before her parents, and her future. Why must it be? Should it be, really? She choked and stifled. After a little time her mother, hearing her come in, came to the door—thin, practical, affectionate, conventional.

"What's wrong, honey? Aren't you feeling well to-night? Have you a headache? Let me feel."

Her thin cool fingers crept over her temples and hair. She suggested something to eat or a headache powder right away.

"I'm all right, mother. I'm just not feeling well now. Don't bother. I'll get up soon. Please don't."

"Would you rather have liver or steak to-night, dear?"

"Oh, anything—nothing—please don't bother—steak will do—anything"—if only she could get rid of her and be at rest!

Her mother looked at her and shook her head sympathetically, then retreated quietly, saying no more. Lying so, she thought and thought—grinding, destroying thoughts about the beauty of the past, the darkness of the future—until able to endure them no longer she got up and, looking distractedly out of the window into the yard and the house next door, stared at her future fixedly. What should she do? What should she really do? There was Mrs. Kessel in her kitchen getting her dinner as usual, just as her own mother was now, and Mr. Kessel out on the front

porch in his shirt-sleeves reading the evening paper. Beyond was Mr. Pollard in his yard, cutting the grass. All along Bethune Street were such houses and such people—simple, commonplace souls all—clerks, managers, fairly successful craftsmen, like her father and Barton, excellent in their way but not like Arthur the beloved, the lost—and here was she, perforce, or by decision of necessity, soon to be one of them, in some such street as this no doubt, forever and—. For the moment it choked and stifled her.

She decided that she would not. No, no, no! There must be some other way—many ways. She did not have to do this unless she really wished to—would not—only—. Then going to the mirror she looked at her face and smoothed her hair.

"But what's the use?" she asked of herself wearily and resignedly after a time. "Why should I cry? Why shouldn't I marry Barton? I don't amount to anything, anyhow. Arthur wouldn't have me. I wanted him, and I am compelled to take some one else—or no one—what difference does it really make who? My dreams are too high, that's all. I wanted Arthur, and he wouldn't have me. I don't want Barton, and he crawls at my feet. I'm a failure, that's what's the matter with me."

And then, turning up her sleeves and removing a fichu which stood out too prominently from her breast, she went into the kitchen and, looking about for an apron, observed:

"Can't I help? Where's the tablecloth?" and finding it among napkins and silverware in a drawer in the adjoining room, proceeded to set the table. ✓

AMY LOWELL (1874-1925)

Amy Lowell was born in Brookline, Massachusetts, on 9 February, 1874, of a distinguished family whose members had lived in New England since 1637. James Russell Lowell was a cousin of her grandfather. One of her two brothers was Percival Lowell, the astronomer, and the other is A. L. Lowell, president of Harvard University. She was educated in private schools and by foreign travel, which extended beyond the usual European routes to Greece, Turkey, and Egypt, and which gave her many vivid and lasting impressions much later utilized in her poetry. It was not until 1902 that she determined to become a poet. She then undertook a course of study and practice, which lasted through eight years before she felt ready to publish anything. Her earliest published poem appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1910. Two years later came her first book, *A Dome of Many-Colored Glass*, on the whole a derivative and conventional volume containing little either to attract marked notice or to prepare readers for what was to follow. But this formal entry into the ranks of the poets, apparently, impelled Miss Lowell to look closely into the work of contemporaries in England and France, and gave her the confidence to emulate them in bold experiment. She thus quickly found a congenial part to play, and announced her new and marked development in 1914, in *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed*, by a group of "Imagist" poems and by another group of three poems written in "polyphonic prose." More than this, she became the active champion of experiment in verse-technique, and both in lectures and in books (*Six French Poets*, 1915; *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry*, 1917) she explained and defended the aims of the "new poets." In particular she thus did much to remove popular bewilderment over "free verse" or, as she called it, "cadenced verse," and over "Imagism" and "polyphonic prose."

"Imagism" is not really something new, but rather denotes the attempt made by Miss Lowell and others to return to certain principles of composition which they deemed essential to all great poetry, but which they felt had latterly been neglected. Briefly, these poets wished to use the language of common speech, employing, however, "always the *exact* word, not the nearly-exact, nor the merely decorative word"; they wished to "create new rhythms" and not to copy old ones, believing that new moods could only thus be expressed; they defended the legitimacy of "free verse," but did not commit themselves to it any more than to any other form of verse; they permitted "absolute freedom in the choice of subject," believing "passionately in the artistic value of modern life" but seeing no objection to treatment of the past; they believed that poetry should first of all present to the mind an image, not in emulation of painting, but because "poetry should render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities, however magnificent and sonorous," and because poetry should be "hard and clear, never blurred nor indefinite"; and finally they believed that "concentration is of the very essence of poetry."

"Polyphonic prose" does not, like "Imagism," denote a set of principles, but simply a very flexible poetic form, in the use of which Miss Lowell was inspired by the work of the French poet, M. Paul Fort, though in adapting the form to the English language she so far changed it as to make it practically one of her own invention. The word "prose" refers only to the way in which the words are prevailingly printed, and "polyphonic," which means "many-voiced," is the important word in the phrase. It indicates that this form freely makes use of all of the "voices" of poetry—"meter, *vers libre*, assonance, alliteration, rhyme, and return." Miss Lowell adopted as the basis of her "polyphonic prose" "the long, flowing cadence of oratorical prose," from which, in obedience to the needs of expression, she could readily change to *vers libre* or regular meters. "Return" signifies "the recurrence of a dominant thought or image" at irregular intervals. As a whole, this form is designed to give an orchestral effect. "Its tone is not merely single and melodic as is that of *vers libre*, for instance, but contrapuntal and various."

After *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed* Miss Lowell published the following volumes, all containing experimental verse: *Men, Women, and Ghosts* (1916), *Can Grande's Castle* (1918), *Pictures of the Floating World* (1919), *Legends* (1921), and *What's O'Clock?* (1925). The last-named volume did not appear until some months after her death, on 12 May, 1925, but had been prepared for publication before that time. Miss Lowell also published in 1921, in collaboration with Florence Ayscough a volume of translations from Chinese poetry, *Fir-Flower Tablets*, and in 1922 *A Critical Fable*, inspired by J. R.

Lowell's *A Fable for Critics*. This was published anonymously, but in 1924 Miss Lowell acknowledged it as hers. The last years of her life were chiefly taken up with the preparation of an exhaustive biography of John Keats, which was published in two volumes in January, 1925. She has said that Keats influenced her more than any other poet, and she had formed an extensive collection of material relating to him, some of which was unpublished or practically unknown to scholars. The last-mentioned fact was her ostensible justification for undertaking a new biography on a large scale.

As a propagandist and critic Amy Lowell was more vivacious and energetic than profound or, at least when it came to historical questions, learned. Yet her militant work was markedly effective for its immediate purpose, and her leadership invaluable to the "new poets"; and it may be that in the future she will be remembered as the champion of a cause much more widely than her own poetry will be read. Aiming at a severe objectivity, and constantly preoccupied with problems of form and color, she tended to lose herself in methodology, with sometimes very doubtful results. She created many pictures of real beauty, but seldom penetrated beneath the bright surfaces of things to illuminate human nature or life, or to touch the springs of human feeling.

GUNS AS KEYS: AND THE GREAT GATE SWINGS ¹

PART I

DUE East, far West. Distant as the nests
of the opposite winds. Removed as fire and
water are, as the clouds and the roots of the
hills, as the wills of youth and age. Let the
key-guns be mounted, make a brave show
of waging war, and pry off the lid of Pan-
dora's box once more. Get in at any cost, and
let out at little, so it seems, but wait—wait—
there is much to follow through the Great
Gate!

They do not see things in quite that way,
on this bright November day, with sun
flashing, and waves splashing, up and down
Chesapeake Bay. On shore, all the papers
are running to press with huge headlines:
"Commodore Perry Sails." Dining-tables
buzz with travelers' tales of old Japan
culled from Dutch writers. But we are not
like the Dutch. No shutting the stars and
stripes up on an island. Pooh! We must
trade wherever we have a mind. Naturally!

¹ Reprinted from *Can Grande's Castle* (1918) by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers. In her Preface to the volume Miss Lowell states that nothing in this narrative, in "polyphonic prose," of Perry's voyage to Japan (1852-1854) should be construed as an expression of discourtesy towards that country. "In fact," she adds, "the Japanese sections in the first part were intended to convey quite the opposite meaning. I wanted to place in juxtaposition the delicacy and artistic clarity of Japan and the artistic ignorance and gallant self-confidence of America. Of course, each country must be supposed to have the faults of its virtues; if, therefore, I have also opposed Oriental craft to Occidental bluff, I must beg indulgence."

The wharves of Norfolk are falling behind,
becoming smaller, confused with the ware-
houses and the trees. On the impetus of the
strong South breeze, the paddle-wheel
steam frigate, *Mississippi*, of the United
States Navy, sails down the flashing bay.
Sails away, and steams away, for her furnaces
are burning, and her paddle-wheels turning,
and all her sails are set and full. Pull, men,
to the old chorus:

"A Yankee ship sails down the river,
Blow, boys, blow;
Her masts and spars they shine like
silver,
Blow, my bully boys, blow."

But what is the use? That plaguy brass
band blares out with *The Star Spangled
Banner*, and you cannot hear the men be-
cause of it. Which is a pity, thinks the
Commodore, in his cabin, studying the map,
and marking stepping-stones: Madeira,
Cape Town, Mauritius, Singapore, nice
firm stepping-places for seven-league boots.
Flag-stones up and down a hemisphere.

My! How she throws the water off from
her bows, and how those paddle-wheels
churn her along at the rate of seven good
knots! You are a proud lady, Mrs. *Missis-
sippi*, curtsying down Chesapeake Bay, all
a-flutter with red white and blue ribbons.

At Mishima in the Province of Kai,
Three men are trying to measure a pine
tree

By the length of their outstretched arms.
Trying to span the bole of a huge pine tree
By the spread of their lifted arms.
Attempting to compress its girth
Within the limit of their extended arms.

Beyond, Fuji,
 Majestic, inevitable,
 Wreathed over by wisps of cloud.
 The clouds draw about the mountain,
 But there are gaps.
 The men reach about the pine tree,
 But their hands break apart;
 The rough bark escapes their hand-clasps;
 The tree is unencircled.
 Three men are trying to measure the stem
 of a gigantic pine tree,
 With their arms,
 At Mishima in the Province of Kai.

Furnaces are burning good Cumberland coal at the rate of twenty-six tons *per diem*, and the paddle-wheels turn round and round in an iris of spray. She noses her way through a wallowing sea; foots it, bit by bit, over the slanting wave slopes; pants along, thrust forward by her breathing furnaces, urged ahead by the wind draft flattening against her taut sails.

The Commodore, leaning over the taff-rail, sees the peak of Madeira sweep up out of the haze. The *Mississippi* glides into smooth water, and anchors under the lee of the "Desertas."

Ah! the purple bougainvillea!¹ And the sweet smells of the heliotrope and geranium hedges! Ox-drawn sledges clattering over cobbles—what a fine pause in an endless voyaging. Stars and stripes demanding five hundred tons of coal, ten thousand gallons of water, resting for a moment on a round stepping-stone, with the drying sails slatting about in the warm wind.

"Get out your accordion, Jim, and give us the *Suwannee River* to show those Dagoes what a tune is. Pipe up with the chorus, boys. Let her go."

The green water flows past Madeira. Flows under the paddle-boards, making them clip and clap. The green water washes along the sides of the Commodore's steam flagship and passes away to leeward.

"Hitch up your trowsers, Black Face, and do a horn-pipe. It's a fine quiet night for a double shuffle. Keep her going, Jim. Louder.

That's the ticket. Gosh, but you can spin, Blackey!"

The road is hilly
 Outside the Tiger Gate,
 And striped with shadows from a bow
 moon
 Slowly sinking to the horizon.
 The roadway twinkles with the bobbing of
 paper lanterns,
 Melon-shaped, round, oblong,
 Lighting the steps of those who pass
 along it;
 And there is a sweet singing of many *semi*,
 From the cages which an insect-seller
 Carries on his back.

Westward of the Canaries, in a wind-blazing sea. Engineers, there, extinguish the furnaces; carpenters, quick, your screw-drivers and mallets, and unship the paddle-boards. Break out her sails, quartermasters, the wind will carry her faster than she can steam, for the trades have her now, and are whipping her along in fine clipper style. Key-guns, your muzzles shine like basalt above the tumbling waves. Polished basalt cameoed upon malachite. Yankee-doodle-dandy! A fine upstanding ship, clouded with canvas, slipping along like a trotting filly out of the Commodore's own stables. White sails and sailors, blue-coated officers, and red in a star sparked through the claret decanter on the Commodore's luncheon table.

The Commodore is writing to his wife, to be posted at the next stopping place. Two years is a long time to be upon the sea.

Nigi-oi of Matsuba-ya
 Celebrated oiran,
 Courtesan of unrivaled beauty,
 The great silk mercer, Mitsui,
 Counts himself a fortunate man
 As he watches her parade in front of him
 In her robes of glazed blue silk
 Embroidered with singing nightingales.
 He puffs his little silver pipe
 And arranges a fold of her dress.
 He parts it at the neck
 And laughs when the falling plum-
 blossoms
 Tickle her naked breasts.
 The next morning he makes out a bill
 To the Director of the Dutch Factory at
 Nagasaki

¹ So written by Miss Lowell. More properly: Bougainvillea (a climbing, flowering shrub, native to tropical and subtropical S. America, named after A. De Bougainville, a French navigator of the eighteenth century).

For three times the amount of the goods
Forwarded that day in two small junks
In the care of a trusted clerk.

The North-east trades have smoothed
away into hot, blue doldrums. Paddle-
wheels to the rescue. Thank God, we live in
an age of invention. What air there is, is
dead ahead. The deck is a bed of cinders,
we wear a smoke cloud like a funeral plume.
Funeral—of whom? Of the little heathens
inside the Gate? Wait! Wait! These mon-
key-men have got to trade, Uncle Sam has
laid his plans with care, see those black guns
sizzling there. "It's deuced hot," says a
lieutenant, "I wish I could look in at a hop
in Newport this evening."

The one hundred and sixty streets in the
Sanno quarter
Are honey-gold,
Honey-gold from the gold-foil screens in
the houses,

Honey-gold from the fresh yellow mats;
The lintels are draped with bright colors,
And from eaves and poles
Red and white paper lanterns
Glitter and swing.

Through the one hundred and sixty
decorated streets of the Sanno quarter,
Trails the procession,
With a bright slowness,
To the music of flutes and drums.
Great white sails of cotton
Belly out along the honey-gold streets.

Sword bearers,
Spear bearers,
Mask bearers,
Grinning masks of mountain genii,
And a white cock on a drum
Above a purple sheet.

Over the flower hats of the people,
Shines the sacred palanquin,
"Car of gentle motion,"

Upheld by fifty men,
Stalwart servants of the god,
Bending under the weight of mirror-black
lacquer,

Of pillars and roof-tree
Wrapped in chased and gilded copper.
Portly silk tassels sway to the marching of
feet,

Wreaths of gold and silver flowers
Shoot sudden scintillations at the gold-
foil screens,

The golden phoenix on the roof of the
palanquin

Spreads its wings,
And seems about to take flight
Over the one hundred and sixty streets
Straight into the white heart
Of the curved blue sky.
Six black oxen,
With white and red trappings,
Draw platforms on which are musicians,
dancers, actors,
Who posture and sing,
Dance and parade,
Up and down the honey-gold streets,
To the sweet playing of flutes,
And the ever-repeating beat of heavy
drums,

To the constant banging of heavily beaten
drums,

To the insistent repeating rhythm of beau-
tiful great drums.

Across the equator and panting down to
Saint Helena, trailing smoke like a mourning
veil. Jamestown jetty, and all the officers
in the ship making at once for Longwood.
Napoleon! Ah, tales—tales—with nobody
to tell them. A bronze eagle caged by
floating woodwork. A heart burst with beat-
ing on a flat drop-curtain of sea and sky.
Nothing now but pigs in a sty. Pigs rooting
in the Emperor's bedroom. God be praised,
we have a plumed smoking ship to take us
away from this desolation.

"Boney was a warrior
Away-i-oh;

Boney was a warrior,
John François."

"Oh, shut up, Jack, you make me sick.
Those pigs are like worms eating a corpse.
Bah!"

The ladies,
Wistaria Blossom, Cloth-of-Silk, and Deep
Snow,

With their ten attendants,
Are come to Asakusa
To gaze at peonies.
To admire crimson-carmine peonies,
To stare in admiration at bomb-shaped,
white and sulphur peonies,
To caress with a soft finger
Single, rose-flat peonies,

Tight, incurved, red-edged peonies,
Spin-wheel circle, amaranth peonies.
To smell the acrid pungence of peony
blooms,
And dream for months afterwards
Of the temple garden at Asakusa,
Where they walked together
Looking at peonies.

The Gate! The Gate! The far-shining
Gate! Pat your guns and thank your stars
you have not come too late. The Orient's
a sleepy place, as all globe-trotters say.
We'll get there soon enough, my lads, and
carry it away. That's a good enough song
to round the Cape with, and there's the
Table Cloth on Table Mountain and we've
drawn a bead over half the curving world.
Three cheers for Old Glory, fellows.

A Daimio's procession
Winds between two green hills,
A line of thin, sharp, shining, pointed
spears
Above red coats
And yellow mushroom hats.
A man leading an ox
Has cast himself upon the ground,
He rubs his forehead in the dust,
While his ox gazes with wide, moon eyes
At the glittering spears
Majestically parading
Between two green hills.

Down, down, down, to the bottom of the
map; but we must up again, high on the
other side. America, sailing the seas of a
planet to stock the shop counters at home.
Commerce-raiding a nation; pulling apart
the curtains of a temple and calling it trade.
Magnificent mission! Every shop-till in
every by-street will bless you. Force the
shut gate with the muzzles of your black
cannon. Then wait—wait for fifty years—
and see who has conquered.

But now the *Mississippi* must brave the
Cape, in a crashing of bitter seas. The wind
blows East, the wind blows West, there is no
rest under these clashing clouds. Petrel
whirl by like torn newspapers along a
street. Albatrosses fly close to the mast-
heads. Dread purrs over this stormy
ocean, and the smell of the water is the
dead, oozing dampness of tombs.

Tiger rain on the temple bridge of carved
green-stone,
Slanting tiger lines of rain on the lichened
lanterns of the gateway,
On the stone statues of mythical warriors.
Striped rain making the bells of the
pagoda roofs flutter,
Tiger-footing on the bluish stones of the
court-yard,
Beating, snapping, on the cheese-rounds
of open umbrellas,
Licking, tiger-tongued, over the straw mat
which a pilgrim wears upon his
shoulders,
Gnawing, tiger-toothed, into the paper
mask
Which he carries on his back.
Tiger-clawed rain scattering the peach-
blossoms,
Tiger tails of rain lashing furiously among
the cryptomerias.

"Land—O." Mauritius. Stepping-stone
four. The coaling ships have arrived, and
the shore is a hive of Negroes, and Malays,
and Lascars, and Chinese. The clip and
clatter of tongues is unceasing. "What
awful brutes!" "Obviously, but the fruits
they sell are good." "Food, fellows, bully
good food." Yankee money for pine-
apples, shaddocks, mangoes. "Who were
Paul and Virginia?" "Oh, a couple of
spoonies who died here, in a shipwreck,
because the lady wouldn't take off her
smock." "I say, Fred, that's a shabby way
to put it. You've no sentiment." "Maybe.
I don't read much myself, and when I do, I
prefer United States, something like old
Artemus Ward,¹ for instance." "Oh, dry up,
and let's get some donkeys and go for a
gallop. We've got to begin coaling to-
morrow, remember."

The beautiful dresses,
Blue, Green, Mauve, Yellow;
And the beautiful green pointed hats
Like Chinese porcelains!
See, a band of geisha
Is imitating the state procession of a
Corean Ambassador,
Under painted streamers,
On an early afternoon.

¹ An anachronism, as Charles Farrar Browne (1834-1867), who used this pseudonym, did not publish his earliest book until 1862.

The hot sun burns the tar up out of the deck. The paddle-wheels turn, flinging the cupped water over their shoulders. Heat smolders along the horizon. The shadow of the ship floats off the starboard quarter, floats like a dark cloth upon the sea. The watch is pulling on the topsail halliards:

"O Sally Brown of New York City,
Ay ay, roll and go."

Like a tired beetle, the *Mississippi* creeps over the flat, glass water, creeps on, breathing heavily. Creeps—creeps—and sighs and settles at Pointe de Galle, Ceylon.

Spice islands speckling the Spanish Main. Fairy tales and stolen readings. Saint John's Eve! Midsummer Madness! Here it is all true. But the smell of the spice-trees is not so nice as the smell of new-mown hay on the Commodore's field at Tarrytown. But what can one say to forests of rose-wood, satin-wood, ebony! To the talipot tree, one leaf of which can cover several people with its single shade. Trade! Trade! Trade in spices for an earlier generation. We dream of lacquers and precious stones. Of spinning telegraph wires across painted fans. Ceylon is an old story, ours will be the glory of more important conquests.

But wait—wait. No one is likely to force the Gate. The smoke of golden Virginia tobacco floats through the blue palms. "You say you killed forty elephants with this rifle!" "Indeed, yes, and a trifling bag, too."

Down the ninety-mile rapids
Of the Heaven Dragon River,
He came,
With his bowmen,
And his spearmen,
Borne in a gilded palanquin,
To pass the Winter in Yedo
By the Shōgun's decree.
To pass the Winter idling in the Yoshi-
wara,
While his bowmen and spearmen
Gamble away their rusted weapons
Every evening
At the Hour of the Cock.

Her Britannic Majesty's frigate *Cleopatra* salutes the *Mississippi* as she sails into the harbor of Singapore. Vessels galore choke the wharves. From China, Siam, Malaya;

Sumatra, Europe, America. This is the bargain counter of the East. Goods—Goods, dumped ashore to change boats and sail on again. Oaths and cupidity; greasy clothes and greasy dollars wound into turbans. Opium and birds'-nests exchanged for teas, cassia, nankeens; gold thread bartered for Brummagem buttons. Pocket knives told off against teapots. Lots and lots of cheap damaged porcelains, and trains of silken bales awaiting advantageous sales to Yankee merchantmen. The figure-head of the *Mississippi* should be a beneficent angel. With her guns to persuade, she should lay the foundation of such a market on the shores of Japan. "We will do what we can," writes the Commodore, in his cabin.

Outside the drapery shop of Taketani
Sabai,

Strips of dyed cloth are hanging out to dry.
Fine Arimitsu cloth,
Fine blue and white cloth,
Falling from a high staging,
Falling like falling water,
Like blue and white unbroken water
Sliding over a high cliff,
Like the Ono Fall on the Kisokaido Road.
Outside the shop of Taketani Sabai,
They have hung the fine dyed cloth
In strips out to dry.

Romance and heroism; and all to make one dollar two. Through gray fog and fresh blue breezes, through heat, and sleet, and sheeted rain. For centuries men have pursued the will-o'-the-wisp—trade. And they have got—what? All civilization weighed in twopenny scales and fastened with string. A sailing planet packed in a dry-goods box. Knocks, and shocks, and blocks of extended knowledge, contended for and won. Cloves and nutmegs, and science stowed among the grains. Your gains are not in silver, mariners, but in the songs of violins, and the thin voices whispering through printed books.

"It looks like a dinner-plate," thinks the officer of the watch, as the *Mississippi* sails up the muddy river to Canton, with the Dragon's Cave Fort on one side, and the Girl's Shoe Fort on the other.

The Great Gate looms in a distant mist, and the anchored squadron waits and rests, but its coming is as certain as the equinoxes,

and the lightning bolts of its guns are ready
to tear off centuries like husks of corn.

The Commodore sips bottled water from
Saratoga, and makes out a report for the
State Department. The men play pitch-
and-toss, and the officers poker, and the
betting gives heavy odds against the little
monkey-men.

On the floor of the reception room of the
Palace

They have laid a white quilt,
And on the quilt, two red rugs;
And they have set up two screens of white
paper

To hide that which should not be seen.
At the four corners, they have placed
lanterns,

And now they come.

Six attendants,

Three to sit on either side of the con-
demned man,

Walking slowly.

Three to the right,

Three to the left,

And he between them

In his dress of ceremony

With the great wings.

Shadow wings, thrown by the lantern light,
Trail over the red rugs to the polished
floor,

Trail away unnoticed,

For there is a sharp glitter from a dagger
Borne past the lanterns on a silver tray.

"O my Master,

I would borrow your sword,

For it may be a consolation to you

To perish by a sword to which you are
accustomed."

Stone, the face of the condemned man,

Stone, the face of the executioner,

And yet before this moment

These were master and pupil,

Honored and according homage,

And this is an act of honorable devotion.

Each face is passive,

Hewed as out of strong stone,

Cold as a statue above a temple porch.

Down slips the dress of ceremony to the
girdle.

Plunge the dagger to its hilt.

A trickle of blood runs along the white
flesh

And soaks into the girdle silk.

Slowly across from left to right,

Slowly, upcutting at the end,

But the executioner leaps to his feet,

Poises the sword—

Did it flash, hover, descend?

There is a thud, a horrible rolling,

And the heavy sound of a loosened, falling
body,

Then only the throbbing of blood

Spurting into the red rugs.

For he who was a man is that thing

Crumpled up on the floor,

Broken, and crushed into the red rugs.

The friend wipes the sword,

And his face is calm and frozen

As a stone statue on a Winter night

Above a temple gateway.

PART II

FOUR vessels giving easily to the low-
running waves and cat's-paw breezes of a
Summer sea. July, 1853, Mid-Century, but
just on the turn. Mid-Century, with the
vanishing half fluttering behind on a foam-
bubbled wake. Four war ships steering for
the "Land of Great Peace," caparisoned in
state, cleaving a jeweled ocean to a Dragon
Gate. Behind it, the quiet of afternoon.
Golden light reflecting from the inner sides
of shut portals. War is an old wives' tale, a
frail beautiful embroidery of other ages. The
panoply of battle fades. Arrows rust in
arsenals, spears stand useless on their butts
in vestibules. Cannon lie unmounted in
castle yards, and rats and snakes make nests
in them and rear their young in unmolested
satisfaction.

The sun of Mid-Summer lies over the
"Land of Great Peace," and behind the shut
gate they do not hear the paddle-wheels of
distant vessels unceasingly turning and
advancing, through the jeweled scintilla-
tions of the encircling sea.

Susquehanna and *Mississippi*, steamers,
towing *Saratoga* and *Plymouth*, sloops of war.
Moving on in the very eye of the wind, with
not a snip of canvas upon their slim yards.
Fuji!—a point above nothing, for there is a
haze. Stop gazing, that is the bugle to clear
decks and shot guns. We must be prepared,
as we run up the coast straight to the Bay of
Yedo. "I say, fellows, those boats think they

can catch us, they don't know that this is Yankee steam." Bang! The shore guns are at work. And that smoke-ball would be a rocket at night, but we cannot see the gleam in this sunshine.

Black with people are the bluffs of Uraga, watching the "fire-ships," lipping windless up the bay. Say all the prayers you know, priests of Shinto and Buddha. Ah! The great splashing of the wheels stops, a chain rattles. The anchor drops at the Hour of the Ape.

A clock on the Commodore's chest of drawers strikes five with a silvery tinkle.

Boats are coming from all directions. Beautiful boats of unpainted wood, broad of beam, with tapering sterns, and clean runs. Swiftly they come, with shouting rowers standing to their oars. The shore glitters with spears and lacquered hats. Compactly the boats advance, and each carries a flag—white-black-white—and the stripes break and blow. But the tow-lines are cast loose when the rowers would make them fast to the "black ships," and those who would climb the chains slip back dismayed, checked by a show of cutlasses, pistols, pikes. "*Naru Hodo!*" This is amazing, unprecedented! Even the Vice-Governor, though he boards the *Susquehanna*, cannot see the Commodore. "His High Mighty Mysteriousness, Lord of the Forbidden Interior," remains in his cabin. Extraordinary! Horrible!

Rockets rise from the forts, and their trails of sparks glitter faintly now, and their bombs break in faded colors as the sun goes down.

Bolt the gate, monkey-men, but it is late to begin turning locks so rusty and worn.

Darkness over rice-fields and hills. The Gold Gate hides in shadow. Upon the indigo-dark water, millions of white jelly-fish drift, like lotus-petals over an inland lake. The land buzzes with prayer, low, dim smoke hanging in air; and every hill gashes and glares with shooting fires. The fire-bells are ringing in double time, and a heavy swinging boom clashes from the great bells of temples. Couriers lash their horses, riding furiously to Yedo; junks and scull-boats arrive hourly at Shinagawa with news; runners, bearing dispatches, pant in government offices.

The hollow doors of the Great Gate beat with alarms. The charmed Dragon Country shakes and trembles. Iyéyoshi, twelfth Shōgun of the Tokugawa line, sits in his city. Sits in the midst of one million, two hundred thousand trembling souls, and his mind rolls forward and back like a ball on a circular runway, and finds no goal. Roll, poor distracted mind of a sick man. What can you do but wait, trusting in your Dragon Gate, for how should you know that it is rusted.

But there is a sign over the "black ships." A wedge-shaped tail of blue sparklets edged with red, trails above them as though a Dragon were pouring violet sulphurous spume from steaming nostrils, and the hulls and rigging are pale, quivering, bright as Taira ghosts on the sea of Nagatō.

Up and down walk sentinels, fore and aft, and at the side gangways. There is a pile of round shot and four stands of grape beside each gun; and carbines, and pistols, and cutlasses, are laid in the boats. Floating arsenals—floating sample-rooms for the wares of a continent; shop-counters, flanked with weapons, adrift among the jelly-fishes.

Eight bells, and the meteor washes away before the wet, white wisps of dawn.

Through the countrysides of the "Land of Great Peace," flowers are blooming. The greenish-white, sterile blossoms of hydrangeas boom faintly, like distant inaudible bombs of color exploding in the woods. Weigelas prick the pink of their slender trumpets against green backgrounds. The fan-shaped leaves of ladies' slippers rustle under cryptomerias.

Midsummer heat curls about the cinnamon-red tree-boles along the Tokaido. The road ripples and glints with the passing to and fro, and beyond, in the roadstead, the "black ships" swing at their anchors and wait.

All up and down the Eastern shore of the bay is a feverish digging, patting, plastering. Forts to be built in an hour to resist the barbarians, if, peradventure, they can. Japan turned to, what will it not do! Fishermen and palanquin-bearers, pack-horse-leaders, and farm-laborers, even women and children, pat and plaster. Disaster batters

at the Dragon Gate. Batters at the doors of Yedo, where Samurai unpack their armor, and whet and feather their arrows.

Daimios smoke innumerable pipes, and drink unnumbered cups of tea, discussing—discussing—"What is to be done?" The Shōgun is no Emperor. What shall they do if the "hairy devils" take a notion to go to Kiōto! Then indeed would the Tokugawa fall. The prisons are crammed with those who advise opening the Gate. Open the Gate, and let the State scatter like dust to the winds! Absurd! Unthinkable! Suppress the "brocade pictures" of the floating monsters with which book-sellers and picture-shop keepers are delighting and affrighting the populace. Place a ban on speech. Preach, inert Daimios—the Commodore will *not* go to Nagasaki, and the roar of his guns will drown the clattering fall of your Dragon Doors if you do not open them in time. East and West, and trade shaded by heroism. Hokusai is dead, but his pupils are lampooning your carpet soldiers. Spare the dynasty—parley, procrastinate. Appoint two Princes to receive the Commodore, at once, since he will not wait over long. At Kurihama, for he must not come to Yedo.

Flip—flap—flutter—flags in front of the Conference House. Built over night, it seems, with unpainted peaked summits of roofs gleaming like ricks of grain. Flip—flutter—flap—variously-tinted flags, in a crescent about nine tall standards whose long scarlet pennons brush the ground. Beat—tap—fill and relapse—the wind pushing against taut white cloth screens, bellying out the Shōgun's crest of heart-shaped Asarum leaves in the panels, crumpling them to indefinite figures of scarlet spotting white. Flip—ripple—brighten—over serried ranks of soldiers on the beach. Sword-bearers, spear-bearers, archers, lancers, and those who carry heavy, antiquated matchlocks. The block of them five thousand armed men, drawn up in front of a cracking golden door. But behind their bristling spears, the cracks are hidden.

Braying, blasting blares from two brass bands, approaching in glittering boats over glittering water. One is playing the "Overture" from *William Tell*, the other, *The Last Rose of Summer*, and the way the notes

clash, and shock, and shatter, and dissolve, is wonderful to hear. Queer barbarian music, and the monkey-soldiers stand stock still, listening to its reverberation humming in the folded doors of the Great Gate.

Stuff your ears, monkey-soldiers, screw your faces, shudder up and down your spines. Cannon! Cannon! from one of the "black ships." Thirteen thudding explosions, thirteen red dragon tongues, thirteen clouds of smoke like the breath of the mountain gods. Thirteen hammer strokes shaking the Great Gate, and the seams in the metal widen. Open Sesame, shotless guns; and "The Only, High, Grand and Mighty, Invisible Mysteriousness, Chief Barbarian" reveals himself, and steps into his barge.

Up, oars, down; drip—sun-spray—row-lock-rattle. To shore! To shore! Set foot upon the sacred soil of the "Land of Great Peace," with its five thousand armed men doing nothing with their spears and matchlocks, because of the genii in the black guns aboard the "black ships."

One hundred marines in a line up the wharf. One hundred sailors, man to man, opposite them. Officers, two deep; and, up the center—the Procession. Bands together now: *Hail Columbia*. Marines in file, sailors after, a staff with the American flag borne by seamen, another with the Commodore's broad pennant. Two boys, dressed for ceremony, carrying the President's letter and credentials in golden boxes. Tall, blue-black negroes on either side of—THE COMMODORE! Walking slowly, gold, blue, steel-glitter, up to the Conference House, walking in state up to an ancient tottering Gate, lately closed securely, but now gaping. Bands, rain your music against this golden barrier, harry the ears of the monkey-men. The doors are ajar, and the Commodore has entered.

Prince of Idzu—Prince of Iwami—in winged dresses of gold brocade, at the end of a red carpet, under violet, silken hangings, under crests of scarlet heart-shaped Asarum leaves, guardians of a scarlet lacquered box, guardians of golden doors, worn thin and bending.

In silence the blue-black negroes advance and take the golden boxes from the page boys; in silence they open them and unwrap

blue velvet coverings. Silently they display the documents to the Prince of Idzu—the Prince of Iwami—motionless, inscrutable—beyond the red carpet.

The vellum crackles as it is unfolded, and the long silk-gold cords of the seals drop their gold tassels to straight glistening inches and swing slowly—gold tassels clock-ticking before a doomed, burnished gate.

The negroes lay the vellum documents upon the scarlet lacquered box; bow, and retire.

"I am desirous that our two countries should trade with each other." Careful letters, carefully traced on rich parchment, and the low sun casts the shadow of the Gate far inland over high hills.

"The letter of the President of the United States will be delivered to the Emperor. Therefore you can now go."

The Commodore, rising: "I will return for the answer during the coming Spring."

But ships are frail, and seas are fickle, one can nail fresh plating over the thin gate before Spring. Prince of Idzu—Prince of Iwami—inscrutable statesmen, insensate idiots, trusting blithely to a lock when the key-guns are trained even now upon it.

Withdraw, Procession. Dip oars back to the "black ships." Slip cables and depart, for day after day will lapse and nothing can retard a coming Spring.

Panic Winter throughout the "Land of Great Peace." Panic, and haste, wasting energies and accomplishing nothing. Kiōto has heard, and prays, trembling. Priests at the shrine of Isé whine long, slow supplications from dawn to dawn, and through days dropping down again from morning. Iyēyoshi is dead, and Iyēsada rules in Yedo; thirteenth Shōgun of the Tokugawa. Rules and struggles, rescinds laws, urges reforms; breathless, agitated endeavors to patch and polish where is only corroding and puffed particles of dust.

It is Winter still in the Bay of Yedo, though the plum-trees of Kamata and Kinagawa are white and fluttering.

Winter, with green, high, angular seas. But over the water, far toward China, are burning the furnaces of three great steamers, and four sailing vessels heel over, with decks slanted and sails full and pulling.

"There's a bit of a lop, this morning. Mr. Jones, you'd better take in those royals."

"Ay, ay, Sir. Tumble up here, men! Tumble up! Lay aloft and stow royals. Haul out to leeward."

"To my,

Ay,

And we'll furl

Ay,

And pay Paddy Doyle for his boots."

"Taut band—knot away."

Chug! Chug! go the wheels of the consorts, salting smoke-stacks with whirled spray.

The Commodore lights a cigar, and paces up and down the quarter-deck of the *Powhatan*. "I wonder what the old yellow devils will do," he muses.

Forty feet high, the camellia trees, with hard, green buds unburst. It is early yet for camellias, and the green buds and the glazed green leaves toss frantically in a blustering March wind. Sheltered behind the forty feet high camellia trees, on the hills of Idzu, stand watchmen straining their eyes over a broken dazzle of sea.

Just at the edge of moonlight and sunlight—moon setting; sun rising—they come. Seven war ships heeled over and flashing, dashing through heaped waves, sleeping a moment in hollows, leaping over ridges, sweeping forward in a strain of canvas and a train of red-black smoke.

"The fire-ships! The fire-ships!"

Slip the bridles of your horses, messengers, and clatter down the Tokaido; scatter pedestrians, palanquins, slow moving cattle, right and left into the cryptomerias; rattle over bridges, spatter dust into shop-windows. To Yedo! To Yedo! For Spring is here, and the fire-ships have come!

Seven vessels, flying the stars and stripes, three more shortly to join them, with ripe, fruit-bearing guns pointed inland.

Princes evince doubt, distrust. Learning must beat learning. Appoint a Professor of the University. Delay, prevaricate. How long can the play continue? Hayashi, learned scholar of Confucius and Mencius—he shall confer with the barbarians at Uruga. Shall he! Word comes that the Mighty Chief of Ships will not go to Uruga. Steam is up, and—Horror! Consternation! The squadron moves toward Yedo! Sailors,

midshipmen, lieutenants, pack yards and cross-trees, seeing temple gates, castle towers, flowered pagodas, and look-outs looming distantly clear, and the Commodore on deck can hear the slow booming of the bells from the temples of Shiba and Asakusa.

You must capitulate, great Princes of a quivering gate. Say Yokohama, and the Commodore will agree, for they must not come to Yedo.

Rows of japonicas in full bloom outside the Conference House. Flags, and streamers, and musicians, and pikemen. Five hundred officers, seamen, marines, and the Commodore following in his white-painted gig. A jig of fortune indeed, with a sailor and a professor maneuvering for terms, chess-playing each other in a game of future centuries.

The Americans bring presents. Presents now, to be bought hereafter. Good will, to head long bills of imports. Occidental mechanisms to push the Orient into limbo. Fox-moves of interpreters, and Pandora's box with a contents rated far too low.

Round and round goes the little train on its circular railroad, at twenty miles an hour, with grave dignitaries seated on its roof. Smiles, gestures, at messages running over wire, a mile away. Touch the harrows, the ploughs, the flails, and shudder at the "spirit pictures" of the daguerreotype machine. These Barbarians have harnessed gods and dragons. They build boats which will not sink, and tinker little gold wheels till they follow the swinging of the sun.

Run to the Conference House. See, feel, listen. And shrug deprecating shoulders at the glisten of silk and lacquer given in return. What are cups cut out of conch-shells, and red-dyed figured crêpe, to railroads, and burning engines!

Go on board the "black ships" and drink mint juleps and brandy smashes, and click your tongues over sweet puddings. Offer the strangers pickled plums, sugared fruits, candied walnuts. Bruit the news far inland through the mouths of countrymen. Who thinks of the Great Gate! Its portals are pushed so far back that the shining edges of them can scarcely be observed. The Commodore has never swerved a moment from his purpose, and the dragon mouths of his

guns have conquered without the need of a single powder-horn.

The Commodore writes in his cabin. Writes an account of what he has done.

The sands of centuries run fast, one slides, and another, each falling into a smother of dust.

A locomotive in pay for a Whistler; telegraph wires buying a revolution; weights and measures and Audubon's birds in exchange for fear. Yellow monkey-men leaping out of Pandora's box, shaking the rocks of the Western coastline. Golden California bartering panic for prints. The dressing-gowns of a continent won at the cost of security. Artists and philosophers lost in the hour-glass sand pouring through an open Gate.

Ten ships sailing for China on a fair May wind. Ten ships sailing from one world into another, but never again into the one they left. Two years and a tip-turn is accomplished. Over the globe and back, Rip Van Winkle ships. Slip into your docks in Newport, in Norfolk, in Charlestown. You have blown off the locks of the East, and what is coming will come.

POSTLUDE

In the Castle moat, lotus flowers are blooming,

They shine with the light of an early moon
Brightening above the Castle towers

They shine in the dark circles of their
unreflecting leaves.

Pale blossoms,

Pale towers,

Pale moon,

Deserted ancient moat

About an ancient stronghold,

Your bowmen are departed,

Your strong walls are silent,

Their only echo

A croaking of frogs.

Frogs croaking at the moon

In the ancient moat

Of an ancient, crumbling Castle.

1903. JAPAN

The high cliff of the Kegon waterfall, and a young man carving words on the trunk of a

tree. He finishes, pauses an instant, and then leaps into the foam-cloud rising from below. But, on the tree-trunk, the newly-cut words blaze white and hard as though set with diamonds:

"How mightily and steadily go Heaven and Earth! How infinite the duration of Past and Present! Try to measure this vastness with five feet. A word explains the Truth of the whole Universe—*unknowable*. To cure my agony I have decided to die. Now, as I stand on the crest of this rock, no uneasiness is left in me. For the first time I know that extreme pessimism and extreme optimism are one."¹

¹ Miss Lowell writes (in the Preface to *Can Grande's Castle*) that the two episodes in this *Postlude* are facts which actually occurred in the same year—a suicide in

1903. AMERICA

"Nocturne—Blue and Silver—Battersea Bridge.

"Nocturne—Gray and Silver—Chelsea Embankment.

"Variations in Violet and Green."

Pictures in a glass-roofed gallery, and all day long the throng of people is so great that one can scarcely see them. Debits—credits? Flux and flow through a wide gateway. Occident—Orient—after fifty years.

Japan and a Whistler exhibition in America. Concerning the former she says: "I owe the scene . . . to the paper *Young Japan*, by Seichi Naruse, which appeared in the *Seven Arts* for April, 1917. The inscription on the tree I have copied word for word from Mr. Naruse's translation."

ROBERT FROST (1875-)

Robert Lee Frost (named by his father, a New England Democrat, after the Confederate general) was born in San Francisco on 26 March, 1875. His father was a New Hampshire man whose ancestors for eight generations had lived in New England. He, however, had become a school-teacher in Pennsylvania, where he had married a Scotchwoman born in Edinburgh, and later had gone to San Francisco, where he edited a Democratic newspaper. When Mr. Frost was ten years old his father died, and he and his mother came east to Lawrence, Massachusetts, to live with the boy's grandfather, who was an overseer in a mill there. Here Mr. Frost lived until 1897, attending the public schools and completing the high-school course, going to Dartmouth College for a few months in the autumn of 1893, but soon leaving—upon finding that he learned nothing and only wasted his time—becoming a mill-hand, and, in 1895, marrying Miss Elinor White, of Lawrence. In 1897 he went to Cambridge and studied at Harvard College for two years, but found it uphill and not altogether profitable work and, at the end of that time, abandoned the hope of obtaining a college degree. (He has since received a number of honorary degrees). He had begun writing poetry at the age of fifteen, and had gone through a period of reading and discipleship which began with Poe and included Shakespeare, Christina Rossetti, E. R. Sill, Bryant, and others. In 1892 he had begun sending poems to periodicals, and had soon been rewarded by *The Independent's* acceptance of one, but this piece of good fortune was not quickly followed by another. Mr. Frost's heart, however, was in his poetry and he kept on writing verse and sending it to periodicals for a period of twenty years, with only the rarest success, with no appreciable profit, and with no public recognition. Meanwhile he had somehow to support his growing family. For a time after he left Cambridge he was a shoemaker, then a school-teacher, and then the editor of a small paper. Finally his grandfather, in 1900, purchased for him a farm in Derry, New Hampshire, and there he struggled, not very successfully, to make a living, until 1912. From 1905 until 1911 he taught English in the Pinkerton Academy, at Derry. In 1911-1912 he taught psychology at the New Hampshire State Normal School in Plymouth. In the latter year an opportunity came to dispose of his farm, and with the proceeds he and his family sailed for England (September, 1912), determining, wisely as it happened, to let the future take care of itself.

In England Mr. Frost found an active interest in poetry, and soon found what he had not been able to find in America—a publisher. In 1913 *A Boy's Will* appeared in London, and was at once heartily welcomed, and its author recognized as a significant and genuine new poet. In the following year, after Mr. Frost had leased a small farm where he had Lascelles Abercrombie and Wilfrid Wilson Gibson for near neighbors, his second volume, *North of Boston*, was published in London, in which he more than made good the promise of his earlier book and, indeed, firmly established himself as one of the finest and truest poets of our age. His fame now began to extend to America and, in addition, the War changed conditions of life in England and made it desirable for him to bring his family back to the United States. He returned in the spring of 1915, and in the same year his two volumes were republished here. He went to live near Franconia, New Hampshire, and in 1916 published *Mountain Interval*. From 1916 to 1919 he taught English at Amherst College, but, finding it impossible to combine professional and creative work, he resigned his post and bought a farm in Vermont. He had not much more than become settled there, however, when he accepted an invitation to become a resident member of the faculty of the University of Michigan, without specific duties. In 1923 he returned for two years to Amherst, but has now gone back to Michigan, and divides his time between Ann Arbor and his Vermont farm. His fourth and most recent volume of verse, *New Hampshire*, was published in 1923, and won the Pulitzer Prize for that year.

Mr. Frost does not write in "free verse," but carries on the central tradition of the English language in poetry, writing in conventional lyric measures and in blank verse. In the latter, it is true, he permits himself to use a considerable amount of freedom; nevertheless, in the matter of form his achievement, like Mr. Robinson's, consists not in invention, but in remarkably successful adaptation, by which means he has developed a verse and a style which seem perfectly to express him and which are wholly his own. He has made himself peculiarly the poet of New England hills and farms and their people. It is a remarkable fact that neither the city in which he was born nor the city in which he grew to manhood has furnished him with any matter for poetry, nor did his three years in England. But the remote

New England countryside is his own, and he has portrayed its repressed, decaying, and hopeless people, hovering on the edge of madness, with a strange, quiet intensity and truthfulness which is unique and memorable. He is a faithful realist, but, as he himself has pointed out, there is more than one kind of realism: "There are two types of realist—the one who offers a good deal of dirt with his potato to show that it is a real one; and the one who is satisfied with his potato brushed clean. . . . To me the thing that art does for life is to strip it to form." Mr. Frost deals with only a small portion of life, but that portion he knows completely and handles as a consummate artist, subtly suggesting through his pictures the life which to him *is* life, in contrast with the realities of both town and country in this industrial, mechanized age. It is necessary, for a full understanding of his work, always to remember that he has called himself a "synecdochist" (one who puts a part for the whole), and that he has said: "I was brought up a Swedenborgian. I am not a Swedenborgian now. But there's a good deal of it that's left with me. I am a mystic. I believe in symbols."

IN NEGLECT¹

THEY leave us so to the way we took,
As two in whom they were proved mistaken,
That we sit sometimes in the wayside nook,
With mischievous, vagrant, seraphic look,
And *try*, if we cannot feel forsaken.

REVELATION

WE make ourselves a place apart
Behind light words that tease and flout,
But oh, the agitated heart
Till someone find us really out.

'Tis pity if the case require
(Or so we say) that in the end
We speak the literal to inspire
The understanding of a friend.

But so with all, from babes that play
At hide-and-seek to God afar, 10
So all who hide too well away
Must speak and tell us where they are.

THE DEMIURGE'S LAUGH

It was far in the sameness of the wood;
I was running with joy on the Demon's trail,
Though I knew what I hunted was no true god.
It was just as the light was beginning to fail
That I suddenly heard—all I needed to hear:
It has lasted me many and many a year.

¹ This and the following two poems are reprinted from *A Boy's Will* (1913) with the permission of Messrs. Henry Holt and Company.

The sound was behind me instead of before,
A sleepy sound, but mocking half,
As of one who utterly couldn't care.

The Demon arose from his wallow to laugh, 10
Brushing the dirt from his eye as he went;
And well I knew what the Demon meant.

I shall not forget how his laugh rang out.
I felt as a fool to have been so caught,
And checked my steps to make pretense
It was something among the leaves I sought
(Though doubtful whether he stayed to see).
Thereafter I sat me against a tree.

MENDING WALL²

SOMETHING there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made, 10
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.

² This and the following three poems are reprinted from *North of Boston* (1914) with the permission of Messrs. Henry Holt and Company.

And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
"Stay where you are until our backs are
turned!"

We wear our fingers rough with handling
them. 20

Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple-orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, "Good fences make good
neighbors."

Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:

"Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't
it 30

Where there are cows? But here there are
no cows.

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down." I could say "Elves"
to him,

But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage
armed. 40

He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good
neighbors."

THE DEATH OF THE HIRED MAN

MARY sat musing on the lamp-flame at the
table

Waiting for Warren. When she heard his
step,

She ran on tip-toe down the darkened
passage

To meet him in the doorway with the news
And put him on his guard. "Silas is back."
She pushed him outward with her through
the door

And shut it after her. "Be kind," she said.
She took the market things from Warren's
arms

And set them on the porch, then drew him
down

To sit beside her on the wooden steps. 10

"When was I ever anything but kind to him?
But I'll not have the fellow back," he said.

"I told him so last haying, didn't I?"

"If he left then," I said, "that ended it."

What good is he? Who else will harbor him
At his age for the little he can do?

What help he is there's no depending on.

Off he goes always when I need him most.

"He thinks he ought to earn a little pay,

Enough at least to buy tobacco with, 20

So he won't have to beg and be beholden."

"All right," I say, "I can't afford to pay

Any fixed wages, though I wish I could."

"Someone else can." "Then someone else
will have to."

I shouldn't mind his bettering himself

If that was what it was. You can be certain,
When he begins like that, there's someone at
him

Trying to coax him off with pocket-money,—

In haying time, when any help is scarce.

In winter he comes back to us. I'm done."

"Sh! not so loud: he'll hear you," Mary
said. 31

"I want him to: he'll have to soon or late."

"He's worn out. He's asleep beside the
stove.

When I came up from Rowe's I found him
here,

Huddled against the barn-door fast asleep,
A miserable sight, and frightening, too—

You needn't smile—I didn't recognize him—
I wasn't looking for him—and he's changed.
Wait till you see."

"Where did you say he'd been?"

"He didn't say. I dragged him to the
house, 40

And gave him tea and tried to make him
smoke.

I tried to make him talk about his travels.
Nothing would do: he just kept nodding off."

"What did he say? Did he say anything?"

"But little."

"Anything? Mary, confess
He said he'd come to ditch the meadow for
me."

"Warren!"

"But did he? I just want to know."

"Of course he did. What would you have
him say?

Surely you wouldn't grudge the poor old
man

Some humble way to save his self-respect. 50

He added, if you really care to know,

He meant to clear the upper pasture, too.

That sounds like something you have heard
before?

Warren, I wish you could have heard the way
He jumbled everything. I stopped to look
Two or three times—he made me feel so
queer—

To see if he was talking in his sleep.

He ran on Harold Wilson—you remember—

The boy you had in haying four years since.

He's finished school, and teaching in his
college. 60

Silas declares you'll have to get him back.

He says they two will make a team for work:
Between them they will lay this farm as
smooth!

The way he mixed that in with other things.
He thinks young Wilson a likely lad, though
daft

On education—you know how they fought
All through July under the blazing sun,
Silas up on the cart to build the load,
Harold along beside to pitch it on."

"Yes, I took care to keep well out of ear-
shot." 70

"Well, those days trouble Silas like a dream.
You wouldn't think they would. How some
things linger!

Harold's young college boy's assurance
piqued him.

After so many years he still keeps finding
Good arguments he sees he might have used.
I sympathize. I know just how it feels
To think of the right thing to say too late.
Harold's associated in his mind with Latin.
He asked me what I thought of Harold's
saying

He studied Latin like the violin 80
Because he liked it—that an argument!

He said he couldn't make the boy believe
He could find water with a hazel prong—
Which showed how much good school had
ever done him.

He wanted to go over that. But most of all
He thinks if he could have another chance
To teach him how to build a load of hay——"

"I know, that's Silas' one accomplishment.

He bundies every forkful in its place,

And tags and numbers it for future reference,

So he can find and easily dislodge it 91

In the unloading. Silas does that well.

He takes it out in bunches like big birds' nests.

You never see him standing on the hay

He's trying to lift, straining to lift himself."

"He thinks if he could teach him that, he'd
be

Some good perhaps to someone in the world.

He hates to see a boy the fool of books.

Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,

And nothing to look backward to with
pride, 100

And nothing to look forward to with hope,
So now and never any different."

Part of a moon was falling down the west,
Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills.

Its light poured softly in her lap. She saw

And spread her apron to it. She put out her
hand

Among the harp-like morning-glory strings,
Taut with the dew from garden bed to
eaves,

As if she played unheard the tenderness

That wrought on him beside her in the
night. 110

"Warren," she said, "he has come home to
die:

You needn't be afraid he'll leave you this
time."

"Home," he mocked gently.

"Yes, what else but home?

It all depends on what you mean by home.

Of course he's nothing to us, any more

Than was the hound that came a stranger to
us

Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail."

"Home is the place where, when you have to
go there, 118

They have to take you in."

"I should have called it
Something you somehow haven't to deserve."

Warren leaned out and took a step or two,
Picked up a little stick, and brought it back
And broke it in his hand and tossed it by.
"Silas has better claim on us you think
Than on his brother? Thirteen little miles
As the road winds would bring him to his
door.

Silas has walked that far no doubt to-day.
Why didn't he go there? His brother's
rich,
A somebody—director in the bank." 129

"He never told us that."

"We know it though."

"I think his brother ought to help, of course.
I'll see to that if there is need. He ought of
right

To take him in, and might be willing to—
He may be better than appearances.
But have some pity on Silas. Do you think
If he'd had any pride in claiming kin
Or anything he looked for from his
brother,
He'd keep so still about him all this time?"

"I wonder what's between them."

"I can tell you.

Silas is what he is—we wouldn't mind him—
But just the kind that kinsfolk can't abide.
He never did a thing so very bad. 142
He don't know why he isn't quite as good
As anyone. He won't be made ashamed
To please his brother, worthless though he
is."

"I can't think Si ever hurt anyone."

"No, but he hurt my heart the way he lay
And rolled his old head on that sharp-edged
chair-back.

He wouldn't let me put him on the lounge.
You must go in and see what you can do.
I made the bed up for him there to-night.
You'll be surprised at him—how much he's
broken. 152
His working days are done; I'm sure of it."

"I'd not be in a hurry to say that."

"I haven't been. Go, look, see for yourself.
But, Warren, please remember how it is:
He's come to help you ditch the meadow.
He has a plan. You mustn't laugh at him.
He may not speak of it, and then he may.
I'll sit and see if that small sailing cloud
Will hit or miss the moon."

It hit the moon.

Then there were three there, making a dim
row, 162
The moon, the little silver cloud, and she.
Warren returned—too soon, it seemed to her,
Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and
waited.

"Warren," she questioned.

"Dead," was all he answered.

A SERVANT TO SERVANTS

I DIDN'T make you know how glad I was
To have you come and camp here on our
land.

I promised myself to get down some day
And see the way you lived, but I don't
know!

With a houseful of hungry men to feed
I guess you'd find. . . . It seems to me
I can't express my feelings any more
Than I can raise my voice or want to lift
My hand (oh, I can lift it when I have to).
Did ever you feel so? I hope you never. 10
It's got so I don't even know for sure
Whether I *am* glad, sorry, or anything.
There's nothing but a voice-like left inside
That seems to tell me how I ought to feel,
And would feel if I wasn't all gone wrong.
You take the lake. I look and look at it.
I see it's a fair, pretty sheet of water.

I stand and make myself repeat out loud
The advantages it has, so long and narrow,
Like a deep piece of some old running
river 20

Cut short off at both ends. It lies five miles
Straight away through the mountain notch
From the sink window where I wash the
plates,

And all our storms come up toward the
house,
Drawing the slow waves whiter and whiter
and whiter.

It took my mind off doughnuts and soda
biscuit

To step outdoors and take the water dazzle
A sunny morning, or take the rising wind
About my face and body and through my
wrapper,

When a storm threatened from the Dragon's
Den, 30

And a cold chill shivered across the lake.
I see it's a fair, pretty sheet of water,
Our Willoughby! How did you hear of it?
I expect, though, everyone's heard of it.
In a book about ferns? Listen to that!
You let things more like feathers regulate
Your going and coming. And you like it
here?

I can see how you might. But I don't
know!

It would be different if more people came,
For then there would be business. As it is,
The cottages Len built, sometimes we rent
them, 41

Sometimes we don't. We've a good piece of
shore

That ought to be worth something, and may
yet.

But I don't count on it as much as Len.
He looks on the bright side of everything,
Including me. He thinks I'll be all right
With doctoring. But it's not medicine—
Lowe is the only doctor's dared to say so—
It's rest I want—there, I have said it out—
From cooking meals for hungry hired men 50
And washing dishes after them—from doing
Things over and over that just won't stay
done.

By good rights I ought not to have so much
Put on me, but there seems no other way.
Len says one steady pull more ought to do it.
He says the best way out is always through.
And I agree to that, or in so far
As that I can see no way out but through—
Leastways for me—and then they'll be
convinced.

It's not that Len don't want the best for
me. 60

It was his plan our moving over in
Beside the lake from where that day I showed
you

We used to live—ten miles from anywhere.
We didn't change without some sacrifice,
But Len went at it to make up the loss.
His work's a man's, of course, from sun to
sun,

But he works when he works as hard as I
do—

Though there's small profit in comparisons.
(Women and men will make them all the
same.)

But work ain't all. Len undertakes to
much. 70

He's into everything in town. This year
It's highways, and he's got too many men
Around him to look after that make waste.
They take advantage of him shamefully,
And proud, too, of themselves for doing so.
We have four here to board, great good-for-
nothings,

Sprawling about the kitchen with their talk
While I fry their bacon. Much they care!

No more put out in what they do or say
Than if I wasn't in the room at all. 80

Coming and going all the time, they are:
I don't learn what their names are, let alone
Their characters, or whether they are safe
To have inside the house with doors un-
locked.

I'm not afraid of them, though, if they're
not

Afraid of me. There's two can play at that.
I have my fancies: it runs in the family.

My father's brother wasn't right. They
kept him

Locked up for years back there at the old
farm.

I've been away once—yes, I've been away. 90
The State Asylum. I was prejudiced;
I wouldn't have sent anyone of mine there;
You know the old idea—the only asylum
Was the poorhouse, and those who could
afford,

Rather than send their folks to such a
place,

Kept them at home; and it does seem more
human.

But it's not so: the place is the asylum.
There they have every means proper to do
with,

And you aren't darkening other people's
lives—

Worse than no good to them, and they no
good 100

To you in your condition; you can't know
Affection or the want of it in that state.
I've heard too much of the old-fashioned
way.

My father's brother, he went mad quite
young.

Some thought he had been bitten by a dog,
 Because his violence took on the form
 Of carrying his pillow in his teeth;
 But it's more likely he was crossed in love,
 Or so the story goes. It was some girl.
 Anyway all he talked about was love. 110
 They soon saw he would do someone a
 mischief
 If he wa'n't kept strict watch of, and it
 ended
 In father's building him a sort of cage,
 Or room within a room, of hickory poles,
 Like stanchions in the barn, from floor to
 ceiling,—
 A narrow passage all the way around.
 Anything they put in for furniture
 He'd tear to pieces, even a bed to lie on.
 So they made the place comfortable with
 straw,
 Like a beast's stall, to ease their con-
 sciences. 120
 Of course they had to feed him without
 dishes.
 They tried to keep him clothed, but he
 paraded
 With his clothes on his arm—all of his
 clothes.
 Cruel—it sounds. I 'spose they did the best
 They knew. And just when he was at the
 height,
 Father and mother married, and mother
 came,
 A bride, to help take care of such a creature,
 And accommodate her young life to his.
 That was what marrying father meant to
 her.
 She had to lie and hear love things made
 dreadful 130
 By his shouts in the night. He'd shout and
 shout
 Until the strength was shouted out of him,
 And his voice died down slowly from
 exhaustion.
 He'd pull his bars apart like bow and bow-
 string,
 And let them go and make them twang
 until
 His hands had worn them smooth as any ox-
 bow.
 And then he'd crow as if he thought that
 child's play—
 The only fun he had. I've heard them say,
 though,
 They found a way to put a stop to it.

He was before my time—I never saw
 him; 140
 But the pen stayed exactly as it was
 There in the upper chamber in the ell,
 A sort of catch-all full of attic clutter.
 I often think of the smooth hickory bars.
 It got so I would say—you know, half
 fooling—
 "It's time I took my turn upstairs in
 jail"—
 Just as you will till it becomes a habit.
 No wonder I was glad to get away.
 Mind you, I waited till Len said the word.
 I didn't want the blame if things went
 wrong. 150
 I was glad though, no end, when we moved
 out,
 And I looked to be happy, and I was,
 As I said, for a while—but I don't know!
 Somehow the change wore out like a prescrip-
 tion.
 And there's more to it than just window-
 views
 And living by a lake. I'm past such help—
 Unless Len took the notion, which he
 won't,
 And I won't ask him—it's not sure enough.
 I 'spose I've got to go the road I'm going:
 Other folks have to, and why shouldn't I? 160
 I almost think if I could do like you,
 Drop everything and live out on the
 ground—
 But it might be, come night, I shouldn't
 like it,
 Or a long rain. I should soon get enough,
 And be glad of a good roof overhead.
 I've lain awake thinking of you, I'll
 warrant,
 More than you have yourself, some of these
 nights.
 The wonder was the tents weren't snatched
 away
 From over you as you lay in your beds.
 I haven't courage for a risk like that. 170
 Bless you, of course, you're keeping me from
 work,
 But the thing of it is, I need to *be* kept.
 There's work enough to do—there's always
 that;
 But behind's behind. The worst that you
 can do
 Is set me back a little more behind.
 I sha'n't catch up in this world, anyway.
 I'd *rather* you'd not go unless you must.

THE CODE

THERE were three in the meadow by the
brook

Gathering up windrows, piling cocks of hay,
With an eye always lifted toward the west
Where an irregular sun-bordered cloud
Darkly advanced with a perpetual dagger
Flickering across its bosom. Suddenly
One helper, thrusting pitchfork in the
ground,

Marched himself off the field and home.
One stayed.

The town-bred farmer failed to understand.

"What is there wrong?"

"Something you just now said." 10

"What did I say?"

"About our taking pains."

"To cock the hay?—because it's going to
shower?"

I said that more than half an hour ago.

I said it to myself as much as you."

"You didn't know. But James is one big
fool.

He thought you meant to find fault with his
work.

That's what the average farmer would have
meant.

James would take time, of course, to chew it
over

Before he acted: he's just got round to act."

"He is a fool if that's the way he takes
me." 20

"Don't let it bother you. You've found out
something.

The hand that knows his business won't be
told

To do work better or faster—those two
things.

I'm as particular as anyone:

Most likely I'd have served you just the
same.

But I know you don't understand our ways.
You were just talking what was in your
mind,

What was in all our minds, and you weren't
hinting.

Tell you a story of what happened once:

I was up here in Salem at a man's 30

Named Sanders with a gang of four or five
Doing the haying. No one liked the boss.

He was one of the kind sports call a spider,
All wiry arms and legs that spread out
wavy

From a humped body nigh as big's a biscuit.

But work! that man could work, especially

If by so doing he could get more work

Out of his hired help. I'm not denying

He was hard on himself. I couldn't find

That he kept any hours—not for himself. 40

Daylight and lantern-light were one to him:

I've heard him pounding in the barn all
night.

But what he liked was someone to encourage.

Them that he couldn't lead he'd get behind

And drive, the way you can, you know, in
mowing—

Keep at their heels and threaten to mow their
legs off.

I'd seen about enough of his bulling tricks

(We call that bulling). I'd been watching
him.

So when he paired off with me in the hay-
field

To load the load, thinks I, Look out for
trouble. 50

I built the load and topped it off; old Sanders

Combed it down with a rake and says,

'O. K.'

Everything went well till we reached the
barn

With a big catch to empty in a bay.

You understand that meant the easy job

For the man up on top of throwing down

The hay and rolling it off wholesale,

Where on a mow it would have been slow lift-
ing.

You wouldn't think a fellow'd need much
urging

Under these circumstances, would you
now? 60

But the old fool seizes his fork in both hands,

And looking up bewhiskered out of the pit,

Shouts like an army captain, 'Let her
come!'

Thinks I, D'ye mean it? 'What was that you
said?'

I asked out loud, so's there'd be no mistake,
'Did you say, Let her come?' 'Yes, let her

come.'

He said it over, but he said it softer.

Never you say a thing like that to a man,
 Not if he values what he is. God, I'd as
 soon
 Murdered him as left out his middle name. 70
 I'd built the load and knew right where to
 find it.
 Two or three forkfuls I picked lightly round
 for
 Like meditating, and then I just dug in
 And dumped the rackful on him in ten lots.
 I looked over the side once in the dust
 And caught sight of him treading-water-
 like,
 Keeping his head above. 'Damn ye,' I says,
 'That gets ye!' He squeaked like a squeezed
 rat.
 That was the last I saw or heard of him.
 I cleaned the rack and drove out to cool
 off. 80
 As I sat mopping hayseed from my neck,
 And sort of waiting to be asked about it,
 One of the boys sings out, 'Where's the old
 man?'
 'I left him in the barn under the hay.
 If ye want him, ye can go and dig him
 out.'
 They realized from the way I swobbed my
 neck
 More than was needed something must be
 up.
 They headed for the barn; I stayed where I
 was.
 They told me afterward. First they forked
 hay,
 A lot of it, out into the barn floor. 90
 Nothing! They listened for him. Not a
 rustle.
 I guess they thought I'd spiked him in the
 temple
 Before I buried him, or I couldn't have man-
 aged.
 They excavated more. 'Go keep his wife
 Out of the barn.' Someone looked in a win-
 dow,
 And curse me if he wasn't in the kitchen
 Slumped way down in a chair, with both his
 feet
 Stuck in the oven, the hottest day that
 summer.
 He looked so clean disgusted from behind
 There was no one that dared to stir him
 up, 100
 Or let him know that he was being looked
 at.

Apparently I hadn't buried him
 (I may have knocked him down); but my
 just trying
 To bury him had hurt his dignity.
 He had gone to the house so's not to meet
 me.
 He kept away from us all afternoon.
 We tended to his hay. We saw him out
 After a while picking peas in his garden:
 He couldn't keep away from doing some-
 thing."

"Weren't you relieved to find he wasn't
 dead?" 110

"No! and yet I don't know—it's hard to
 say.
 I went about to kill him fair enough."

"You took an awkward way. Did he dis-
 charge you?"

"Discharge me? No! He knew I did just
 right."

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN¹

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
 And sorry I could not travel both
 And be one traveler, long I stood
 And looked down one as far as I could
 To where it bent in the undergrowth:

Then took the other, as just as fair,
 And having perhaps the better claim,
 Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
 Though as for that the passing there
 Had worn them really about the same, 10

And both that morning equally lay
 In leaves no step had trodden black.
 Oh, I kept the first for another day!
 Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
 I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
 Somewhere ages and ages hence:
 Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
 I took the one less traveled by,
 And that has made all the difference. 20

¹ This and the following three poems are reprinted
 from *Mountain Interval* (1916) with the permission of
 Messrs. Henry Holt and Company.

AN OLD MAN'S WINTER NIGHT

ALL out of doors looked darkly in at him
 Through the thin frost, almost in separate
 stars,
 That gathers on the pane in empty rooms.
 What kept his eyes from giving back the gaze
 Was the lamp tilted near them in his hand.
 What kept him from remembering what it
 was
 That brought him to that creaking room
 was age.
 He stood with barrels round him—at a loss.
 And having scared the cellar under him
 In clomping there, he scared it once again 10
 In clomping off;—and scared the outer
 night,
 Which has its sounds, familiar, like the roar
 Of trees and crack of branches, common
 things,
 But nothing so like beating on a box.
 A light he was to no one but himself
 Where now he sat, concerned with he knew
 what,
 A quiet light, and then not even that.
 He consigned to the moon, such as she was,
 So late-arising, to the broken moon
 As better than the sun in any case 20
 For such a charge, his snow upon the roof,
 His icicles along the wall to keep;
 And slept. The log that shifted with a jolt
 Once in the stove, disturbed him and he
 shifted,
 And eased his heavy breathing, but still slept.
 One aged man—one man—can't fill a house,
 A farm, a countryside, or if he can,
 It's thus he does it of a winter night.

THE HILL WIFE

LONELINESS

(Her Word)

ONE ought not to have to care
 So much as you and I
 Care when the birds come round the house
 To seem to say good-by;

Or care so much when they come back
 With whatever it is they sing;
 The truth being we are as much
 Too glad for the one thing

As we are too sad for the other here—
 With birds that fill their breasts 10
 But with each other and themselves
 And their built or driven nests.

HOUSE FEAR

Always—I tell you this they learned—
 Always at night when they returned
 To the lonely house from far away
 To lamps unlighted and fire gone gray,
 They learned to rattle the lock and key
 To give whatever might chance to be
 Warning and time to be off in flight:
 And preferring the out- to the in-door
 night, 20
 They learned to leave the house-door wide
 Until they had lit the lamp inside.

THE SMILE

(Her Word)

I didn't like the way he went away.
 That smile! It never came of being gay.
 Still he smiled—did you see him?—I was
 sure!
 Perhaps because we gave him only bread
 And the wretch knew from that that we were
 poor.
 Perhaps because he let us give instead
 Of seizing from us as he might have seized.
 Perhaps he mocked at us for being wed, 30
 Or being very young (and he was pleased
 To have a vision of us old and dead).
 I wonder how far down the road he's got.
 He's watching from the woods as like as not.

THE OFT-REPEATED DREAM

She had no saying dark enough
 For the dark pine that kept
 Forever trying the window-latch
 Of the room where they slept.

The tireless but ineffectual hands
 That with every futile pass 40
 Made the great tree seem as a little bird
 Before the mystery of glass!

It never had been inside the room,
 And only one of the two
 Was afraid in an oft-repeated dream
 Of what the tree might do.

THE IMPULSE

It was too lonely for her there,
And too wild,
And since there were but two of them,
And no child, 50

And work was little in the house,
She was free,
And followed where he furrowed field,
Or felled tree.

She rested on a log and tossed
The fresh chips,
With a song only to herself
On her lips

And once she went to break a bough
Of black alder. 60
She strayed so far she scarcely heard
When he called her—

And didn't answer—didn't speak—
Or return.
She stood, and then she ran and hid
In the fern.

He never found her, though he looked
Everywhere,
And he asked at her mother's house
Was she there. 70

Sudden and swift and light as that
The ties gave,
And he learned of finalities
Besides the grave.

THE SOUND OF THE TREES

I WONDER about the trees.
Why do we wish to bear
Forever the noise of these
More than another noise
So close to our dwelling place?
We suffer them by the day
Till we lose all measure of pace,
And fixity in our joys,
And acquire a listening air. 10
They are that that talks of going
But never gets away;
And that talks no less for knowing,
As it grows wiser and older,
That now it means to stay.

My feet tug at the floor
And my head sways to my shoulder
Sometimes when I watch trees sway,
From the window or the door.
I shall set forth for somewhere, 20
I shall make the reckless choice
Some day when they are in voice
And tossing so as to scare
The white clouds over them on.
I shall have less to say,
But I shall be gone.

FIRE AND ICE¹

SOME say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.
But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

THE RUNAWAY

ONCE when the snow of the year was begin-
ning to fall,
We stopped by a mountain pasture to say,
"Whose colt?"
A little Morgan had one forefoot on the
wall,
The other curled at his breast. He dipped
his head
And snorted at us. And then he had to bolt.
We heard the miniature thunder where he
fled,
And we saw him, or thought we saw him,
dim and gray,
Like a shadow against the curtain of falling
flakes.
"I think the little fellow's afraid of the snow.
He isn't winter-broken. It isn't play 10
With the little fellow at all. He's running
away.
I doubt if even his mother could tell him,
'Sakes,
It's only weather.' He'd think she didn't
know!

¹ This and the following two poems are reprinted
from *New Hampshire* (1923) with the permission of
Messrs. Henry Holt and Company.

Where is his mother? He can't be out
 alone."
 And now he comes again with clatter of
 stone,
 And mounts the wall again with whited eyes
 And all his tail that isn't hair up straight.
 He shudders his coat as if to throw off flies.
 "Whoever it is that leaves him out so late,
 When other creatures have gone to stall and
 bin, 20
 Ought to be told to come and take him in."

THE ONSET

ALWAYS the same, when on a fated night
 At last the gathered snow lets down as white
 As may be in dark woods, and with a song
 It shall not make again all winter long
 Of hissing on the yet uncovered ground,
 I almost stumble looking up and round,

As one who overtaken by the end
 Gives up his errand, and lets death descend
 Upon him where he is, with nothing done
 To evil, no important triumph won, 10
 More than if life had never been begun.

Yet all the precedent is on my side:
 I know that winter death has never tried
 The earth but it has failed: the snow may
 heap
 In long storms an undrifted four feet deep
 As measured against maple, birch and oak,
 It cannot check the peeper's silver croak;
 And I shall see the snow all go down hill
 In water of a slender April rill
 That flashes tail through last year's withered
 brake 20
 And dead weeds, like a disappearing snake.
 Nothing will be left white but here a birch,
 And there a clump of houses with a church.

VACHEL LINDSAY (1879-)

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay was born in Springfield, Illinois, on 10 November, 1879. His parents both came of Kentucky families, and maintained their Southern sympathies (as does their son) even in Republican Springfield, within a few blocks of the Lincoln home, and in a house where Lincoln had been given parties by his sister-in-law. Mr. Lindsay's father was a physician, and his mother, before her marriage, a teacher of literature and painting in a Kentucky college. They both had traveled in Europe, and after their marriage they spent their summers abroad when they did not camp "like cinnamon bears" on Mount Clinton, in Colorado; and once they made a journey to China. In the Lindsay home there were many books, most of them relating to Europe, none of them relating to New England. One which Mr. Lindsay knew thoroughly when still a very young boy was Rawlinson's *History of Egypt*. Another was Chambers's *Encyclopedia of English Literature*, through which he came to know in particular Chatterton, Shelley, Byron, Coleridge, and Dryden. These were discoveries as interesting to him as were certain Egyptian kings, and another discovery valued as highly as an Egyptian king was E. A. Poe. He has said (Preface to *Collected Poems*): "There was not even a picture of Poe in the histories of American literature taught in the High School when I entered it. There was nothing to be found but the full-page portraits of a famous mutual-admiration society. I knew exactly Poe's opinion of these whiskered worthies. I had read his complete works, criticism and all, through and through, before I was fourteen. I could use his whip. I could quote his critical headlines, that brought blood. I was a kind of literary outcast, because I championed Poe and his view."

In 1897 Mr. Lindsay was graduated from the Springfield High School, and he spent the following three years at Hiram College (Ohio), where all of the students were enthusiastic orators, and where he practiced verse-writing attuned to the rhythms of oratorical prose. Instead of remaining to take a degree from Hiram College, however, he went in 1900 to the Art Institute of Chicago, where he remained three years. His mother had from his infancy intended him to become an artist, and he was now seeking to fulfill her wish. From Chicago he proceeded to the New York School of Art, where he studied under Chase and Henri in 1904 and 1905. He has said that the one consistent thread in his life is the fact that he has always been, and still is, an art student, but it would appear that there are two threads. For he has also consistently been a preacher, a propagandist, a reformer, a prophet of the millennium, and his pictures (hieroglyphics, as he calls them, meaning that they are symbols of his vision) and verses have been for him, not ends, but instruments. Moreover, he acutely needs an audience and has worked hard for one, not hesitating to abandon one means or method for another, if change promised success. In this, if he has employed methods akin to the vulgar politician's, he has of course been honest in intention, hoping to lead his public around, once he has it, to his own objectives;—as is shown in some of his most recent utterances by his naïve but discreet annoyance over the fact that his public obstinately persists in wanting from him only amusing and stirring recitations, and will not listen patiently to his real message.

Mr. Lindsay obeyed the call to teach in 1905, and for three winters was a Y.M.C.A. lecturer in New York. But in 1908 he decided that his native town, Springfield, was the proper place for him to find and create and preach an authentic "United States beauty," and to it he returned. During the next two years he was employed as a lecturer by the Springfield Y.M.C.A. and by the Anti-Saloon League, but was repudiated by both when he began to mix his aims with theirs. He was likewise actively discouraged by the citizens of Springfield, who either did not understand or could not seriously regard his apocalyptic dream of a Springfield regenerated by the love and pursuit of beauty, and thus leading the rest of the world towards an æsthetic millennium. Some apparently thought that he was insidiously preaching a political revolution. Only a small circle of Swedenborgians, a devoted teacher of former days, and a few others remained his friends. From the Swedenborgians he learned much, and was confirmed in his apocalyptic zeal, though he did not formally join the sect. At the same time he was unsuccessfully submitting drawings and verses to every art editor and literary editor in New York, so that both at home and abroad he was told plainly, or by implication, that either he must subdue himself to produce what was commercially acceptable in art and poetry, or he must beg. He accepted the alternative and, as a spectacular act of defiance, calculated to impress Springfield, if not a larger public,

he made three journeys afoot as a beggar, preaching the gospel of beauty, reciting poems, and giving away drawings and verses (in particular a pamphlet entitled *Rhymes to be Traded for Bread*).

It was his first-hand acquaintance with the work of the Salvation Army, gained while he was a beggar, which inspired him to write the earliest of his better known poems, *General William Booth Enters into Heaven*. This was published with other poems in 1913, but the volume failed to attract the public, and his widespread fame dates only from the appearance of his second volume, *The Congo and Other Poems*, in 1914. In this volume he achieved a blend of "jazzy" rhythm with rhyme and religion which at once caught the popular ear and fancy, particularly when chanted by Mr. Lindsay, who has toured the United States and England and Canada, intoning his poems and fairly acting them out upon the platform with great effect. In following up this success he has been trying, he has explained, to create in the public a "higher vaudeville" imagination by writing in emulation of classical Greek poetry which was half-sung, half-spoken. He has at any rate discovered a completely appropriate medium, of vast popular appeal, for the expression of his immense vitality and his exuberant, whimsical fancy. And his serious themes he has occasionally succeeded in transmuting perfectly into powerful and moving verse. He is, however, a very uneven and uncritical writer, apparently unable to distinguish enthusiasm from inspiration, and has produced a great quantity of absurd and worthless verse which in his *Collected Poems* (1923; revised and illustrated edition, 1925) tends to obscure the slender veins of gold. Other volumes which have been incorporated in the *Collected Poems*, besides the two mentioned above, are: *The Chinese Nightingale and Other Poems* (1917), and *The Golden Whales of California and Other Poems* (1920). Three additional volumes of poems are: *The Daniel Jazz and Other Poems* (1920), *Going-to-the-Sun* (1923), and *Going to the Stars* (1926). Mr. Lindsay has also published two volumes which have issued out of his experiences as a beggar, *Adventures while Preaching the Gospel of Beauty* (1914) and *A Handy Guide for Beggars* (1916); and also a study entitled *The Art of the Moving Picture* (1915), and a "sealed book of prophecy," *The Golden Book of Springfield* (1920). He still calls Springfield his home, but spends a part of every year at Gulf Park College (Mississippi), and other time in traveling, when he is not on one of his "national reciting tours."

I KNOW ALL THIS WHEN GYPSY FIDDLES CRY¹

Oh, gypsies, proud and stiff-necked and
perverse,

Saying: "We tell the fortunes of the nations,
And revel in the deep palm of the world.

The head-line is the road we choose for trade.
The love-line is the lane wherein we camp.

The life-line is the road we wander on.

Mount Venus, Jupiter, and all the rest

Are finger-tips of ranges clasping round

And holding up the Romany's wide sky."

Oh, gypsies, proud and stiff-necked and per-
verse, 10

Saying: "We will swap horses till the doom,
And mend the pots and kettles of mankind,

And lend our sons to big-time vaudeville,

Or to the race-track, or the learned world.

But India's Brahma waits within their
breasts.

¹ The poems here reprinted follow the text of Mr. Lindsay's *Collected Poems*, Revised and Illustrated Edition, and are arranged in the same order as in that volume. To meet a requirement of the publishers, however, the volume in which each poem originally appeared is named in the footnotes. The present poem comes from V. Lindsay's *Collected Poems*, copyrighted in 1923 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

They will return to us with gypsy grins,
And chatter Romany, and shake their curls
And hug the dirtiest babies in the camp.
They will return to the moving pillar of
smoke,

The whitest toothed, the merriest laughs
known, 20

The blackest haired of all the tribes of men.

What trap can hold such cats? The Ro-
many

Has crossed such delicate palms with lead or
gold,

Wheedling in sun and rain, through perilous
years,

All coins now look alike. The palm is all.

Our greasy pack of cards is still the book

Most read of men. The heart's librarians,

We tell all lovers what they want to know.

So, out of the famed Chicago Library,

Out of the great Chicago orchestras, 30

Out of the skyscraper, the Fine Arts Build-
ing,

Our sons will come with fiddles and with loot,
Dressed, as of old, like turkey-cocks and
zebras,

Like tiger-lilies and chameleons,

Go west with us to California,

Telling the fortunes of the bleeding world,
And kiss the sunset, ere their day is done."

Oh, gypsies, proud and stiff-necked and
perverse,

Picking the brains and pockets of mankind,
You will go westward for one-half hour yet.

You will turn eastward in a little while. 41

You will go back, as men turn to Kentucky,
Land of their fathers, dark and bloody
ground.

When all the Jews go home to Syria,
When Chinese cooks go back to Canton,
China,

When Japanese photographers return
With their black cameras to Tokio,
And Irish patriots to Donegal,

And Scotch accountants back to Edinburgh,
You will go back to India, whence you
came. 50

When you have reached the borders of your
quest,

Homesick at last, by many a devious way,
Winding the wonderlands circuitous,
By foot and horse will trace the long way
back!

Fiddling for ocean liners, while the dance
Sweeps through the decks, your brown
tribes all will go!

Those east-bound ships will hear your long
farewell

On fiddle, piccolo, and flute and timbrel.
I know all this, when gypsy fiddles cry. 59

That hour of their homesickness, I myself
Will turn, will say farewell to Illinois,
To old Kentucky and Virginia,
And go with them to India, whence they
came.

For they have heard a singing from the
Ganges,

And cries of orioles,—from the temple
caves,—

And Bengal's oldest, humblest villages.

They smell the supper smokes of Amritsar.

Green monkeys cry in Sanskrit to their souls

From lofty bamboo trees of hot Madras.

They think of towns to ease their feverish
eyes, 70

And make them stand and meditate forever,

Domes of astonishment, to heal the mind.

I know all this, when gypsy fiddles cry.

What music will be blended with the wind

When gypsy fiddlers, nearing that old land,

Bring tunes from all the world to Brahma's
house?

Passing the Indus, winding poisonous
forests,

Blowing soft flutes at scandalous temple girls,
Filling the highways with their magpie
loot,

What brass from my Chicago will they
heap, 80

What gems from Walla Walla, Omaha,
Will they pile near the Bodhi Tree, and
laugh?

They will dance near such temples as best
suit them,

Though they will not quite enter, or adore,

Looking on roofs, as poets look on lilies,

Looking at towers, as boys at forest vines,

That leap to tree-tops through the dizzy air.

I know all this, when gypsy fiddles cry.

And with the gypsies there will be a king

And a thousand desperadoes just his style, 90

With all their rags dyed in the blood of
roses,

Splashed with the blood of angels, and of
demons.

And he will boss them with an awful voice.

And with a red whip he will beat his wife.

He will be wicked on that sacred shore,

And rattle cruel spurs against the rocks,

And shake Calcutta's walls with circus
bugles.

He will kill Brahmins there, in Kali's name,

And please the thugs, and blood-drunk of the
earth.

I know all this, when gypsy fiddles cry. 100

Oh, sweating thieves, and hard-boiled
scalawags,

That still will boast your pride until the
doom,

Smashing every caste rule of the world,

Reaching at last your Hindu goal to smash

The caste rules of old India, and shout:

"Down with the Brahmins, let the Romany
reign."

When gypsy girls look deep within my hand

They always speak so tenderly and say

That I am one of those star-crossed to wed

A princess in a forest fairy-tale. 110

So there will be a tender gypsy princess,

My Juliet, shining through this clan.

And I would sing you of her beauty now.

And I will fight with knives the gypsy man

Who tries to steal her wild young heart away.

INCENSE ¹

And I will kiss her in the waterfalls,
And at the rainbow's end, and in the incense
That curls about the feet of sleeping gods,
And sing with her in canebrakes and in rice
fields,

In Romany, eternal Romany. 120

We will sow secret herbs, and plant old roses,
And fumble through dark, snaky palaces,
Stable our ponies in the Taj Mahal,
And sleep outdoors ourselves.

In her strange fairy mill-wheel eyes will wait
All windings and unwindings of the high-
ways,

From India, across America,—

All windings and unwindings of my fancy,
All windings and unwindings of all souls,
All windings and unwindings of the heav-
ens. 130

I know all this, when gypsy fiddles cry.

We gypsies, proud and stiff-necked and
perverse,

Standing upon the white Himalayas,
Will think of far divine Yosemite.

We will heal Hindu hermits there with oil
Brought from California's tall sequoias.
And we will be like gods that heap the
thunders,

And start young redwood trees on Time's
own mountains,

We will swap horses with the rising moon,
And mend that funny skillet called Orion,
Color the stars like San Francisco's street-
lights, 141

And paint our sign and signature on high
In planets like a bed of crimson pansies;
While a million fiddles shake all listening
hearts,

Crying good fortune to the Universe,
Whispering adventure to the Ganges waves,
And to the spirits, and all winds and gods.

Till mighty Brahma puts his golden palm
Within the gypsy king's great striped tent,
And asks his fortune told by that great love-
line 150

That winds across his palm in splendid
flame.

Only the hearthstone of old India
Will end the endless march of gypsy feet.
I will go back to India with them
When they go back to India whence they
came.

I know all this, when gypsy fiddles cry.

THINK not that incense-smoke has had its
day.

My friends, the incense-time has but begun.
Creed upon creed, cult upon cult shall bloom,
Shrine after shrine grow gray beneath the
sun.

And mountain-boulders in our aged West
Shall guard the graves of hermits truth-
endowed:

And there the scholar from the Chinese hills
Shall do deep honor, with his wise head
bowed.

And on our old, old plains some muddy
stream,

Dark as the Ganges, shall, like that strange
tide— 10

(Whispering mystery to half the earth)—
Gather the praying millions to its side,

And flow past halls with statues in white
stone

To saints unborn to-day, whose lives of grace
Shall make one shining, universal church
Where all Faiths kneel, as brothers, in one
place.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS
AT MIDNIGHT ²

(IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS)

It is portentous, and a thing of state
That here at midnight, in our little town
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,
Near the old court-house pacing up and
down,

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards
He lingers where his children used to play,
Or through the market, on the well-worn
stones

He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

¹ From V. Lindsay's *General William Booth Enters into Heaven, and Other Poems*, copyrighted in 1913 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

² From V. Lindsay's *The Congo and Other Poems*, copyrighted in 1914 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient
black,
A famous high top-hat and plain worn
shawl 10
Make him the quaint great figure that men
love,
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.
He is among us:—as in times before!
And we who toss and lie awake for long
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the
door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and
kings.
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he
sleep?
Too many peasants fight, they know not
why,
Too many homesteads in black terror
weep. 20

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every
main.
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders
now
The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come;—the shining hope of Europe
free:
The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and
Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder
still,
That all his hours of travail here for men 30
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white
peace
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

SPRINGFIELD MAGICAL ¹

IN this, the City of my Discontent,
Sometimes there comes a whisper from the
grass,
"Romance, Romance—is here. No Hindu
town
Is quite so strange. No Citadel of Brass

¹ From V. Lindsay's *General William Booth Enters into Heaven, and Other Poems*, copyrighted in 1913 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

By Sinbad found, held half such love and
hate;
No picture-palace in a picture-book
Such webs of Friendship, Beauty, Greed and
Fate!"

IN this, the City of my Discontent,
Down from the sky, up from the smoking
deep
Wild legends new and old burn round my
bed 10
While trees and grass and men are wrapped
in sleep.
Angels come down, with Christmas in their
hearts,
Gentle, whimsical, laughing, heaven-sent;
And, for a day, fair Peace have given me
In this, the City of my Discontent!

A GOSPEL OF BEAUTY ²

I. THE PROUD FARMER

(In memory of E. S. Frazee, Rush County,
Indiana)

INTO the acres of the newborn state
He poured his strength, and plowed his an-
cient name,
And, when the traders followed him, he stood
Towering above their furtive souls and tame.

That brow without a stain, that fearless eye
Oft left the passing stranger wondering
To find such knighthood in the sprawling
land,
To see a democrat well-nigh a king.

He lived with liberal hand, with guests from
far,
With talk and joke and fellowship to spare,—
Watching the wide world's life from sun to
sun, 11
Lining his walls with books from everywhere.

He read by night, he built his world by day.
The farm and house of God to him were one.
For forty years he preached and plowed and
wrought—

A statesman in the fields, who bent to none.

² From V. Lindsay's *General William Booth Enters into Heaven, and Other Poems*, copyrighted in 1913 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission. Mr. Lindsay states that he recited this group of poems more than any others in his "mendicant preaching tour through the West," and he adds: "Taken as a triad, they hold in solution my theory of American civilization."

His plowmen-neighbors were as lords to him.

His was an ironside, democratic pride.

He served a rigid Christ, but served him well—

And, for a lifetime, saved the countryside. 20

Here lie the dead, who gave the church their best

Under his fiery preaching of the word.

They sleep with him beneath the ragged grass . . .

The village withers, by his voice unstirred.

And though his tribe be scattered to the wind

From the Atlantic to the China Sea,

Yet do they think of that bright lamp he burned

Of family worth and proud integrity.

And many a sturdy grandchild hears his name

In reverence spoken, till he feels akin 30

To all the lion-eyed who build the world—

And lion-dreams begin to burn within.

II. THE ILLINOIS VILLAGE

O YOU who lose the art of hope,
Whose temples seem to shrine a lie,
Whose sidewalks are but stones of fear,
Who weep that Liberty must die,
Turn to the little prairie towns,
Your higher hope shall yet begin.
On every side awaits you there
Some gate where glory enters in.

Yet when I see the flocks of girls,
Watching the Sunday train go through 10
(As though the whole wide world went by)
With eyes that long to travel too,
I sigh, despite my soul made glad
By cloudy dresses and brown hair,
Sigh for the sweet life wrenched and torn
By thundering commerce, fierce and bare.
Nymphs of the wheat these girls should be:
Kings of the grove, their lovers, strong.
Why are they not inspired, aflame?
This beauty calls for valiant song— 20
For men to carve these fairy-forms
And faces in a fountain-frieze;
Dancers that own immortal hours;
Painters that work upon their knees;

Maids, lovers, friends, so deep in life,
So deep in love and poet's deeds,
The railroad is a thing disowned,
The city but a field of weeds.

Who can pass a village church
By night in these clean prairie lands 30
Without a touch of Spirit-power?
So white and fixed and cool it stands—
A thing from some strange fairy-town,
A pious amaranthine flower,
Unsullied by the winds, as pure
As jade or marble, wrought this hour:—
Rural in form, foursquare and plain,
And yet our sister, the new moon,
Makes it a praying wizard's dream.
The trees that watch at dusty noon 40
Breaking its sharpest lines, veil not
The whiteness it reflects from God,
Flashing like Spring on many an eye,
Making clean flesh, that once was clod.

Who can pass a district school
Without the hope that there may wait
Some baby-heart the books shall flame
With zeal to make his playmates great,
To make the whole wide village gleam
A strangely carved celestial gem, 50
Eternal in its beauty-light,
The Artist's town of Bethlehem!

III. ON THE BUILDING OF SPRINGFIELD

LET not our town be large, remembering
That little Athens was the Muses' home,
That Oxford rules the heart of London still,
That Florence gave the Renaissance to
Rome.

Record it for the grandson of your son—
A city is not builded in a day:
Our little town cannot complete her soul
Till countless generations pass away. 8

Now let each child be joined as to a church
To her perpetual hopes, each man ordained:
Let every street be made a reverent aisle
Where Music grows and Beauty is unchained.

Let Science and Machinery and Trade
Be slaves of her, and make her all in all,
Building against our blatant, restless time
An unseen, skilful, medieval wall.

Let every citizen be rich toward God.
 Let Christ the beggar, teach divinity.
 Let no man rule who holds his money dear.
 Let this, our city, be our luxury. 20

We should build parks that students from
 afar
 Would choose to starve in, rather than go
 home,
 Fair little squares, with Phidian ornament,
 Food for the spirit, milk and honeycomb.

Songs shall be sung by us in that good day,
 Songs we have written, blood within the
 rhyme
 Beating, as when Old England still was
 glad,—
 The purple, rich Elizabethan time.

.

Say, is my prophecy too fair and far?
 I only know, unless her faith be high, 30
 The soul of this, our Nineveh, is doomed,
 Our little Babylon will surely die.

Some city on the breast of Illinois
 No wiser and no better at the start
 By faith shall rise redeemed, by faith shall
 rise
 Bearing the western glory in her heart.

The genius of the Maple, Elm and Oak,
 The secret hidden in each grain of corn,
 The glory that the prairie angels sing
 At night when sons of Life and Love are
 born, 40

Born but to struggle, squalid and alone,
 Broken and wandering in their early years.
 When will they make our dusty streets their
 goal,
 Within our attics hide their sacred tears?

When will they start our vulgar blood athrill
 With living language, words that set us free?
 When will they make a path of beauty clear
 Between our riches and our liberty?

We must have many Lincoln-hearted men.
 A city is not builded in a day. 50
 And they must do their work, and come and
 go,
 While countless generations pass away.

JOHN L. SULLIVAN, THE STRONG BOY OF BOSTON¹

(Inscribed to Louis Untermeyer and Robert
 Frost)

WHEN I was nine years old, in 1889,
 I sent my love a lacy Valentine.
 Suffering boys were dressed like Fauntle-
 roys,
 While *Judge* and *Puck* in giant humor vied.
 The Gibson Girl came shining like a bride
 To spoil the cult of Tennyson's Elaine.
 Louisa Alcott was my gentle guide. . . .
 Then . . .
 I heard a battle trumpet sound.
 Nigh New Orleans 10
 Upon an emerald plain
 John L. Sullivan
 The strong boy
 Of Boston
 Fought seventy-five red rounds with Jake
 Kilrain.

In simple sheltered 1889
 Nick Carter I would piously deride.
 Over the *Elsie Books* I moped and sighed.
St. Nicholas Magazine was all my pride,
 While coarser boys on cellar doors would
 slide. 20
 The grown-ups bought refinement by the
 pound.
 Rogers groups had not been told to hide.
 E. P. Roe had just begun to wane.
 Howells was rising, surely to attain!
 The nation for a jamboree was gowned.—
 Her hundredth year of roaring freedom
 crowned.

The British Lion ran and hid from Blaine
 The razzle-dazzle hip-hurrah from Maine.
 The mocking bird was singing in the lane. . . .
 Yet . . . 30

"East side, west side, all around
 the town

The tots sang: 'Ring a rosie—'
 'London Bridge is falling down.'"

And . . .

John L. Sullivan
 The strong boy
 Of Boston
 Broke every single rib of Jake Kilrain.

To be sung.
 Let the audi-
 ence join in
 softly on this
 tune, wherever
 it appears.

¹ From V. Lindsay's *The Golden Whales of California*,
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 printed by permission.

In dear provincial 1889,
 Barnum's bears and tigers could astound. 40
 Ingersoll was called a most vile hound,
 And named with Satan, Judas, Thomas
 Paine!

Robert Elsmere riled the pious brain.
 Phillips Brooks for heresy was fried.
 Boston Brahmins patronized Mark Twain.
 The baseball rules were changed. That
 was a gain.

Pop Anson was our darling, pet and pride.
 Native sons in Irish votes were drowned.
 Tammany once more escaped its chain.
 Once more each raw saloon was raising
 Cain. 50

The mocking bird was singing in the lane. . . .
 Yet . . .

"East side, west side, all around the town
 The tots sang: 'Ring a rosie'
 'London Bridge is falling down.'"

And . . .
 John L. Sullivan
 The strong boy
 Of Boston

Finished the ring career of Jake Kilrain. 60

In mystic, ancient 1889,
 Wilson with pure learning was allied.
 Roosevelt gave forth a chirping sound.
 Stanley found old Emin and his train.
 Stout explorers sought the pole in vain.
 To dream of flying proved a man insane.
 The newly rich were bathing in champagne.
 Van Bibber Davis, at a single bound
 Displayed himself, and simpering glory
 found.

John J. Ingalls, like a lonely crane, 70
 Swore and swore, and stalked the Kansas
 plain.

The Cronin murder was the ages' stain.
 Johnstown was flooded, and the whole
 world cried.

We heard not of Louvain nor of Lorraine,
 Or a million heroes for their freedom slain.
 Of Armageddon and the world's birth-pain—
 The League of Nations, the new world
 allied,

With Wilson, crucified, then justified.
 We *thought* the world would loaf and sprawl
 and mosey.

The gods of Yap and Swat were sweetly
 dozy. 80

We *thought* the far-off gods of Chow had died.
 The mocking bird was singing in the lane. . . .

Yet . . .

"East side, west side, all around the town
 The tots sang: 'Ring a rosie'

'LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN.'"

And . . .

John L. Sullivan knocked out Jake Kilrain.

SIMON LEGREE — A NEGRO SERMON¹

(To be read in your own variety of negro
 dialect)

LEGREE'S big house was white and green.
 His cotton-fields were the best to be seen.
 He had strong horses and opulent cattle,
 And bloodhounds bold, with chains that
 would rattle.

His garret was full of curious things:
 Books of magic, bags of gold,
 And rabbits' feet on long twine strings.
But he went down to the Devil.

Legree he sported a brass-buttoned coat,
 A snake-skin necktie, a blood-red shirt. 10
 Legree he had a beard like a goat,
 And a thick hairy neck, and eyes like dirt.
 His puffed-out cheeks were fish-belly white,
 He had great long teeth, and an appetite.
 He ate raw meat, 'most every meal,
 And rolled his eyes till the cat would squeal.

His fist was an enormous size
 To mash poor niggers that told him lies:
 He was surely a witch-man in disguise.
But he went down to the Devil. 20

He wore hip-boots, and would wade all day
 To capture his slaves that had fled away.
But he went down to the Devil.

He beat poor Uncle Tom to death
 Who prayed for Legree with his last breath.
 Then Uncle Tom to Eva flew,
 To the high sanctoriums bright and new;
 And Simon Legree stared up beneath,
 And cracked his heels, and ground his teeth:
And went down to the Devil. 30

¹ From V. Lindsay's *The Chinese Nightingale and Other Poems*, copyrighted in 1917 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission. This and the following poem are the first two of a group of three collectively entitled *The Booker Washington Trilogy*.

He crossed the yard in the storm and gloom;
 He went into his grand front room.
 He said, "I killed him, and I don't care."
 He kicked a hound, he gave a swear;
 He tightened his belt, he took a lamp,
 Went down cellar to the webs and damp.
 There in the middle of the moldy floor
 He heaved up a slab, he found a door—
And went down to the Devil.

His lamp blew out, but his eyes burned
 bright. 40

Simon Legree stepped down all night—
Down, down to the Devil.

Simon Legree he reached the place,
 He saw one half of the human race,
 He saw the Devil on a wide green throne,
 Gnawing the meat from a big ham-bone,
 And he said to Mister Devil:

"I see that you have much to eat—
 A red ham-bone is surely sweet.
 I see that you have lion's feet; 50
 I see your frame is fat and fine,
 I see you drink your poison wine—
 Blood and burning turpentine."

And the Devil said to Simon Legree:

"I like your style, so wicked and free.
 Come sit and share my throne with me,
 And let us bark and revel."

And there they sit and gnash their teeth,
 And each one wears a hop-vine wreath.
 They are matching pennies and shooting
 craps, 60

They are playing poker and taking naps.
 And old Legree is fat and fine:
 He eats the fire, he drinks the wine—
 Blood and burning turpentine—

Down, down with the Devil;

Down, down with the Devil;

Down, down with the Devil.

JOHN BROWN ¹

(To be sung by a leader and chorus, the
 leader singing the body of the poem, while
 the chorus interrupts with the question)

I've been to Palestine.

What did you see in Palestine?

I saw the ark of Noah—

It was made of pitch and pine.

I saw old Father Noah
 Asleep beneath his vine.
 I saw Shem, Ham, and Japhet
 Standing in a line.
 I saw the tower of Babel
 In the gorgeous sunrise shine— 10
 By a weeping willow tree
 Beside the Dead Sea.

I've been to Palestine.

What did you see in Palestine?

I saw abominations
 And Gadarene swine.
 I saw the sinful Canaanites
 Upon the shewbread dine,
 And spoil the temple vessels
 And drink the temple wine. 20
 I saw Lot's wife, a pillar of salt
 Standing in the brine—
 By a weeping willow tree
 Beside the Dead Sea.

I've been to Palestine.

What did you see in Palestine?

Cedars on Mount Lebanon,
 Gold in Ophir's mine,
 And a wicked generation
 Seeking for a sign, 30
 And Baal's howling worshipers
 Their god with leaves entwine.
 And . . .

I saw the war-horse ramping
 And shake his forelock fine—
 By a weeping willow tree
 Beside the Dead Sea.

I've been to Palestine.

What did you see in Palestine?

Old John Brown. 40
 Old John Brown.
 I saw his gracious wife
 Dressed in a homespun gown.
 I saw his seven sons
 Before his feet bow down.
 And he marched with his seven sons,
 His wagons and goods and guns,
 To his campfire by the sea,
 By the waves of Galilee.

I've been to Palestine.

What did you see in Palestine?

I saw the harp and psalt'ry
 Played for Old John Brown.
 I heard the ram's horn blow,
 Blow for Old John Brown. 50

¹ From V. Lindsay's *The Chinese Nightingale and Other Poems*, copyrighted in 1917 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

I saw the Bulls of Bashan—
 They cheered for Old John Brown.
 I saw the big Behemoth—
 He cheered for Old John Brown.
 I saw the big Leviathan—
 He cheered for Old John Brown.
 I saw the Angel Gabriel
 Great power to him assign.
 I saw him fight the Canaanites
 And set God's Israel free.
 I saw him when the war was done
 In his rustic chair recline—
 By his campfire by the sea
 By the waves of Galilee.

60

I've been to Palestine.
What did you see in Palestine?
 Old John Brown.
 Old John Brown.
 And there he sits
 To judge the world.
 His hunting-dogs
 At his feet are curled.
 His eyes half-closed,
 But John Brown sees
 The ends of the earth,
 The Day of Doom.
 And his shot-gun lies
 Across his knees—
 Old John Brown,
 Old John Brown.

70

80

HOW SAMSON BORE AWAY¹ THE GATES OF GAZA

A NEGRO SERMON

ONCE, in a night as black as ink,
 She drove him out when he would not drink.
 Round the house there were men in wait
 Asleep in rows by the Gaza gate.
 But the Holy Spirit was in this man.
 Like a gentle wind he crept and ran.
 ("It is midnight," said the big town clock.)

He lifted the gates up, post and lock.
 The hole in the wall was high and wide
 When he bore away old Gaza's pride
 Into the deep of the night:—

10

The bold Jack Johnson Israelite,—
 Samson—
 The Judge,
 The Nazarite.

The air was black, like the smoke of a dragon.
 Samson's heart was as big as a wagon.
 He sang like a shining golden fountain.
 He sweated up to the top of the mountain.
 He threw down the gates with a noise like
 judgment.
 And the quails all ran with the big arouse-
 ment.

20

But he wept—"I must not love tough
 queens,
 And spend on them my hard earned means.
 I told that girl I would drink no more.
 Therefore she drove me from her door.
 Oh sorrow!
 Sorrow!
 I cannot hide.
 Oh Lord look down from your chariot side.
 You made me Judge, and I am not wise.
 I am weak as a sheep for all my size."

30

*Let Samson
 Be coming
 Into your mind.*

The moon shone out, the stars were gay.
 He saw the foxes run and play.
 He rent his garments, he rolled around
 In deep repentance on the ground.

Then he felt a honey in his soul.
 Grace abounding made him whole.
 Then he saw the Lord in a chariot blue.
 The gorgeous stallions whinnied and flew.
 The iron wheels hummed an old hymn-tune
 And crunched in thunder over the moon.
 And Samson shouted to the sky:
 "My Lord, my Lord is riding high."

40

Like a steed, he pawed the gates with his
 hoof.

He rattled the gates like rocks on the roof,
 And danced in the night
 On the mountain-top,
 Danced in the deep of the night:
 The Judge, the holy Nazarite,
 Whom ropes and chains could never bind.

50

*Let Samson
 Be coming
 Into your mind.*

¹ From V. Lindsay's *The Chinese Nightingale and Other Poems*, copyrighted in 1917 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Whirling his arms, like a top he sped.
His long black hair flew round his head
Like an outstretched net of silky cord,
Like a wheel of the chariot of the Lord. 60

*Let Samson
Be coming
Into your mind.*

Samson saw the sun anew.
He left the gates in the grass and dew.
He went to a county-seat a-nigh.
Found a harlot proud and high:
Philistine that no man could tame—
Delilah was her lady-name.
Oh sorrow, 70
Sorrow,
She was too wise.
She cut off his hair,
She put out his eyes.

*Let Samson
Be coming
Into your mind.*

QUEEN MAB IN THE VILLAGE ¹

ONCE I loved a fairy,
Queen Mab it was. Her voice
Was like a little Fountain
That bids the birds rejoice.
Her face was wise and solemn,
Her hair was brown and fine.
Her dress was pansy velvet,
A butterfly design.

To see her hover round me
Or walk the hills of air, 10
Awakened love's deep pulses
And boyhood's first despair;
A passion like a sword-blade
That pierced me through and through:
Her fingers healed the sorrow
Her whisper would renew.
We sighed and reigned and feasted
Within a hollow tree,
We vowed our love was boundless,
Eternal as the sea. 20
She banished from her kingdom
The mortal boy I grew—
So tall and crude and noisy,
I killed grasshoppers too.

I threw big rocks at pigeons,
I plucked and tore apart
The weeping, wailing daisies,
And broke my lady's heart.
At length I grew to manhood,
I scarcely could believe 30
I ever loved the lady,
Or caused her court to grieve,
Until a dream came to me,
One bleak first night of Spring,
Ere tides of apple blossoms
Rolled in o'er everything,
While rain and sleet and snowbanks
Were still a-vexing men,
Ere robin and his comrades
Were nesting once again. 40

I saw Mab's Book of Judgment—
Its clasps were iron and stone,
Its leaves were mammoth ivory,
Its boards were mammoth bone,—
Hid in her seaside mountains,
Forgotten or unkept,
Beneath its mighty covers
Her wrath against me slept.
And deeply I repented 50
Of brash and boyish crime,
Of murder of things lovely
Now and in olden time.
I cursed my vain ambition,
My would-be worldly days,
And craved the paths of wonder,
Of dewy dawns and fays.
I cried, "Our love was boundless,
Eternal as the sea,
O Queen, reverse the sentence,
Come back and master me!" 60

The book was by the cliff-side
Upon its edge upright.
I laid me by it softly,
And wept throughout the night.
And there at dawn I saw it,
No book now, but a door,
Upon its panels written,
"Judgment is no more."
The bolt flew back with thunder, 70
I saw within that place
A mermaid wrapped in seaweed
With Mab's immortal face,
Yet grown now to a woman,
A woman to the knee.
She cried, she clasped me fondly,
We soon were in the sea.

¹ From V. Lindsay's *General William Booth Enters into Heaven, and Other Poems*, copyrighted in 1913 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Ah, she was wise and subtle,
 And gay and strong and sleek,
 We chained the wicked swordfish,
 We played at hide and seek.
 We floated on the water,
 We heard the dawn-wind sing,
 I made from ocean-wonders,
 Her bridal wreath and ring.
 All mortal girls were shadows,
 All earth-life but a mist,
 When deep beneath the maelstrom,
 The mermaid's heart I kissed.

I woke beside the church-door
 Of our small inland town,
 Bowing to a maiden
 In a pansy-velvet gown,
 Who had not heard of fairies,
 Yet seemed of love to dream.
 We planned an earthly cottage
 Beside an earthly stream.

Our wedding long is over,
 With toil the years fill up,
 Yet in the evening silence,
 We drink a deep-sea cup.
 Nothing the fay remembers,
 Yet when she turns to me,
 We meet beneath the whirlpool,
 We swim the golden sea.

MY FATHERS CAME FROM KENTUCKY ¹

I WAS born in Illinois,—
 Have lived there many days.
 And I have Northern words,
 And thoughts,
 And ways.

80

90

100

But my great-grandfathers came
 To the west with Daniel Boone,
 And taught his babes to read,
 And heard the redbird's tune;

And heard the turkey's call,
 And stilled the panther's cry,
 And rolled on the blue-grass hills,
 And looked God in the eye.

10

And feud and Hell were theirs;
 Love, like the moon's desire,
 Love like a burning-mine,
 Love like rifle-fire.

I tell tales out of school
 Till these Yankees hate my style.
 Why should the young cad cry,
 Shout with joy for a mile?

20

Why do I faint with love
 Till the prairies dip and reel?
 My heart is a kicking horse
 Shod with Kentucky steel.

No drop of my blood from north
 Of Mason and Dixon's line.
 And this racer in my breast
 Tears my ribs for a sign.

But I ran in Kentucky hills
 Last week. They were hearth and home.
 And the church at Grassy Springs,
 Under the redbird's wings
 Was peace and honeycomb.

30

¹ From V. Lindsay's *The Golden Whales of California*, copyrighted in 1917 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission. This poem is the first in a group of three collectively entitled *Alexander Campbell*. Mr. Lindsay has stated that this is the one of his shorter poems which he himself likes best.

EDGAR LEE MASTERS (1869-)

Mr. Masters was born at Garnett, Kansas, on 23 August, 1869. His father's ancestors had come to America from England in the seventeenth century, had settled, after a trial of Massachusetts, in Virginia, had migrated thence to Tennessee, and from there had gone in the 1820's to Illinois. His mother came of a New England family. His father was a lawyer, practicing in Garnett at the time of Mr. Masters's birth. But the boy was brought up in Illinois, for the family returned to that state in the summer of 1870, in obedience to the desire of Mr. Masters's grandfather, who wished his son to abandon the law for farming, in which he himself had prospered. Mr. Masters's father, however, though he remained in Illinois, soon returned to the law, practicing in Petersburg, and later in Lewiston. In those towns and on his grandfather's farm Mr. Masters was brought up, receiving a somewhat irregular education, chiefly in public schools, reading extensively in Scott, Dickens, Tennyson, Thomas Moore, and other nineteenth-century writers, and completing his high-school course when he was seventeen. He had by the time he was fourteen practically learned the printing trade, and he now entered it, and at the same time began to write a great deal. He wrote for local papers and sent news to others in Chicago, Peoria, and St. Louis, while he also wrote many poems, tales, and essays. His father, however, regarded his writing with disfavor, and insisted upon his studying the law. He did so, but the creative impulse within him was no merely temporary flare of youthfulness, was on the contrary a fundamental trait which persisted now and later with undimmed, intense force in the face of whatever misunderstanding, loneliness, and discouragement. Hence, while he studied the law, he continued to write, to read, he took up the study of Latin, and finally, when he was twenty-one, he persuaded his father to let him go for one year to Knox College. There he worked at his Latin, and at German, and began to learn Greek, while he read Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Homer, Virgil, Goethe, and also some philosophy and criticism. Altogether the benefits conferred by this year must have been very great, though probably at the time the chief result was merely to intensify Mr. Masters's inner rebellion against the fate which chained him to the law in a small, ugly, prosaic town where there was nothing to relieve his intellectual and spiritual isolation or to help him to understand himself.

What he did, while he again took up the law, was to follow privately desires and tastes which were largely instinctive and which had no relation to the life around him. He wrote incessantly—wrote hundreds of poems which were, as he has said, "the products of moods, psychic states, attempts to reproduce music, or to interpret the moods produced by music. More poems came to me as sounds. Sometimes as vision, but mostly as sound. The idea was negligible. I was working under the influence of Poe, Shelley, Keats: sometimes as to nature poems, looking to Theocritus. I wrote many sonnets and many vague things in the music of Swinburne." In time, Mr. Masters was duly admitted to practice, and after a year in his father's office he went to Chicago, in the hope of thus escaping the monotony and spiritual emptiness of a country town.

In Chicago he became a successful attorney, but did not lose his literary interests or ambition. In 1895 he wrote a play in blank verse on Benedict Arnold. In 1898 he published *A Book of Verses*, in 1902 another play in blank verse, *Maximilian*, in 1904 a volume of essays (*The New Star Chamber and Other Essays*), in 1905, 1910, and 1912 further volumes of verse. In the mean time, neither his plays nor his verse attracting the slightest attention, he turned to writing plays in prose, and rapidly completed eight, of which two were published, *Althea* (1907) and *The Trifler* (1908). It was his hope that if he could get some of these plays produced he might win sufficient money to devote his time wholly to literature, but the plays attracted no more attention than did his other work. Nor was his fortune during these years undeserved. His productions were conventional and flat, without merit of any kind, the work of a man who did not know either himself or his capacities, and who was simply following in a blind way an equally blind impulse to create "something or other." It would appear, moreover, that when finally Mr. Masters did hit upon something which deserved—and received—a warm response, it was a species of accident, which left him, at the best, only partially enlightened. As early as 1909 his friend William Marion Reedy pressed upon his attention the *Greek Anthology*, the epitaphs in which particularly attracted him. But it was not until after he had read a number of brief poems in *vers libre* which appeared in *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* that, early in 1914, he began to write a series of epitaphs in which people of types he had known told briefly the plain truth about themselves. He

apparently drifted into the undertaking, and was perhaps led on by its essential irony, once it had occurred to him to contrast the truth with the eulogistic lies usual in epitaphs. A number of these monologues spoken from beyond the grave were printed during 1914 in *Reedy's Mirror*, and were at once widely commented on; and when they were, with additions, printed as *The Spoon River Anthology* in 1915 they created a sensation such as had never before attended the publication of any volume of poems in the United States.

This was partly because Mr. Masters had set no apparent limits to the frankness which was essential to his design—but only partly. For it was immediately recognized that the epitaphs went together to form a profoundly conceived picture of the middle-Western American village, brutal in its realism, probably exaggerated in its treatment of sexual concerns, bitter in its satire, but, still, genuine, powerful, vivid, and unique. The plan gave Mr. Masters an opportunity to express what was central in him, the fact that his vague love of beauty had been frustrated, smothered, turned to bitterness by the drab monotony and the hard, stupid conventions of village life, and he made the fullest use of the opportunity, even though he could not help showing at the same time that he also was unescapably a product of the community he pictured, sharing its sensuality, its pettiness, its concealed bitterness, and its blind, inarticulate, frustrated impulses towards a higher and nobler humanity. A part of the book's strength and truth lay in the fact that the picture it drew was not merely negative, in the fact that those last-mentioned impulses, though vague and frustrated, were present and living. Thus Mr. Masters was saved from mere vituperation. His book was not merely a savage blow struck against sentimentalism and meanness and cruelty, but its satire served the positive end of exalting personal integrity, courageous independence, and the spirit of wise toleration.

Mr. Masters, however, apparently could not learn from the phenomenal reception of *The Spoon River Anthology*, which at once placed him amongst the best-known men of letters of our time, that his strength lay in compressed satire. He has since 1915 written some powerful and moving poems, which deserve a place beside those in *The Spoon River Anthology*, but he has tended to bury them among a far larger number which are completely without merit, some of them being unconscionably diffuse and flat, and others suggesting by their style and content the poems he wrote before 1914, if, indeed, they are not those poems revived. And the result is, somewhat unfairly, that Mr. Masters is increasingly looked upon as a man of one book. His later volumes of poems are: *Songs and Satires* (1916), *The Great Valley* (1916), *Toward the Gulf* (1918), *Starved Rock* (1919), *Domesday Book* (1920), *The Open Sea* (1921), and *The New Spoon River* (1924). He has also in recent years published a boy's story, *Mitch Miller* (1920), which has been highly praised, and several novels—*Children of the Market Place*, *Mirage*, and *The Nuptial Flight*.

SPOON RIVER ANTHOLOGY

THE HILL ¹

WHERE are Elmer, Herman, Bert, Tom and Charley,

The weak of will, the strong of arm, the clown, the boozier, the fighter?

All, all, are sleeping on the hill.

One passed in a fever,

One was burned in a mine,

One was killed in a brawl,

One died in a jail,

One fell from a bridge toiling for children and wife—

All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where are Ella, Kate, Mag, Lizzie and Edith, ¹⁰

The tender heart, the simple soul, the loud, the proud, the happy one?—

All, all, are sleeping on the hill.

One died in shameful child-birth,

One of a thwarted love,

One at the hands of a brute in a brothel,

One of a broken pride, in the search for heart's desire,

One after life in far-away London and Paris

Was brought to her little space by Ella and Kate and Mag—

All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where are Uncle Isaac and Aunt Emily, ²⁰

And old Towny Kincaid and Sevigne Houghton,

And Major Walker who had talked

With venerable men of the revolution?—

All, all, are sleeping on the hill.

¹ From E. L. Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*, copyrighted in 1915 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

All of the poems by Mr. Masters here reprinted are used with his permission as well as with the permission of his publishers.

They brought them dead sons from the
war,
And daughters whom life had crushed,
And their children fatherless, crying—
All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the
hill.

Where is Old Fiddler Jones
Who played with life all his ninety 30
years,
Braving the sleet with bared breast,
Drinking, rioting, thinking neither of wife
nor kin,
Nor gold, nor love, nor heaven?
Lo! he babbles of the fish-frys of long
ago,
Of the horse-races of long ago at Clary's
Grove,
Of what Abe Lincoln said
One time at Springfield.

ROBERT FULTON TANNER ¹

If a man could bite the giant hand
That catches and destroys him,
As I was bitten by a rat
While demonstrating my patent trap,
In my hardware store that day.
But a man can never avenge himself
On the monstrous ogre Life.
You enter the room—that's being born;
And then you must live—work out your
soul,
Aha! the bait that you crave is in view: 10
A woman with money you want to marry,
Prestige, place, or power in the world.
But there's work to do and things to con-
quer—
Oh, yes! the wires that screen the bait.
At last you get in—but you hear a step:
The ogre, Life, comes into the room
(He was waiting and heard the clang of the
spring)
To watch you nibble the wondrous cheese,
And stare with his burning eyes at you,
And scowl and laugh, and mock and curse
you, 20
Running up and down in the trap,
Until your misery bores him.

¹ From E. L. Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*, copy-
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by permission.

BENJAMIN PANTIER ¹

TOGETHER in this grave lie Benjamin Pan-
tier, attorney at law,
And Nig, his dog, constant companion, sol-
ace and friend.
Down the gray road, friends, children, men
and women,
Passing one by one out of life, left me till I
was alone
With Nig for partner, bed-fellow, comrade
in drink.
In the morning of life I knew aspiration and
saw glory.
Then she, who survives me, snared my soul
With a snare which bled me to death,
Till I, once strong of will, lay broken, indif-
ferent,
Living with Nig in a room back of a dingy
office. 10
Under my jaw-bone is snuggled the bony
nose of Nig—
Our story is lost in silence. Go by, mad
world!

MRS. BENJAMIN PANTIER ¹

I KNOW that he told that I snared his soul
With a snare which bled him to death.
And all the men loved him,
And most of the women pitied him.
But suppose you are really a lady, and have
delicate tastes,
And loathe the smell of whiskey and onions.
And the rhythm of Wordsworth's "Ode"
runs in your ears,
While he goes about from morning till
night
Repeating bits of that common thing:
"Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be
proud?" 10
And then, suppose:
You are a woman well endowed,
And the only man with whom the law and
morality
Permit you to have the marital relation
Is the very man that fills you with disgust
Every time you think of it—while you think
of it
Every time you see him?
That's why I drove him away from home
To live with his dog in a dingy room
Back of his office. 20

DAISY FRASER ¹

Did you ever hear of Editor Whedon
 Giving to the public treasury any of the
 money he received
 For supporting candidates for office?
 Or for writing up the canning factory
 To get people to invest?
 Or for suppressing the facts about the
 bank,
 When it was rotten and ready to break?
 Did you ever hear of the Circuit Judge
 Helping anyone except the "Q" railroad,
 Or the bankers? Or did Rev. Peet or Rev.
 Sibley 10
 Give any part of their salary, earned by
 keeping still,
 Or speaking out as the leaders wished them
 to do,
 To the building of the water works?
 But I—Daisy Fraser who always passed
 Along the streets through rows of nods and
 smiles,
 And coughs and words such as "there she
 goes,"
 Never was taken before Justice Arnett
 Without contributing ten dollars and costs
 To the school fund of Spoon River!

DOCTOR MEYERS ¹

No other man, unless it was Doc Hill,
 Did more for people in this town than I.
 And all the weak, the halt, the improvi-
 dent
 And those who could not pay flocked to
 me.
 I was good-hearted, easy Doctor Meyers.
 I was healthy, happy, in comfortable
 fortune,
 Blest with a congenial mate, my children
 raised,
 All wedded, doing well in the world.
 And then one night, Minerva, the poetess,
 Came to me in her trouble, crying. 10
 I tried to help her out—she died—
 They indicted me, the newspapers disgraced
 me,
 My wife perished of a broken heart.
 And pneumonia finished me.

¹ From E. L. Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*, copyrighted in 1915 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

MRS. MEYERS ¹

He protested all his life long
 The newspapers lied about him villainously;
 That he was not at fault for Minerva's fall,
 But only tried to help her.
 Poor soul so sunk in sin he could not see
 That even trying to help her, as he called it,
 He had broken the law human and divine.
 Passers by, an ancient admonition to you:
 If your ways would be ways of pleasantness,
 And all your pathways peace, 10
 Love God and keep his commandments.

KNOWLTON HOHEIMER ¹

I WAS the first fruits of the battle of Mis-
 sionary Ridge.
 When I felt the bullet enter my heart
 I wished I had stayed at home and gone to
 jail
 For stealing the hogs of Curl Trenary,
 Instead of running away and joining the
 army.
 Rather a thousand times the county jail
 Than to lie under this marble figure with
 wings,
 And this granite pedestal
 Bearing the words, "*Pro Patria*."
 What do they mean, anyway? 10

DOC HILL ¹

I WENT up and down the streets
 Here and there by day and night,
 Through all hours of the night caring for the
 poor who were sick.
 Do you know why?
 My wife hated me, my son went to the
 dogs:
 And I turned to the people and poured out
 my love to them.
 Sweet it was to see the crowds about the
 lawns on the day of my funeral,
 And hear them murmur their love and sor-
 row.
 But oh, dear God, my soul trembled, scarcely
 able
 To hold to the railing of the new life 10
 When I saw Em Stanton behind the oak tree
 At the grave,
 Hiding herself, and her grief!

FIDDLER JONES ¹

THE earth keeps some vibration going
 There in your heart, and that is you.
 And if the people find you can fiddle,
 Why, fiddle you must, for all your life.
 What do you see, a harvest of clover?
 Or a meadow to walk through to the river?
 The wind's in the corn; you rub your
 hands
 For beeves hereafter ready for market;
 Or else you hear the rustle of skirts
 Like the girls when dancing at Little
 Grove.
 To Cooney Potter a pillar of dust II
 Or whirling leaves meant ruinous drouth;
 They looked to me like Red-Head Sammy
 Stepping it off, to "Toor-a-Loor."
 How could I till my forty acres
 Not to speak of getting more,
 With a medley of horns, bassoons and pic-
 colos
 Stirred in my brain by crows and robins
 And the creak of a wind-mill—only these?
 And I never started to plow in my life 20
 That some one did not stop in the road
 And take me away to a dance or picnic.
 I ended up with forty acres;
 I ended up with a broken fiddle—
 And a broken laugh, and a thousand mem-
 ories,
 And not a single regret.

 PETIT, THE POET ¹

SEEDS in a dry pod, tick, tick, tick,
 Tick, tick, tick, like mites in a quarrel—
 Faint iambs that the full breeze wakens—
 But the pine tree makes a symphony thereof.
 Triolets, villanelles, rondels, rondeaus,
 Ballades by the score with the same old
 thought:
 The snows and the roses of yesterday are
 vanished;
 And what is love but a rose that fades?
 Life all around me here in the village:
 Tragedy, comedy, valor and truth, 10
 Courage, constancy, heroism, failure—
 All in the loom, and oh what patterns!
 Woodlands, meadows, streams and rivers—
 Blind to all of it all my life long.

Triolets, villanelles, rondels, rondeaus,
 Seeds in a dry pod, tick, tick, tick,
 Tick, tick, tick, what little iambs,
 While Homer and Whitman roared in the
 pines?

 WASHINGTON MCNEELY ¹

RICH, honored by my fellow citizens,
 The father of many children, born of a noble
 mother,
 All raised there
 In the great mansion-house, at the edge of
 town.
 Note the cedar tree on the lawn!
 I sent all the boys to Ann Arbor, all the girls
 to Rockford,
 The while my life went on, getting more
 riches and honors—
 Resting under my cedar tree at evening.
 The years went on.
 I sent the girls to Europe; 10
 I dowered them when married.
 I gave the boys money to start in business.
 They were strong children, promising as
 apples
 Before the bitten places show.
 But John fled the country in disgrace.
 Jenny died in child-birth—
 I sat under my cedar tree.
 Harry killed himself after a debauch,
 Susan was divorced—
 I sat under my cedar tree. 20
 Paul was invalided from over study,
 Mary became a recluse at home for love of
 a man—
 I sat under my cedar tree.
 All were gone, or broken-winged or devoured
 by life—
 I sat under my cedar tree.
 My mate, the mother of them, was taken—
 I sat under my cedar tree,
 Till ninety years were tolled.
 O maternal Earth, which rocks the fallen
 leaf to sleep!

 THOMAS RHODES ¹

VERY well, you liberals,
 And navigators into realms intellectual,
 You sailors through heights imaginative,
 Blown about by erratic currents, tumbling
 into air pockets,
 You Margaret Fuller Slacks, Petits,
 And Tennessee Claflin Shopes—

¹ From E. L. Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*, copy-
 righted in 1915 by the Macmillan Company. Re-
 printed by permission.

You found with all your boasted wisdom
How hard at the last it is
To keep the soul from splitting into cellular
atoms.

While we, seekers of earth's treasures, 10
Getters and hoarders of gold,
Are self-contained, compact, harmonized,
Even to the end.

EDITOR WHEDON ¹

To be able to see every side of every ques-
tion;

To be on every side, to be everything, to be
nothing long;

To pervert truth, to ride it for a purpose,
To use great feelings and passions of the
human family

For base designs, for cunning ends,
To wear a mask like the Greek actors—
Your eight-page paper—behind which you
huddle,

Bawling through the megaphone of big
type:

"This is I, the giant."

Thereby also living the life of a sneak-
thief, 10

Poisoned with the anonymous words
Of your clandestine soul.

To scratch dirt over scandal for money,
And exhume it to the winds for revenge,
Or to sell papers,

Crushing reputations, or bodies, if need be,
To win at any cost, save your own life.

To glory in demoniac power, ditching civili-
zation,

As a paranoiac boy puts a log on the track
And derails the express train. 20

To be an editor, as I was.

Then to lie here close by the river over the
place

Where the sewage flows from the village,
And the empty cans and garbage are
dumped,

And abortions are hidden.

SETH COMPTON ¹

WHEN I died, the circulating library
Which I built up for Spoon River,
And managed for the good of inquiring
minds,

Was sold at auction on the public square,
As if to destroy the last vestige
Of my memory and influence.

For those of you who could not see the virtue
Of knowing Volney's *Ruins* as well as But-
ler's *Analogy*

And *Faust* as well as *Evangeline*, 10
Were really the power in the village,
And often you asked me,

"What is the use of knowing the evil in the
world?"

I am out of your way now, Spoon River,
Choose your own good and call it good.

For I could never make you see
That no one knows what is good
Who knows not what is evil;
And no one knows what is true
Who knows not what is false.

PERRY ZOLL ¹

MY thanks, friends of the County Scientific
Association,

For this modest boulder,
And its little tablet of bronze.

Twice I tried to join your honored body,
And was rejected,

And when my little brochure
On the intelligence of plants
Began to attract attention

You almost voted me in. 9
After that I grew beyond the need of you
And your recognition.

Yet I do not reject your memorial stone,
Seeing that I should, in so doing,
Deprive you of honor to yourselves.

ARCHIBALD HIGBIE ¹

I LOATHED you, Spoon River. I tried to
rise above you,

I was ashamed of you. I despised you
As the place of my nativity.

And there in Rome, among the artists,
Speaking Italian, speaking French,
I seemed to myself at times to be free
Of every trace of my origin.

I seemed to be reaching the heights of art
And to breathe the air that the masters
breathed,

And to see the world with their eyes. 10
But still they'd pass my work and say:

"What are you driving at, my friend?
Sometimes the face looks like Apollo's,
At others it has a trace of Lincoln's."

¹ From E. L. Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*, copy-
righted in 1915 by the Macmillan Company. Re-
printed by permission.

There was no culture, you know, in Spoon
River,
And I burned with shame and held my
peace.
And what could I do, all covered over
And weighted down with western soil,
Except aspire, and pray for another
Birth in the world, with all of Spoon River
Rooted out of my soul? 21

FATHER MALLOY¹

You are over there, Father Malloy,
Where holy ground is, and the cross marks
every grave,
Not here with us on the hill—
Us of wavering faith, and clouded vision
And drifting hope, and unforgiven sins.
You were so human, Father Malloy,
Taking a friendly glass sometimes with
us,
Siding with us who would rescue Spoon
River
From the coldness and the dreariness of vil-
lage morality.
You were like a traveler who brings a little
box of sand 10
From the wastes about the pyramids
And makes them real and Egypt real.
You were a part of and related to a great
past,
And yet you were so close to many of us.
You believed in the joy of life.
You did not seem to be ashamed of the
flesh.
You faced life as it is,
And as it changes.
Some of us almost came to you, Father
Malloy,
Seeing how your church had divined the
heart, 20
And provided for it,
Through Peter the Flame,
Peter the Rock.

ANNE RUTLEDGE¹

OUT of me unworthy and unknown
The vibrations of deathless music;
"With malice toward none, with charity for
all."

¹ From E. L. Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*, copy-
righted in 1915 by the Macmillan Company. Re-
printed by permission.

Out of me the forgiveness of millions toward
millions,
And the beneficent face of a nation
Shining with justice and truth.
I am Anne Rutledge who sleep beneath these
weeds,
Beloved in life of Abraham Lincoln,
Wedded to him, not through union,
But through separation. 10
Bloom forever, O Republic,
From the dust of my bosom!

RUTHERFORD McDOWELL¹

THEY brought me ambrotypes
Of the old pioneers to enlarge.
And sometimes one sat for me—
Some one who was in being
When giant hands from the womb of the
world
Tore the republic.
What was it in their eyes?—
For I could never fathom
That mystical pathos of drooped eyelids,
And the serene sorrow of their eyes. 10
It was like a pool of water,
Amid oak trees at the edge of a forest,
Where the leaves fall,
As you hear the crow of a cock
From a far-off farm house, seen near the hills
Where the third generation lives, and the
strong men
And the strong women are gone and for-
gotten.
And these grand-children and great grand-
children
Of the pioneers!
Truly did my camera record their faces,
too, 20
With so much of the old strength gone,
And the old faith gone,
And the old mastery of life gone,
And the old courage gone,
Which labors and loves and suffers and sings
Under the sun!

LUCINDA MATLOCK¹

I WENT to the dances at Chandlerville,
And played snap-out at Winchester.
One time we changed partners,
Driving home in the moonlight of middle
June,
And then I found Davis.

We were married and lived together for seventy years,
 Enjoying, working, raising the twelve children,
 Eight of whom we lost
 Ere I had reached the age of sixty.
 I spun, I wove, I kept the house, I nursed
 the sick, 10
 I made the garden, and for holiday
 Rambled over the fields where sang the larks,
 And by Spoon River gathering many a shell,
 And many a flower and medicinal weed—
 Shouting to the wooded hills, singing to the
 green valleys.
 At ninety-six I had lived enough, that is all,
 And passed to a sweet repose.
 What is this I hear of sorrow and weariness,
 Anger, discontent and drooping hopes?
 Degenerate sons and daughters, 20
 Life is too strong for you—
 It takes life to love Life.

SLIP SHOE LOVEY¹

YOU'RE the cook's understudy
 A gentle idiot body.
 You are slender like a broom
 Weaving up and down the room,
 With your dirt hair in a twist
 And your left eye in a mist.
 Never thinkin', never hopin'
 With your wet mouth open.
 So bewildered and so busy
 As you scrape the dirty kettles, 10
 O Slip Shoe Lizzie
 As you rattle with the pans.
 There's a clatter of old metals,
 O Slip Shoe Lovey,
 As you clean the milk cans.
 You're a greasy little dovey,
 A laughing scullery daughter,
 As you slop the dishwater,
 So abstracted and so dizzy,
 O Slip Shoe Lizzie! 20

So mussy, little hussie,
 With the china that you break,
 And the kitchen in a smear
 When the bread is yet to bake,
 And the market things are here—
 O Slip Shoe Lovey!

You are hurrying and scurrying
 From the sink to the oven,
 So forgetful and so sloven.
 You are bustling and hustling 30
 From the pantry to the door,
 With your shoe strings on the floor,
 And your apron strings a-draggin',
 And your spattered skirt a-saggin'.

You're an angel idiot lovey,
 One forgives you all this clatter
 Washing dishes, beating batter.
 But there is another matter
 As you dream above the sink:
 You're in love pitter-patter, 40
 With the butcher-boy I think.
 And he'll get you, he has got you
 If he hasn't got you yet.

For he means to make you his,
 O Slip Shoe Liz.
 And your open mouth is wet
 To a little boyish chatter.
 You're an easy thing to flatter
 With your hank of hair a-twist,
 And your left eye in a mist— 50
 O Slip Shoe Lovey!

So hurried and so flurried
 And just a little worried
 You lean about the room,
 Like a mop, like a broom.
 O Slip Shoe Lovey!
 O Slip Shoe Lovey!

CHRISTMAS AT INDIAN POINT²

WHO is that calling through the night,
 A wail that dies when the wind roars?
 We heard it first on Shipley's Hill,
 It faded out at Comingoer's.

Along five miles of wintry road
 A horseman galloped with a cry,
 "'Twas two o'clock," said Herman Pointer,
 "When I heard clattering hoofs go by."

"I flung the winder up to listen;
 I heerd him there on Gordon's Ridge; 10
 I heerd the loose boards bump and rattle
 When he went over Houghton's Bridge."

¹ From E. L. Masters's *The Great Valley*, copyrighted in 1916 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

² From E. L. Masters's *Toward the Gulf*, copyrighted in 1918 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Said Roger Ragsdale: "I was doctorin'
A heifer in the barn, and then
My boy says: 'Pap, that's Billy Paris.'
'There,' says my boy, 'it is again.'

"Says I: 'That kain't be Billy Paris,
We seed 'im at the Christmas tree.
It's two o'clock,' says I, 'and Billy
I seed go home with Emily.' 20

"'He is too old for galavantin'
Upon a night like this,' says I.
'Well, pap,' says he, 'I know that frosty,
Good-natured huskiness in that cry.'

"'It kain't be Billy,' says I, swabbin'
The heifer's tongue and mouth with brine,
'I never thought—it makes me shiver,
And goose-flesh up and down the spine.'"

Said Doggie Traylor: "When I heard it
I 'lowed 'twas Pin Hook's rowdy new
'uns. 30

Them Cashner boys was at the schoolhouse
Drinkin' there at the Christmas doin's."

Said Pete McCue: "I lit a candle
And held it up to the winder pane.
But when I heerd again the holler
'Twere half-way down the Bowman Lane."

Said Andy Ensley: "First I knowed
I thought he'd thump the door away.
I hopped from bed, and says, 'Who is it?'
'O, Emily,' I heard him say. 40

"And there stood Billy Paris tremblin',
His face so white, he looked so queer.
'O Andy'—and his voice went broken.
'Come in,' says I, 'and have a cheer.'

"'Sit by the fire,' I kicked the logs up,
'What brings you here?—I would be told.'
Says he: 'My hand just . . . happened
near hers,
It teched her hand . . . and it war cold.

"'We got back from the Christmas doin's
And went to bed, and she was sayin', 50
(The clock struck ten) if it keeps snowin'
To-morrow there'll be splendid sleighin'."

"'My hand teched hers, the clock struck two,
And then I thought I heerd her moan.

It war the wind, I guess, for Emily
War lyin' dead. . . . She's thar alone.'

"I left him then to call my woman
To tell her that her mother died.
When we come back his voice was steady,
The big tears in his eyes was dried. 60

"He just sot there and quiet like
Talked 'bout the fishin' times they had,
And said for her to die on Christmas
Was somethin' 'bout it made him glad.

"He grew so cam he almost skeered us.
Says he: 'It's a fine Christmas over there.'
Says he: 'She was the lovingest woman
That ever walked this Vale of Care.'

"Says he: 'She allus laughed and sang,
I never heerd her once complain.' 70
Says he: 'It's not so bad a Christmas
When she can go and have no pain.'

"Says he: 'The Christmas's good for her.'
Says he: . . . 'Not very good for me.'
He hid his face then in his muffler
And sobbed and sobbed, 'O Emily.'"

MOURNIN' FOR RELIGION ¹

BROTHERS and sisters, I'm mournin' for
religion,
But I can't get religion, it's my woman in-
terferin'.

I sing and I pray, and I'm real perseverin',
But I can't get religion,
That's all I have to say.
I know there is a fountain, a Jesus, a com-
forter,

A heaven, a Jerusalem, a day of Pentecost,
Salvation for the wishin', blood for sin's
remission,

A covenant, a promise for souls that are lost.
But I can't get religion, the salvation
feelin', 10

The vision of the Lamb, forgiveness and
healin'.

I have a sort of numbness
When I see the mourners kneelin'.

¹ From E. L. Masters's *Starved Rock*, copyrighted in 1919 by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

I have a kind of dumbness
 When the preacher is appealin'.
 I have a kind of wariness, even contrariness,
 Even while I'm fearin'
 The bottomless pit and the shut gates of
 heaven,
 It's my woman interferin'—

For you see when they say: 20
 Come to the mercy seat, come, come,
 The spirit and the bride
 Say come, come,
 I think of my woman who bore so many
 children;
 I think of her a cookin' for harvesters in
 summer;
 I think of her a lyin' there, a dyin' there,
 the neighbors
 Who came in to fan her and how she never
 murmured;
 And then I seem to grow number and
 number,
 And something in me says:
 Why didn't Jesus help her for to die, 30
 Why did Jesus always pass her by,
 Let her break her health down as I was
 growing poorer,
 Let her lie and suffer with no medicine to
 cure her,
 I wouldn't treat a stray dog as Jesus acted
 to her.
 If these are devil words, I'm a child of the
 devil.
 And this is why I'm dumb,
 As the spirit and the bride say come!

I am old and crippled—sixty in December.
 And I wonder if it's God that stretches out
 and hands us
 Troubles we remember? 40
 I'm alone besides, I need the Comforter,
 All the children's grown up, livin' out in
 Kansas.
 My old friend Billy died of lung fever. . . .
 But the worse of it is I'm really a believer,
 Expect to go to hell if I don't get religion.
 And I need this religion to stop this awful
 grievin'
 About my woman lyin' there in the cemetery.
 And you can't stop this grievin' simply by
 believin'.
 So I mourn for religion,
 I mourn for religion, 50
 My old heart breaks for religion!

THE NEW SPOON RIVER ¹

EZRA FINK

RAISED in the faith of Elliott Hawkins of old,
 Making my way as a hand on the farm,
 Then teaching school, then becoming a
 lawyer;
 Entering politics, cultivating the good
 people,
 A church member too—
 (Observe my lecture on the fall of Athens,
 Due to her immoral and un-Christian life.)
 Elected a judge at last of the City Court.
 Then lifted up to a law partnership in
 Chicago,
 Fighting the eight hour day, 10
 And consolidating industries.
 On and on, up and up—always busy.
 Abstemious, the husband of one wife—
 nothing else!
 Called at last to the presidency of the Trust.
 Master now of tens of thousands of workers,
 And hundreds of millions of gold.
 Taking over the little canning works or
 Spoon River;
 Building a church in Spoon River,
 Head of Spoon River's library board,
 And supervising the selection of its books. 20
 Building myself a great tomb in Spoon River,
 For which these words are the inscription:
 "Blessed are the dead which die in the
 Lord."

DICK SAPPER

THE ordinance of Spoon River permitted
 The preaching of Jesus on the streets,
 By Salvationists and Fundamentalists.
 So I went to the square one day with the
 Bible
 And began to read: "Woe unto you lawyers,
 Who build the sepulchers of the prophets."
 And being known as a Socialist
 They put me in jail for talking socialism
 On the public square.
 Well, the war came on, and Ezra Fink 10
 Had written a letter to Spoon River
 To buy war bonds until we were broke,
 And I opposed it and even opposed
 The lawless and hellish draft in the name
 Of Jesus of Nazareth, as I thought.

¹ The five epitaphs here reprinted from this volume are used with the permission of its publishers, Messrs. Boni and Liveright, Inc.

So they put me in prison for twenty years,
Where my body broke, and my spirit broke,
And where in vain I tried to be pardoned.
And I coughed and cursed to that awful
moment

When the blood of my body shot from my
mouth 20

Like a gushing hose, and I was dead.
And some of you call this a republic!
Well, some of you be damned,
And God damned!

THOMAS MACCRACKEN

NEW commandments I give to you, Spoon
River,

Out of the wisdom of living:

Thou shalt make graven images of all beau-
tiful things;

Thou shalt take the name of God in vain,
For by unanswered prayers shall you be
lifted up;

Thou shalt labor every day in the week,
Even as thy heart rests not;

Thou shalt give life;

Thou shalt love the woman who gives her
love to thee,

Or else thou shalt not accept her love; 10

Thou shalt help to multiply the goods of the
community;

Thou shalt tell the truth about thy neighbor,
And about thy enemy.

Thou shalt be free, joyous, tolerant, active.

Thou shalt trust death,

Having trusted and rejoiced in birth!

HENRY RABENEAU

To be gay, free, to be a liver;
To see through the cant of service;

To hoot effectively the uplifter;

To know that life is a jest;

And man a germ amid bread and roofs;

To walk like a giant, laughing and roaring,

Kicking off the ropes of the dwarfs,

Breaking the chains of the New Jerusa-
lemites.

To smile at all philosophies and religions,
As the mind wanderings of starving wits. 10

To be a fat and lusty weed,

Flaunting insolent leaves—

Then to have the dwarfs get you,

And cover you with their ideas of dishonor,
Until infinite disgust rots you,

And you wither and lisp and break,
Frost bitten and dusted over.

That was I, fellow citizens,

Until in the hour of death

One moment of myself, gay and free 20

And insolent, returned in a laugh!

SARAH DEWITT

BECAUSE I believed God brought him to me,
And because I believed him gifted of God

With honor, truth and love of the right,

I believed in God and worshiped God.

Then when I found he was just a thief,

And full of treasons and perjuries,

All for money and worldly pride,

The wreck of him was the wreck of God;

And so I fainted amid the ruins 9

Of plaster and sticks, and sat in the stillness

That followed the fallen bust of God.

Friends, it is folly to prison God

In any house that is built with hands,

In man or woman, or passionate hopes,

Or the love of Truth, or the Rock of Ages,

For all will change, deceive or crumble,

As soon as you think you have prisoned God,

For God is Proteus, and flies like magic

From earth to heaven, from hope to hope.

You never can catch Him, and this is the
reason: 20

The game of the soul is never to find,

The game of the soul is to follow!

ON A DEATH MASK¹

(H. W. M. died 14 November, 1925)

I

LIFE cuts depressions and these make reliefs,
As gnarls make hollows in the final cast

By Life the sculptor. So this mask amassed
In bronze what Life had done: brought clear

beliefs

From the incisions of defeating griefs;

From hate brought love, brought wisdom,
and at last

Brought peace and pardon, as the soul sur-
passed

The clay and rose emancipate from the fiefs
Of Fate and flesh—all sculpturing here is
shown

¹ Reprinted from *The Nation*, issue of 3 February, 1926, with the permission of the editors and of the author.

Of Life whose hands opposed or helped his
soul, 10
Resisting or accepting in the role
Of clay and spirit making the Fate his own
For the master mask, whose finish would
control
The dignity of bronze, the peace of stone!

II

Whatever Life pressed down and back is
here:

Great music only imagined, never heard;
Great fellowships afar, always deferred;
And life more ample in a richer sphere.
The spirit of genius to his eye was clear
In lovers, lovers, in the impassioned word. 20
Beethoven's face, or Shelley's, Byron's
stirred

Fraternal reverence, as the returning year
Denied his longing, and as a deepening glance
Revealed him to himself, his stuff and strain,
Called by Venetian songs, an English lane,
By happy freedoms where men drink and
dance.

So Traviata speaks him, so remain
In bronze the prize denied, the great
romance.

III

Scarcely in life did the life that moved within
This brow, these eyelids, these Mercutio
cheeks 30
Break the disguise of flesh—but now all
speaks

Down to the humorous mouth and granite
chin,

And the laughing rays that star the un-
troubled skin

About the eye which smiles, and no more
seeks

The Secret. But the eye long blind still
wreaks

Its patient wonder, leaving the brow to win,
And solve the secrets blindness sees—this
brow

Like a great boulder from the Sangamon. . . .

I never saw him all in all, this son

Of Jackson's day, but Death instructs me
how: 40

This Hawthorne face, this prairie Jefferson,
This type American departed now!

IV

As if the Fate which brought paralysis,
And closed his throat to water for his thirst,
Intended his last hours to match his first,
With strength prolonged to ask the benefice
Of water and the tenderness of a kiss—

So did it punish him it had amerced,
And gave not water, neither the lot reversed
Which all his days wrought hard antithesis
Between his longing and his long defeat. 51

An old man, dying in a lonely room
Where no one but a nurse was, had his doom
Of thirst and silence and a winding sheet.

Now the bronze smiles upon the distant
tomb:

Love is and thirst, but Death how great and
sweet!

SHERWOOD ANDERSON (1876-)

Mr. Anderson was born in Camden, Ohio, on 13 September, 1876. He has published an autobiographical volume, *A Story-Teller's Story* (1924), from which information concerning his life may be obtained, though the book is neither a consecutive narrative, nor complete, nor, as he himself says, by any means free from fiction. His father was "a ruined dandy from the South" who kept a harness-repair shop until it failed, and who then became "ostensibly a house-and-barn painter. However, he did not call himself a house-painter. The idea was not flashy enough for him. He called himself a 'sign-writer.' The day of universal advertising had not yet come and there was but little sign-writing to do, . . . but still he stuck out bravely for the higher life." Mr. Anderson's mother, who died when he was still a young boy, was a woman of Italian extraction who had been a bound servant in a farmer's family when his father had met her and married her. The family was poor and led almost a vagabond existence. The mother was a woman of character, but the father was a ne'er-do-well who lived in a world of brightly colored dreams. Sometimes, while mother and children were left to shift for themselves, this father managed to secure board and lodging for himself from farmers and their wives by the romantic tales he invented concerning his past. The family had begun to disintegrate when Mr. Anderson was yet a small boy, and the death of his mother hastened the process. He attended public schools for a time, but apparently not for long. When other boys were preparing for college he was already earning his own living—was employed in a nail factory, rolling kegs of nails from a warehouse to waiting trucks. He did not continue long at any one job, however. He had a passion for reading—novels and romances at first, then memoirs, and some history—and whenever he managed to get a few dollars ahead he threw up his job and did nothing save read books from public libraries until he was again without money. Then he obtained a new job, assembled parts in a bicycle-factory, or helped to care for race-horses, until he had earned another period of reading. When the Spanish War came he enlisted. He happened at the time to have a hundred dollars—the result of his rescue of a drunken man from robbers—and for greater effect he purchased new clothes and a walking-stick and returned to his native town to enlist, so that the people who knew him could see how well he was doing in life and could appreciate the sacrifice he was making in fighting for his country. The people "rose," and tried to make a hero of him, and he liked it. Later he managed to start a small manufacturing business, but he had no head for buying and selling, the business soon began to go badly, and he suddenly quitted it in disgust. He then became an advertisement-writer in Chicago.

By this time Mr. Anderson knew that he was a story-teller, and only a story-teller, a man of words and fancies—fancies so vivid and inevitable that he could scarcely keep them distinct from the world of fact. And he was writing, writing, trying to get his matter faithfully into words, in whatever time he could steal from the advertisement-business. Several of his tales, moreover, were published, in *The Little Review*, and in *The Seven Arts*, and this helped him to conquer his fears, born of the notion that only cultured and educated people could hope to produce literature. He went to New York, became acquainted with writers and critics, and discovered that the only people who had solved the problems of the craft of fiction were the factory-hands of the periodicals, the men who produced machine-made "plot-stories," with the aim, not of exploring reality, but of amusing or distracting their readers. He also discovered that apparently there was a new and growing interest in problems of the craft of fiction, and likewise in the effort to create an authentic "United States beauty" by a faithful and untrammelled handling of the lives of real people—that, indeed, there was a growing naturalistic school of American writers, in whose ranks he was already enrolled.

Thus encouraged, Mr. Anderson published his first novel, *Windy McPherson's Son*, in 1916, and since then other volumes have followed rapidly: *Marching Men* (1917; novel), *Mid-American Chants* (1918; poems), *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919; tales), *Poor White* (1920; novel), *The Triumph of the Egg* (1921; tales), *Many Marriages* (1922; novel), *Horses and Men* (1923; tales), *Dark Laughter* (1925; novel), and *Note-book*, (1926; essays and brief observations). "*Tar*," *The Story of a Mid-American Childhood* will be published in the fall of 1926, and Mr. Anderson has in preparation a novel to be entitled *Another Man's House*.

Mr. Anderson is at once a conscious artist and a seeker after truth. He insists that his books are not transcripts from life, but imaginative creations, yet adds that the imagination can fruitfully be fed

only by naked reality. Thus his novels and tales have a marked autobiographical element, while his autobiography contains, as has been mentioned, many imaginative details. As a creator he tends to follow art for art's sake, and endeavors after complete independence of literary, social, and moral conventions, so that he may be wholly faithful to his vision, whatever it may be, and equally free to express it. He also, however, earnestly seeks to understand life, which has bewildered and baffled him. He is confident that there is a good way of life which industrial America as he has known it somehow has lost consciousness of, and he seems to feel that all conventions and standards are deadening shackles the repudiation of which, throwing open the gates to free individual development, would reawaken our dormant intelligence and our dormant sensitiveness to beauty, and so make life for every one a rich and ennobling experience. This is well illustrated by some sentences from the initial tale in *Winesburg, Ohio*, probably Mr. Anderson's best book: "All of the men and women the writer had ever known had become grotesques." They were not all horrible. "Some were amusing, some almost beautiful," but all were grotesques. And the reason was, "That in the beginning when the world was young there were a great many thoughts but no such thing as a truth. Man made the truths himself and each truth was a composite of a great many vague thoughts. All about in the world were the truths and they were all beautiful. . . . There was the truth of virginity and the truth of passion, the truth of wealth and of poverty, of thrift and of profligacy, and of carelessness and abandon. . . . And then the people came along. Each as he appeared snatched up one of the truths. . . . It was the truths that made the people grotesques. . . . The moment one of the people took one of the truths to himself, called it his truth, and tried to live his life by it, he became a grotesque and the truth he embraced became a falsehood." It must be felt that the quality of Mr. Anderson's work would be different were it not for his very one-sided experience of life and for his lack of the ordered historical understanding which liberal education aims to give. Nevertheless, his novels and tales are notable not only for their honesty, their vividness, and their limited range of truth to human nature, but also for their indictment of rigid standardization in art, industry, and life, their exhibition of the emptiness of material prosperity, and their fresh and vigorous insistence upon the high value of independence, courage, and personal integrity.

A MAN OF IDEAS¹

HE lived with his mother, a gray, silent woman with a peculiar ashy complexion. The house in which they lived stood in a little grove of trees beyond where the main street of Winesburg crossed Wine Creek. His name was Joe Welling, and his father had been a man of some dignity in the community, a lawyer and a member of the state legislature at Columbus. Joe himself was small of body and in his character unlike anyone else in town. He was like a tiny little volcano that lies silent for days and then suddenly spouts fire. No, he wasn't like that—he was like a man who is subject to fits, one who walks among his fellow men inspiring fear because a fit may come upon him suddenly and blow him away into a strange uncanny physical state in which his eyes roll and his legs and arms jerk. He was like that, only that the visitation that descended upon Joe Welling was a mental and not a physical thing. He was beset by ideas and in the throes of one of his

ideas was uncontrollable. Words rolled and tumbled from his mouth. A peculiar smile came upon his lips. The edges of his teeth that were tipped with gold glistened in the light. Pouncing upon a bystander he began to talk. For the bystander there was no escape. The excited man breathed into his face, peered into his eyes, pounded upon his chest with a shaking forefinger, demanded, compelled attention.

In those days the Standard Oil Company did not deliver oil to the consumer in big wagons and motor trucks as it does now, but delivered instead to retail grocers, hardware stores and the like. Joe was the Standard Oil agent in Winesburg and in several towns up and down the railroad that went through Winesburg. He collected bills, booked orders, and did other things. His father, the legislator, had secured the job for him.

In and out of the stores of Winesburg went Joe Welling—silent, excessively polite, intent upon his business. Men watched him with eyes in which lurked amusement tempered by alarm. They were waiting for him to break forth, preparing to flee. Although the seizures that came upon him were harmless enough, they could not be

¹ This and the following two tales are reprinted from *Winesburg, Ohio* with the permission of the publishers, The Viking Press, Inc., B. W. Huebsch, Inc.

laughed away. They were overwhelming. Astride an idea, Joe was overmastering. His personality became gigantic. It overrode the man to whom he talked, swept him away, swept all away, all who stood within sound of his voice.

In Sylvester West's Drug Store stood four men who were talking of horse racing. Wesley Moyer's stallion, Tony Tip, was to race at the June meeting at Tiffin, Ohio, and there was a rumor that he would meet the stiffest competition of his career. It was said that Pop Geers, the great racing driver, would himself be there. A doubt of the success of Tony Tip hung heavy in the air of Winesburg.

Into the drug store came Joe Welling, brushing the screen door violently aside. With a strange absorbed light in his eyes he pounced upon Ed Thomas, he who knew Pop Geers and whose opinion of Tony Tip's chances was worth considering.

"The water is up in Wine Creek," cried Joe Welling with the air of Pheidippides bringing news of the victory of the Greeks in the struggle at Marathon. His finger beat a tattoo upon Ed Thomas' broad chest. "By Trunion bridge it is within eleven and a half inches of the flooring," he went on, the words coming quickly and with a little whistling noise from between his teeth. An expression of helpless annoyance crept over the faces of the four.

"I have my facts correct. Depend upon that. I went to Sinning's Hardware Store and got a rule. Then I went back and measured. I could hardly believe my own eyes. It hasn't rained you see for ten days. At first I didn't know what to think. Thoughts rushed through my head. I thought of subterranean passages and springs. Down under the ground went my mind, delving about. I sat on the floor of the bridge and rubbed my head. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, not one. Come out into the street and you'll see. There wasn't a cloud. There isn't a cloud now. Yes, there was a cloud. I don't want to keep back any facts. There was a cloud in the west down near the horizon, a cloud no bigger than a man's hand.

"Not that I think that has anything to do with it. There it is you see. You understand how puzzled I was.

"Then an idea came to me. I laughed.

You'll laugh, too. Of course it rained over in Medina County. That's interesting, eh? If we had no trains, no mails, no telegraph, we would know that it rained over in Medina County. That's where Wine Creek comes from. Everyone knows that. Little old Wine Creek brought us the news. That's interesting. I laughed. I thought I'd tell you—it's interesting, eh?"

Joe Welling turned and went out at the door. Taking a book from his pocket, he stopped and ran a finger down one of the pages. Again he was absorbed in his duties as agent of the Standard Oil Company. "Hern's Grocery will be getting low on coal oil. I'll see them," he muttered, hurrying along the street, and bowing politely to the right and left at the people walking past.

When George Willard went to work for the *Winesburg Eagle* he was besieged by Joe Welling. Joe envied the boy. It seemed to him that he was meant by Nature to be a reporter on a newspaper. "It is what I should be doing, there is no doubt of that," he declared, stopping George Willard on the sidewalk before Daugherty's Feed Store. His eyes began to glisten and his forefinger to tremble. "Of course I make more money with the Standard Oil Company and I'm only telling you," he added. "I've got nothing against you, but I should have your place. I could do the work at odd moments. Here and there I would run finding out things you'll never see."

Becoming more excited Joe Welling crowded the young reporter against the front of the feed store. He appeared to be lost in thought, rolling his eyes about and running a thin nervous hand through his hair. A smile spread over his face and his gold teeth glittered. "You get out your note book," he commanded. "You carry a little pad of paper in your pocket, don't you? I knew you did. Well, you set this down. I thought of it the other day. Let's take decay. Now what is decay? It's fire. It burns up wood and other things. You never thought of that? Of course not. This sidewalk here and this feed store, the trees down the street there—they're all on fire. They're burning up. Decay you see is always going on. It don't stop. Water and paint can't stop it. If a thing is iron, then what? It rusts, you

see. That's fire, too. The world is on fire. Start your pieces in the paper that way. Just say in big letters '*The World Is On Fire.*' That will make 'em look up. They'll say you're a smart one. I don't care. I don't envy you. I just snatched that idea out of the air. I would make a newspaper hum. You got to admit that."

Turning quickly, Joe Welling walked rapidly away. When he had taken several steps he stopped and looked back. "I'm going to stick to you," he said. "I'm going to make you a regular hummer. I should start a newspaper myself, that's what I should do. I'd be a marvel. Everybody knows that."

When George Willard had been for a year on the *Winesburg Eagle*, four things happened to Joe Welling. His mother died, he came to live at the New Willard House, he became involved in a love affair, and he organized the Winesburg Baseball Club.

Joe organized the baseball club because he wanted to be a coach and in that position he began to win the respect of his townsmen. "He is a wonder," they declared after Joe's team had whipped the team from Medina County. "He gets everybody working together. You just watch him."

Upon the baseball field Joe Welling stood by first base, his whole body quivering with excitement. In spite of themselves all of the players watched him closely. The opposing pitcher became confused.

"Now! Now! Now! Now!" shouted the excited man. "Watch me! Watch me! Watch my fingers! Watch my hands! Watch my feet! Watch my eyes! Let's work together here! Watch me! In me you see all the movements of the game! Work with me! Work with me! Watch me! Watch me! Watch me!"

With runners of the Winesburg team on bases, Joe Welling became as one inspired. Before they knew what had come over them, the base runners were watching the man, edging off the bases, advancing, retreating, held as by an invisible cord. The players of the opposing team also watched Joe. They were fascinated. For a moment they watched and then as though to break a spell that hung over them, they began hurling the ball wildly about, and amid a series of fierce animal-like cries from the

coach, the runners of the Winesburg team scampered home.

Joe Welling's love affair set the town of Winesburg on edge. When it began everyone whispered and shook his head. When people tried to laugh, the laughter was forced and unnatural. Joe fell in love with Sarah King, a lean, sad-looking woman who lived with her father and brother in a brick house that stood opposite the gate leading to the Winesburg Cemetery.

The two Kings, Edward the father, and Tom the son, were not popular in Winesburg. They were called proud and dangerous. They had come to Winesburg from some place in the South and ran a cider mill on the Trunion Pike. Tom King was reported to have killed a man before he came to Winesburg. He was twenty-seven years old and rode about town on a gray pony. Also he had a long yellow mustache that dropped down over his teeth, and always carried a heavy, wicked-looking walking stick in his hand. Once he killed a dog with the stick. The dog belonged to Win Pawsey, the shoe merchant, and stood on the sidewalk wagging its tail. Tom King killed it with one blow. He was arrested and paid a fine of ten dollars.

Old Edward King was small of stature and when he passed people in the street laughed a queer unmirthful laugh. When he laughed he scratched his left elbow with his right hand. The sleeve of his coat was almost worn through from the habit. As he walked along the street, looking nervously about and laughing, he seemed more dangerous than his silent, fierce looking son.

When Sarah King began walking out in the evening with Joe Welling, people shook their heads in alarm. She was tall and pale and had dark rings under her eyes. The couple looked ridiculous together. Under the trees they walked and Joe talked. His passionate eager protestations of love, heard coming out of the darkness by the cemetery wall, or from the deep shadows of the trees on the hill that ran up to the Fair Grounds from Waterworks Pond, were repeated in the stores. Men stood by the bar in the New Willard House laughing and talking of Joe's courtship. After the laughter came silence. The Winesburg baseball team, under his management, was winning game

after game, and the town had begun to respect him. Sensing a tragedy, they waited, laughing nervously.

Late on a Saturday afternoon the meeting between Joe Welling and the two Kings, the anticipation of which had set the town on edge, took place in Joe Welling's room in the New Willard House. George Willard was a witness to the meeting. It came about in this way:

When the young reporter went to his room after the evening meal he saw Tom King and his father sitting in the half darkness in Joe's room. The son had the heavy walking stick in his hand and sat near the door. Old Edward King walked nervously about, scratching his left elbow with his right hand. The hallways were empty and silent.

George Willard went to his own room and sat down at his desk. He tried to write but his hand trembled so that he could not hold the pen. He also walked nervously up and down. Like the rest of the town of Winesburg he was perplexed and knew not what to do.

It was seven-thirty and fast growing dark when Joe Welling came along the station platform toward the New Willard House. In his arms he held a bundle of weeds and grasses. In spite of the terror that made his body shake, George Willard was amused at the sight of the small spry figure holding the grasses and half running along the platform.

Shaking with fright and anxiety, the young reporter lurked in the hallway outside the door of the room in which Joe Welling talked to the two Kings. There had been an oath, the nervous giggle of old Edward King, and then silence. Now the voice of Joe Welling, sharp and clear, broke forth. George Willard began to laugh. He understood. As he had swept all men before him, so now Joe Welling was carrying the two men in the room off their feet with a tidal wave of words. The listener in the hall walked up and down, lost in amazement.

Inside the room Joe Welling had paid no attention to the grumbled threat of Tom King. Absorbed in an idea he closed the door and lighting a lamp, spread the handful of weeds and grasses upon the floor. "I've got something here," he announced solemnly. "I was going to tell George Willard about it,

let him make a piece out of it for the paper. I'm glad you're here. I wish Sarah were here also. I've been going to come to your house and tell you of some of my ideas. They're interesting. Sarah wouldn't let me. She said we'd quarrel. That's foolish."

Running up and down before the two perplexed men, Joe Welling began to explain. "Don't you make a mistake now," he cried. "This is something big." His voice was shrill with excitement. "You just follow me, you'll be interested. I know you will. Suppose this—suppose all of the wheat, the corn, the oats, the peas, the potatoes, were all by some miracle swept away. Now here we are, you see, in this county. There is a high fence built all around us. We'll suppose that. No one can get over the fence and all the fruits of the earth are destroyed, nothing left but these wild things, these grasses. Would we be done for? I ask you that. Would we be done for?" Again Tom King growled and for a moment there was silence in the room. Then again Joe plunged into the exposition of his idea. "Things would go hard for a time. I admit that. I've got to admit that. No getting around it. We'd be hard put to it. More than one fat stomach would cave in. But they couldn't down us. I should say not."

Tom King laughed good naturedly and the shivery, nervous laugh of Edward King rang through the house. Joe Welling hurried on. "We'd begin, you see, to breed up new vegetables and fruits. Soon we'd regain all we had lost. Mind, I don't say the new things would be the same as the old. They wouldn't. Maybe they'd be better, maybe not so good. That's interesting, eh? You can think about that. It starts your mind working, now don't it?"

In the room there was silence and then again old Edward King laughed nervously. "Say, I wish Sarah was here," cried Joe Welling. "Let's go up to your house. I want to tell her of this."

There was a scraping of chairs in the room. It was then that George Willard retreated to his own room. Leaning out at the window he saw Joe Welling going along the street with the two Kings. Tom King was forced to take extraordinary long strides to keep pace with the little man. As he strode along, he leaned over, listening—absorbed, fas-

minated. Joe Welling again talked excitedly. "Take milkweed now," he cried. "A lot might be done with milkweed, eh? It's almost unbelievable. I want you to think about it. I want you two to think about it. There would be a new vegetable kingdom you see. It's interesting, eh? It's an idea. Wait till you see Sarah, she'll get the idea. She'll be interested. Sarah is always interested in ideas. You can't be too smart for Sarah, now can you? Of course you can't. You know that."

"QUEER"

FROM his seat on a box in the rough board shed that stuck like a bur on the rear of Cowley & Son's store in Winesburg, Elmer Cowley, the junior member of the firm, could see through a dirty window into the printshop of the *Winesburg Eagle*. Elmer was putting new shoelaces in his shoes. They did not go in readily and he had to take the shoes off. With the shoes in his hand he sat looking at a large hole in the heel of one of his stockings. Then looking quickly up he saw George Willard, the only newspaper reporter in Winesburg, standing at the back door of the *Eagle* printshop and staring absent-mindedly about. "Well, well, what next!" exclaimed the young man with the shoes in his hand, jumping to his feet and creeping away from the window.

A flush crept into Elmer Cowley's face and his hands began to tremble. In Cowley & Son's store a Jewish traveling salesman stood by the counter talking to his father. He imagined the reporter could hear what was being said and the thought made him furious. With one of the shoes still held in his hand he stood in a corner of the shed and stamped with a stockinged foot upon the board floor.

Cowley & Son's store did not face the main street of Winesburg. The front was on Maumee Street and beyond it was Voight's wagon shop and a shed for the sheltering of farmers' horses. Beside the store an alleyway ran behind the main street stores and all day drays and delivery wagons, intent on bringing in and taking out goods, passed up and down. The store itself was indescribable. Will Henderson once said of it that it sold everything and nothing. In the window

facing Maumee Street stood a chunk of coal as large as an apple barrel, to indicate that orders for coal were taken, and beside the black mass of the coal stood three combs of honey grown brown and dirty in their wooden frames.

The honey had stood in the store window for six months. It was for sale as were also the coat hangers, patent suspender buttons, cans of roof paint, bottles of rheumatism cure and a substitute for coffee that companioned the honey in its patient willingness to serve the public.

Ebenezer Cowley, the man who stood in the store listening to the eager patter of words that fell from the lips of the traveling man, was tall and lean and looked unwashed. On his scrawny neck was a large wen partially covered by a gray beard. He wore a long Prince Albert coat. The coat had been purchased to serve as a wedding garment. Before he became a merchant Ebenezer was a farmer and after his marriage he wore the Prince Albert coat to church on Sundays and on Saturday afternoons when he came into town to trade. When he sold the farm to become a merchant he wore the coat constantly. It had become brown with age and was covered with grease spots, but in it Ebenezer always felt dressed up and ready for the day in town.

As a merchant Ebenezer was not happily placed in life and he had not been happily placed as a farmer. Still he existed. His family, consisting of a daughter named Mabel and the son, lived with him in rooms above the store and it did not cost them much to live. His troubles were not financial. His unhappiness as a merchant lay in the fact that when a traveling man with wares to be sold came in at the front door he was afraid. Behind the counter he stood shaking his head. He was afraid, first that he would stubbornly refuse to buy and thus lose the opportunity to sell again; second that he would not be stubborn enough and would in a moment of weakness buy what could not be sold.

In the store on the morning when Elmer Cowley saw George Willard standing and apparently listening at the back door of the *Eagle* printshop, a situation had arisen that always stirred the son's wrath. The traveling man talked and Ebenezer listened, his whole figure expressing uncertainty. "You

see how quickly it is done," said the traveling man who had for sale a small flat metal substitute for collar buttons. With one hand he quickly unfastened a collar from his shirt and then fastened it on again. He assumed a flattering wheedling tone. "I tell you what, men have come to the end of all this fooling with collar buttons and you are the man to make money out of the change that is coming. I am offering you the exclusive agency for this town. Take twenty dozen of these fasteners and I'll not visit any other store. I'll leave the field to you."

The traveling man leaned over the counter and tapped with his finger on Ebenezer's breast. "It's an opportunity and I want you to take it," he urged. "A friend of mine told me about you. 'See that man Cowley,' he said. 'He's a live one.'"

The traveling man paused and waited. Taking a book from his pocket he began writing out the order. Still holding the shoe in his hand Elmer Cowley went through the store, past the two absorbed men, to a glass show case near the front door. He took a cheap revolver from the case and began to wave it about. "You get out of here!" he shrieked. "We don't want any collar fasteners here." An idea came to him. "Mind, I'm not making any threat," he added. "I don't say I'll shoot. Maybe I just took this gun out of the case to look at it. But you better get out. Yes sir, I'll say that. You better grab up your things and get out."

The young storekeeper's voice rose to a scream and going behind the counter he began to advance upon the two men. "We're through being fools here!" he cried. "We ain't going to buy any more stuff until we begin to sell. We ain't going to keep on being queer and have folks staring and listening. You get out of here!"

The traveling man left. Raking the samples of collar fasteners off the counter into a black leather bag, he ran. He was a small man and very bow-legged and he ran awkwardly. The black bag caught against the door and he stumbled and fell. "Crazy, that's what he is—crazy!" he sputtered as he arose from the sidewalk and hurried away.

In the store Elmer Cowley and his father stared at each other. Now that the immediate object of his wrath had fled, the younger man

was embarrassed. "Well, I meant it. I think we've been queer long enough," he declared, going to the showcase and replacing the revolver. Sitting on a barrel he pulled on and fastened the shoe he had been holding in his hand. He was waiting for some word of understanding from his father but when Ebenezer spoke his words only served to re-awaken the wrath in the son and the young man ran out of the store without replying. Scratching his gray beard with his long dirty fingers, the merchant looked at his son with the same wavering uncertain stare with which he had confronted the traveling man. "I'll be starched," he said softly. "Well, well, I'll be washed and ironed and starched!"

Elmer Cowley went out of Winesburg and along a country road that paralleled the railroad track. He did not know where he was going or what he was going to do. In the shelter of a deep cut where the road, after turning sharply to the right, dipped under the tracks he stopped and the passion that had been the cause of his outburst in the store began to again find expression. "I will not be queer—one to be looked at and listened to," he declared aloud. "I'll be like other people. I'll show that George Willard. He'll find out. I'll show him!"

The distraught young man stood in the middle of the road and glared back at the town. He did not know the reporter George Willard and had no special feeling concerning the tall boy who ran about town gathering the town news. The reporter had merely come, by his presence in the office and in the printshop of the *Winesburg Eagle*, to stand for something in the young merchant's mind. He thought the boy who passed and repassed Cowley & Son's store and who stopped to talk to people in the street must be thinking of him and perhaps laughing at him. George Willard, he felt, belonged to the town, typified the town, represented in his person the spirit of the town. Elmer Cowley could not have believed that George Willard had also his days of unhappiness, that vague hungers and secret unnamable desires visited also his mind. Did he not represent public opinion and had not the public opinion of Winesburg condemned the Cowleys to queerness? Did he not walk whistling and laughing through Main Street?

Might not one by striking his person strike also the greater enemy—the thing that smiled and went its own way—the judgment of Winesburg?

Elmer Cowley was extraordinarily tall and his arms were long and powerful. His hair, his eyebrows, and the downy beard that had begun to grow upon his chin, were pale almost to whiteness. His teeth protruded from between his lips and his eyes were blue with the colorless blueness of the marbles called "aggies" that the boys of Winesburg carried in their pockets. Elmer had lived in Winesburg for a year and had made no friends. He was, he felt, one condemned to go through life without friends and he hated the thought.

Sullenly the tall young man tramped along the road with his hands stuffed into his trouser pockets. The day was cold with a raw wind, but presently the sun began to shine and the road became soft and muddy. The tops of the ridges of frozen mud that formed the road began to melt and the mud clung to Elmer's shoes. His feet became cold. When he had gone several miles he turned off the road, crossed a field and entered a wood. In the wood he gathered sticks to build a fire by which he sat trying to warm himself, miserable in body and in mind.

For two hours he sat on the log by the fire and then, arising and creeping cautiously through a mass of underbrush, he went to a fence and looked across fields to a small farmhouse surrounded by low sheds. A smile came to his lips and he began making motions with his long arms to a man who was husking corn in one of the fields.

In his hour of misery the young merchant had returned to the farm where he had lived through boyhood and where there was another human being to whom he felt he could explain himself. The man on the farm was a half-witted old fellow named Mook. He had once been employed by Ebenezer Cowley and had stayed on the farm when it was sold. The old man lived in one of the unpainted sheds back of the farmhouse and puttered about all day in the fields.

Mook the half-wit lived happily. With childlike faith he believed in the intelligence of the animals that lived in the sheds with

him, and when he was lonely held long conversations with the cows, the pigs, and even with the chickens that ran about the barnyard. He it was who had put the expression regarding being "laundered" into the mouth of his former employer. When excited or surprised by anything he smiled vaguely and muttered: "I'll be washed and ironed. Well, well, I'll be washed and ironed and starched."

When the half-witted old man left his husking of corn and came into the wood to meet Elmer Cowley, he was neither surprised nor especially interested in the sudden appearance of the young man. His feet also were cold and he sat on the log by the fire, grateful for the warmth and apparently indifferent to what Elmer had to say.

Elmer talked earnestly and with great freedom, walking up and down and waving his arms about. "You don't understand what's the matter with me so of course you don't care," he declared. "With me it's different. Look how it has always been with me. Father is queer and mother was queer, too. Even the clothes mother used to wear were not like other people's clothes, and look at that coat in which father goes about there in town, thinking he's dressed up, too. Why don't he get a new one? It wouldn't cost much. I'll tell you why. Father doesn't know and when mother was alive she didn't know either. Mabel is different. She knows but she won't say anything. I will, though. I'm not going to be stared at any longer. Why look here, Mook, father doesn't know that his store there in town is just a queer jumble, that he'll never sell the stuff he buys. He knows nothing about it. Sometimes he's a little worried that trade doesn't come and then he goes and buys something else. In the evenings he sits by the fire upstairs and says trade will come after a while. He isn't worried. He's queer. He doesn't know enough to be worried."

The excited young man became more excited. "He don't know but I know," he shouted, stopping to gaze down into the dumb, unresponsive face of the half-wit. "I know too well. I can't stand it. When we lived out here it was different. I worked and at night I went to bed and slept. I wasn't always seeing people and thinking

as I am now. In the evening, there in town, I go to the post office or to the depot to see the train come in, and no one says anything to me. Everyone stands around and laughs and they talk but they say nothing to me. Then I feel so queer that I can't talk either. I go away. I don't say anything. I can't."

The fury of the young man became uncontrollable. "I won't stand it," he yelled, looking up at the bare branches of the trees. "I'm not made to stand it."

Maddened by the dull face of the man on the log by the fire, Elmer turned and glared at him as he had glared back along the road at the town of Winesburg. "Go on back to work," he screamed. "What good does it do me to talk to you?" A thought came to him and his voice dropped. "I'm a coward too, eh?" he muttered. "Do you know why I came clear out here afoot? I had to tell some one and you were the only one I could tell. I hunted out another queer one, you see. I ran away, that's what I did. I couldn't stand up to some one like that George Willard. I had to come to you. I ought to tell him and I will."

Again his voice arose to a shout and his arms flew about. "I will tell him. I won't be queer. I don't care what they think. I won't stand it."

Elmer Cowley ran out of the woods leaving the half-wit sitting on the log before the fire. Presently the old man arose and climbing over the fence went back to his work in the corn. "I'll be washed and ironed and starched," he declared. "Well, well, I'll be washed and ironed." Mook was interested. He went along a lane to a field where two cows stood nibbling at a straw stack. "Elmer was here," he said to the cows. "Elmer is crazy. You better get behind the stack where he don't see you. He'll hurt someone yet, Elmer will."

At eight o'clock that evening Elmer Cowley put his head in at the front door of the office of the *Winesburg Eagle* where George Willard sat writing. His cap was pulled down over his eyes and a sullen determined look was on his face. "You come on outside with me," he said, stepping in and closing the door. He kept his hand on the knob as though prepared to resist anyone else coming in. "You just come along outside. I want to see you."

George Willard and Elmer Cowley walked through the main street of Winesburg. The night was cold and George Willard had on a new overcoat and looked very spruce and dressed up. He thrust his hands into the overcoat pockets and looked inquiringly at his companion. He had long been wanting to make friends with the young merchant and find out what was in his mind. Now he thought he saw a chance and was delighted. "I wonder what he's up to? Perhaps he thinks he has a piece of news for the paper. It can't be a fire because I haven't heard the fire bell and there isn't anyone running," he thought.

In the main street of Winesburg, on the cold November evening, but few citizens appeared and these hurried along bent on getting to the stove at the back of some store. The windows of the stores were frosted and the wind rattled the tin sign that hung over the entrance to the stairway leading to Doctor Welling's office. Before Hern's Grocery a basket of apples and a rack filled with new brooms stood on the sidewalk. Elmer Cowley stopped and stood facing George Willard. He tried to talk and his arms began to pump up and down. His face worked spasmodically. He seemed about to shout. "Oh, you go on back," he cried. "Don't stay out here with me. I ain't got anything to tell you. I don't want to see you at all."

For three hours the distracted young merchant wandered through the resident streets of Winesburg blind with anger, brought on by his failure to declare his determination not to be queer. Bitterly the sense of defeat settled upon him and he wanted to weep. After the hours of futile sputtering at nothingness that had occupied the afternoon and his failure in the presence of the young reporter, he thought he could see no hope of a future for himself.

And then a new idea dawned for him. In the darkness that surrounded him he began to see a light. Going to the now darkened store, where Cowley & Son had for over a year waited vainly for trade to come, he crept stealthily in and felt about in a barrel that stood by the stove at the rear. In the barrel beneath shavings lay a tin box containing Cowley & Son's cash. Every evening Ebenezer Cowley put the box in the barrel

when he closed the store and went upstairs to bed. "They wouldn't never think of a careless place like that," he told himself, thinking of robbers.

Elmer took twenty dollars, two ten dollar bills, from the little roll containing perhaps four hundred dollars, the cash left from the sale of the farm. Then replacing the box beneath the shavings he went quietly out at the front door and walked again in the streets.

The idea that he thought might put an end to all of his unhappiness was very simple. "I will get out of here, run away from home," he told himself. He knew that a local freight train passed through Winesburg at midnight and went on to Cleveland where it arrived at dawn. He would steal a ride on the local and when he got to Cleveland would lose himself in the crowds there. He would get work in some shop and become friends with the other workmen. Gradually he would become like other men and would be indistinguishable. Then he could talk and laugh. He would no longer be queer and would make friends. Life would begin to have warmth and meaning for him as it had for others.

The tall awkward young man, striding through the streets, laughed at himself because he had been angry and had been half afraid of George Willard. He decided he would have his talk with the young reporter before he left town, that he would tell him about things, perhaps challenge him, challenge all of Winesburg through him.

Aglow with new confidence Elmer went to the office of the New Willard House and pounded on the door. A sleep-eyed boy slept on a cot in the office. He received no salary but was fed at the hotel table and bore with pride the title of "night clerk." Before the boy Elmer was bold, insistent. "You wake him up," he commanded. "You tell him to come down by the depot. I got to see him and I'm going away on the local. Tell him to dress and come on down. I ain't got much time."

The midnight local had finished its work in Winesburg and the trainmen were coupling cars, swinging lanterns and preparing to resume their flight east. George Willard, rubbing his eyes and again wearing the new overcoat, ran down to the station platform

afire with curiosity. "Well, here I am. What do you want? You've got something to tell me, eh?" he said.

Elmer tried to explain. He wet his lips with his tongue and looked at the train that had begun to groan and get under way. "Well, you see," he began, and then lost control of his tongue. "I'll be washed and ironed. I'll be washed and ironed and starched," he muttered half incoherently.

Elmer Cowley danced with fury beside the groaning train in the darkness on the station platform. Lights leaped into the air and bobbed up and down before his eyes. Taking the two ten dollar bills from his pocket he thrust them into George Willard's hand. "Take them," he cried. "I don't want them. Give them to father. I stole them." With a snarl of rage he turned and his long arms began to flay the air. Like one struggling for release from hands that held him he struck out, hitting George Willard blow after blow on the breast, the neck, the mouth. The young reporter rolled over on the platform half unconscious, stunned by the terrific force of the blows. Springing aboard the passing train and running over the tops of cars, Elmer sprang down to a flat car and lying on his face looked back, trying to see the fallen man in the darkness. Pride surged up in him. "I showed him," he cried. "I guess I showed him. I ain't so queer. I guess I showed him I ain't so queer."

DRINK

TOM FOSTER came to Winesburg from Cincinnati when he was still young and could get many new impressions. His grandmother had been raised on a farm near the town and as a young girl had gone to school there when Winesburg was a village of twelve or fifteen houses clustered about a general store on the Trunion Pike.

What a life the old woman had led since she went away from the frontier settlement and what a strong, capable little old thing she was! She had been in Kansas, in Canada, and in New York City, traveling about with her husband, a mechanic, before he died. Later she went to stay with her daughter who had also married a mechanic and lived in Covington, Kentucky, across the river from Cincinnati.

Then began the hard years for Tom Foster's grandmother. First her son-in-law was killed by a policeman during a strike and then Tom's mother became an invalid and died also. The grandmother had saved a little money, but it was swept away by the illness of the daughter and by the cost of the two funerals. She became a half worn-out old woman worker and lived with the grandson above a junk shop on a side street in Cincinnati. For five years she scrubbed the floors in an office building and then got a place as dish washer in a restaurant. Her hands were all twisted out of shape. When she took hold of a mop or a broom handle the hands looked like the dried stems of an old creeping vine clinging to a tree.

The old woman came back to Winesburg as soon as she got the chance. One evening as she was coming home from work she found a pocketbook containing thirty-seven dollars, and that opened the way. The trip was a great adventure for the boy. It was past seven o'clock at night when the grandmother came home with the pocketbook held tightly in her old hands and she was so excited she could scarcely speak. She insisted on leaving Cincinnati that night, saying that if they stayed until morning the owner of the money would be sure to find them out and make trouble. Tom, who was then sixteen years old, had to go trudging off to the station with the old woman bearing all of their earthly belongings done up in a worn-out blanket and slung across his back. By his side walked the grandmother urging him forward. Her toothless old mouth twitched nervously, and when Tom grew weary and wanted to put the pack down at a street crossing she snatched it up and if he had not prevented would have slung it across her own back. When they got into the train and it had run out of the city she was as delighted as a girl and talked as the boy had never heard her talk before.

All through the night as the train rattled along, the grandmother told Tom tales of Winesburg and of how he would enjoy his life working in the fields and shooting wild things in the wood there. She could not believe that the tiny village of fifty years before had grown into a thriving town in her absence, and in the morning when the train

came to Winesburg did not want to get off. "It isn't what I thought. It may be hard for you here," she said, and then the train went on its way and the two stood confused, not knowing where to turn, in the presence of Albert Longworth, the Winesburg baggage master.

But Tom Foster did get along all right. He was one to get along anywhere. Mrs. White, the banker's wife, employed his grandmother to work in the kitchen and he got a place as stable boy in the banker's new brick barn.

In Winesburg servants were hard to get. The woman who wanted help in her housework employed a "hired girl" who insisted on sitting at the table with the family. Mrs. White was sick of hired girls and snatched at the chance to get hold of the old city woman. She furnished a room for the boy Tom upstairs in the barn. "He can mow the lawn and run errands when the horses do not need attention," she explained to her husband.

Tom Foster was rather small for his age and had a large head covered with stiff black hair that stood straight up. The hair emphasized the bigness of his head. His voice was the softest thing imaginable, and he was himself so gentle and quiet that he slipped into the life of the town without attracting the least bit of attention.

One could not help wondering where Tom Foster got his gentleness. In Cincinnati he had lived in a neighborhood where gangs of tough boys prowled through the streets, and all through his early formative years he ran about with tough boys. For a while he was messenger for a telegraph company and delivered messages in a neighborhood sprinkled with houses of prostitution. The women in the houses knew and loved Tom Foster and the tough boys in the gangs loved him also.

He never asserted himself. That was one thing that helped him escape. In an odd way he stood in the shadow of the wall of life, was meant to stand in the shadow. He saw the men and women in the houses of lust, sensed their casual and horrible love affairs, saw boys fighting and listened to their tales of thieving and drunkenness unmoved and strangely unaffected.

Once Tom did steal. That was while he

still lived in the city. The grandmother was ill at the time and he himself was out of work. There was nothing to eat in the house, and so he went into a harness shop on a side street and stole a dollar and seventy-five cents out of the cash drawer.

The harness shop was run by an old man with a long mustache. He saw the boy lurking about and thought nothing of it. When he went out into the street to talk to a teamster Tom opened the cash drawer and taking the money walked away. Later he was caught and his grandmother settled the matter by offering to come twice a week for a month and scrub the shop. The boy was ashamed, but he was rather glad, too. "It is all right to be ashamed and makes me understand new things," he said to the grandmother, who didn't know what the boy was talking about but loved him so much that it didn't matter whether she understood or not.

For a year Tom Foster lived in the banker's stable and then lost his place there. He didn't take very good care of the horses and he was a constant source of irritation to the banker's wife. She told him to mow the lawn and he forgot. Then she sent him to the store or to the post office and he did not come back but joined a group of men and boys and spent the whole afternoon with them, standing about, listening and occasionally, when addressed, saying a few words. As in the city in the houses of prostitution and with the rowdy boys running through the streets at night, so in Winesburg among its citizens he had always the power to be a part of and yet distinctly apart from the life about him.

After Tom lost his place at Banker White's he did not live with his grandmother, although often in the evening she came to visit him. He rented a room at the rear of a little frame building belonging to old Rufus Whiting. The building was on Duane Street, just off Main Street, and had been used for years as a law office by the old man who had become too feeble and forgetful for the practice of his profession but did not realize his inefficiency. He liked Tom and let him have the room for a dollar a month. In the late afternoon when the lawyer had gone home the boy had the place to himself and spent hours lying on the floor by the stove

and thinking of things. In the evening the grandmother came and sat in the lawyer's chair to smoke a pipe while Tom remained silent, as he always did in the presence of every one.

Often the old woman talked with great vigor. Sometimes she was angry about some happening at the banker's house and scolded away for hours. Out of her own earnings she bought a mop and regularly scrubbed the lawyer's office. Then when the place was spotlessly clean and smelled clean she lighted her clay pipe and she and Tom had a smoke together. "When you get ready to die then I will die also," she said to the boy lying on the floor beside her chair.

Tom Foster enjoyed life in Winesburg. He did odd jobs, such as cutting wood for kitchen stoves and mowing the grass before houses. In late May and early June he picked strawberries in the fields. He had time to loaf and he enjoyed loafing. Banker White had given him a cast-off coat which was too large for him, but his grandmother cut it down, and he had also an overcoat, got at the same place, that was lined with fur. The fur was worn away in spots, but the coat was warm and in the winter Tom slept in it. He thought his method of getting along good enough and was happy and satisfied with the way life in Winesburg had turned out for him.

The most absurd little things made Tom Foster happy. That, I suppose, was why people loved him. In Hern's grocery they would be roasting coffee on Friday afternoon, preparatory to the Saturday rush of trade, and the rich odor invaded lower Main Street. Tom Foster appeared and sat on a box at the rear of the store. For an hour he did not move but sat perfectly still, filling his being with the spicy odor that made him half drunk with happiness. "I like it," he said gently. "It makes me think of things far away, places and things like that."

One night Tom Foster got drunk. That came about in a curious way. He never had been drunk before, and indeed in all his life had never taken a drink of anything intoxicating, but he felt he needed to be drunk that one time and so went and did it.

In Cincinnati, when he lived there, Tom had found out many things, things about

ugliness and crime and lust. Indeed, he knew more of these things than any one else in Winesburg. The matter of sex in particular had presented itself to him in a quite horrible way and had made a deep impression on his mind. He thought, after what he had seen of the women standing before the squalid houses on cold nights and the look he had seen in the eyes of the men who stopped to talk to them, that he would put sex altogether out of his own life. One of the women of the neighborhood tempted him once and he went into a room with her. He never forgot the smell of the room nor the greedy look that came into the eyes of the woman. It sickened him and in a very terrible way left a scar on his soul. He had always before thought of women as quite innocent things, much like his grandmother, but after that one experience in the room he dismissed women from his mind. So gentle was his nature that he could not hate anything and not being able to understand he decided to forget.

And Tom did forget until he came to Winesburg. After he had lived there for two years something began to stir in him. On all sides he saw youth making love and he was himself a youth. Before he knew what had happened he was in love also. He fell in love with Helen White, daughter of the man for whom he had worked, and found himself thinking of her at night.

That was a problem for Tom and he settled it in his own way. He let himself think of Helen White whenever her figure came into his mind and only concerned himself with the manner of his thoughts. He had a fight, a quiet determined little fight of his own, to keep his desires in the channel where he thought they belonged, but on the whole he was victorious.

And then came the spring night when he got drunk. Tom was wild on that night. He was like an innocent young buck of the forest that has eaten of some maddening weed. The thing began, ran its course, and was ended in one night, and you may be sure that no one in Winesburg was any the worse for Tom's outbreak.

In the first place, the night was one to make a sensitive nature drunk. The trees along the residence streets of the town were all newly clothed in soft green leaves, in the

gardens behind the houses men were puttering about in vegetable gardens, and in the air there was a hush, a waiting kind of silence very stirring to the blood.

Tom left his room on Duane Street just as the young night began to make itself felt. First he walked through the streets, going softly and quietly along, thinking thoughts that he tried to put into words. He said that Helen White was a flame dancing in the air and that he was a little tree without leaves standing out sharply against the sky. Then he said that she was a wind, a strong terrible wind, coming out of the darkness of a stormy sea and that he was a boat left on the shore of the sea by a fisherman.

That idea pleased the boy and he sauntered along playing with it. He went into Main Street and sat on the curbing before Wracker's tobacco store. For an hour he lingered about listening to the talk of men, but it did not interest him much and he slipped away. Then he decided to get drunk and went into Willy's saloon and bought a bottle of whiskey. Putting the bottle into his pocket, he walked out of town, wanting to be alone to think more thoughts and to drink the whiskey.

Tom got drunk sitting on a bank of new grass beside the road about a mile north of town. Before him was a white road and at his back an apple orchard in full bloom. He took a drink out of the bottle and then lay down on the grass. He thought of mornings in Winesburg and of how the stones in the graveled driveway by Banker White's house were wet with dew and glistened in the morning light. He thought of the nights in the barn when it rained and he lay awake hearing the drumming of the rain drops and smelling the warm smell of horses and of hay. Then he thought of a storm that had gone roaring through Winesburg several days before and, his mind going back, he relived the night he had spent on the train with his grandmother when the two were coming from Cincinnati. Sharply he remembered how strange it had seemed to sit quietly in the coach and to feel the power of the engine hurling the train along through the night.

Tom got drunk in a very short time. He kept taking drinks from the bottle as the thoughts visited him and when his head began to reel got up and walked along the

road going away from Winesburg. There was a bridge on the road that ran out of Winesburg north to Lake Erie and the drunken boy made his way along the road to the bridge. There he sat down. He tried to drink again, but when he had taken the cork out of the bottle he became ill and put it quickly back. His head was rocking back and forth and so he sat on the stone approach to the bridge and sighed. His head seemed to be flying about like a pin wheel and then projecting itself off into space and his arms and legs flopped helplessly about.

At eleven o'clock Tom got back into town. George Willard found him wandering about and took him into the *Eagle* printshop. Then he became afraid that the drunken boy would make a mess on the floor and helped him into the alleyway.

The reporter was confused by Tom Foster. The drunken boy talked of Helen White and said he had been with her on the shore of a sea and had made love to her. George had seen Helen White walking in the street with her father during the evening and decided that Tom was out of his head. A sentiment concerning Helen White that lurked in his own heart flamed up and he became angry. "Now you quit that," he said. "I won't let Helen White's name be dragged into this. I won't let that happen." He began shaking Tom's shoulder, trying to make him understand. "You quit it," he said again.

For three hours the two young men, thus strangely thrown together, stayed in the printshop. When he had a little recovered George took Tom for a walk. They went into the country and sat on a log near the edge of a wood. Something in the still night drew them together and when the drunken boy's head began to clear they talked.

"It was good to be drunk," Tom Foster said. "It taught me something. I won't

have to do it again. I will think more clearly after this. You see how it is."

George Willard did not see, but his anger concerning Helen White passed and he felt drawn towards the pale, shaken boy as he had never before been drawn towards any one. With motherly solicitude, he insisted that Tom get to his feet and walk about. Again they went back to the printshop and sat in silence in the darkness.

The reporter could not get the purpose of Tom Foster's action straightened out in his mind. When Tom spoke again of Helen White he again grew angry and began to scold. "You quit that," he said sharply. "You haven't been with her. What makes you say you have? What makes you keep saying such things? Now you quit it, do you hear?"

Tom was hurt. He couldn't quarrel with George Willard because he was incapable of quarreling, so he got up to go away. When George Willard was insistent he put out his hand, laying it on the older boy's arm, and tried to explain.

"Well," he said softly, "I don't know how it was. I was happy. You see how that was. Helen White made me happy and the night did too. I wanted to suffer, to be hurt somehow. I thought that was what I should do. I wanted to suffer, you see, because every one suffers and does wrong. I thought of a lot of things to do, but they wouldn't work. They all hurt some one else."

Tom Foster's voice arose, and for once in his life he became almost excited. "It was like making love, that's what I mean," he explained. "Don't you see how it is? It hurt me to do what I did and made everything strange. That's why I did it. I'm glad, too. It taught me something, that's it, that's what I wanted. Don't you understand? I wanted to learn things, you see. That's why I did it."

EUGENE O'NEILL (1888-)

Eugene Gladstone O'Neill was born in New York on 16 October, 1888. His father was an actor and the boy spent the first seven years of his life traveling through the United States with his father's company. During the next six years he attended several Catholic boarding schools, and then spent four years at the Betts Academy (Connecticut). In the fall of 1906 he entered Princeton University, but remained there only one year. During the following fourteen or fifteen months he worked for a mail-order firm in New York, until it failed. He then went off to Honduras on a prospecting expedition, and after some months of hardship got only an attack of malarial fever for his pains. This necessitated his return to the United States, where he was given a managerial position with a theatrical company of his father's which was then on tour. The company's tour ended in Boston. Mr. O'Neill had been reading Jack London, and Joseph Conrad's *Nigger of the Narcissus*, and he now felt impelled to go to sea in a sailing ship. He did so, going on a Norwegian boat to Buenos Aires, where he remained for more than a year, working for various American firms and also shipping on board a cattle boat for a voyage to South Africa and back. After a further period in Buenos Aires, during which he found no work and had no money, he returned to America as a common seaman on a tramp ship. A time of loafing followed, and then again he went to sea, making a couple of voyages as able seaman on vessels of the American Line. Thereafter he was for a while an actor, and then for some months a newspaper reporter, until he was attacked by tuberculosis, which necessitated a half-year in a sanitarium.

It was only after he came out of the sanitarium, in the latter half of 1913, that Mr. O'Neill began to write. During the winter of 1913-1914 he composed a number of plays, and he spent the following winter at Harvard, working under the direction of Professor G. P. Baker. Through the winter of 1915-1916 he lived in New York, engaged in writing, and in the summer of 1916 he joined the Provincetown Players, and began to act in plays of his own writing which they produced. Since that time he has been engaged entirely in the composition and production of plays, living for some years in Provincetown, and more recently in Ridgefield, Connecticut. He has thus far written some fifty plays, only about one-half of which have been short ones. Twenty of these he has not only discarded as worthless, but has destroyed. Of the remainder many have been successfully produced, and they have made such an impression upon the public that by now Mr. O'Neill is everywhere recognized as a dramatist of genius—really the earliest dramatist of unquestioned genius whom the United States can boast. Were he to cease writing to-day his place would still be secure and memorable, both in the history of the American stage and in American literature. He should, however, have many years of work before him, and those who have studied his plays most closely seem to be agreed that his powers show no sign of exhaustion and that he is likely in the future to give a great fulfillment to the brilliant promise of his first decade as a playwright.

Mr. O'Neill has attained his high position first of all because he has something to say about the character of life which has elements of profound truth in it; and what he has to say is his own, is the fruit of his own experience and reflection, and is felt intensely and intimately. And besides building up in his plays a criticism of life which contains so much of unescapable truth that, whatever our conclusion about it may be, we cannot possibly disregard it but must somehow come to terms with it, Mr. O'Neill has expressed his criticism with great imaginative power, a masterly independence, and a thorough understanding of the nature and limits of theatrical art. He has been a bold experimentalist, but his experiments have been rigidly controlled by the means at his disposal, furnished by modern stage technique, so that some of the most novel of his experiments have at once proved effective and successful when tested by public performance. And perhaps nothing is more notable in Mr. O'Neill's artistry than his severe economy in the use of his material. His economical presentation joins hands with his sense of balance to give to his plays a concentration and directness which, if at times it seems brutally overpowering, also at times makes them seem as inevitable as destiny.

Mr. O'Neill's conviction is that human life is essentially and hopelessly tragic. He appears to discern elements of worth and of fineness in life, and discovers the springs of beauty and ground for sympathy in every honest effort of the understanding to follow the lead of genuine feeling, but concludes that so mixed is human nature and so indifferent are the contending elemental forces which surround man that ultimate defeat in life is inevitable even for the best. He feels that civilization has not improved, but has debased human nature. Built on shams and falsehood, it has produced in the so-called favored classes only qualities which are worthy of contempt. Yet Mr. O'Neill does not find a

cheap escape from this possibly immature conclusion in any sentimental exaltation of savage races. He does not pour on them his contempt, it is true, save when they ape the rottenness of modern civilization, but neither does he cherish any sentimental illusions concerning nature and nature's simple children. He contents himself with an impartial effort to discover sensitiveness and scrupulousness, the springs of whatever is worthy in human nature, as he feels, wherever they may be brought to the surface by crucial conflicts. And if these very qualities serve in our world but to hasten tragic defeat for the persons who possess them, he is also content simply to leave the enigma bared and insistent, as long as he is able to see no further. Thus, though his criticism of life is individual and independent, its general outcome, pointing towards despair and hopelessness either over life itself or, at least, over present conditions of life, is in striking accord with a pronounced critical tendency among a number of contemporary American writers in various fields.

Mr. O'Neill's published plays include the following: *Thirst, and Other One-Act Plays* (1914; the additional plays are *The Web, Warnings, Fog, and Recklessness*), *Before Breakfast* (1916), *The Moon of the Caribbees and Six Other Plays of the Sea* (1919; the other plays are *Bound East for Cardiff, The Long Voyage Home, In the Zone, Ile, Where the Cross is Made, and The Rope*), *Beyond the Horizon* (1920), *Gold* (1921), *The Emperor Jones* (1921), *Diff'rent* (1921), *The Straw* (1921), *Anna Christie* (1922), "*The Hairy Ape*" (1922), *The First Man* (1922), *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (1924), *Welded* (1924), *Desire under the Elms* (1924), *The Dreamy Kid* (1924), *The Great God Brown* (1926), and *The Fountain* (1926).

"THE HAIRY APE"¹

A Comedy of Ancient and Modern Life
in Eight Scenes

CHARACTERS

ROBERT SMITH, "YANK"

PADDY

LONG

MILDRED DOUGLAS

HER AUNT

SECOND ENGINEER

A GUARD

A SECRETARY OF AN ORGANIZATION

STOKERS, LADIES, GENTLEMEN, etc.

SCENES

SCENE I: The firemen's forecandle of an ocean liner—an hour after sailing from New York.

SCENE II: Section of promenade deck, two days out—morning.

SCENE III: The stokehole. A few minutes later.

SCENE IV: Same as Scene I. Half an hour later.

SCENE V: Fifth Avenue, New York. Three weeks later.

SCENE VI: An island near the city. The next night.

SCENE VII: In the city. About a month later.

SCENE VIII: In the city. Twilight of the next day. ¶

SCENE ONE

The firemen's forecandle of a transatlantic liner an hour after sailing from New York for the voyage across. Tiers of narrow, steel bunks, three deep, on all sides. An entrance in rear. Benches on the floor before the bunks. The room is crowded with men, shouting, cursing, laughing, singing—a confused, inchoate uproar swelling into a sort of unity, a meaning—the bewildered, furious, baffled defiance of a beast in a cage. Nearly all the men are drunk. Many bottles are passed from hand to hand. All are dressed in dungaree pants, heavy ugly shoes. Some wear singlets, but the majority are stripped to the waist.

The treatment of this scene, or of any other scene in the play, should by no means be naturalistic. The effect sought after is a cramped space in the bowels of a ship, imprisoned by white steel. The lines of bunks, the uprights supporting them, cross each other like the steel framework of a cage. The ceiling crushes down upon the men's heads. They cannot stand upright. This accentuates the natural stooping posture which shoveling coal and the resultant over-development of back and shoulder muscles have given them. The men themselves should resemble those pictures in which the appearance of Neanderthal Man is guessed at. All are hairy-chested, with long arms of tremendous power, and low, receding brows above their small, fierce, resentful eyes. All the civilized white races are represented, but except for the slight differentiation in color of hair, skin, eyes, all these men are alike.

¹ Reprinted from the revised text in the collective edition of Mr. O'Neill's plays, with the permission of the publishers, Messrs. Boni and Liveright, Inc.

The curtain rises on a tumult of sound. YANK is seated in the foreground. He seems broader, fiercer, more truculent, more powerful, more sure of himself than the rest. They respect his superior strength—the grudging respect of fear. Then, too, he represents to them a self-expression, the very last word in what they are, their most highly developed individual.

VOICES.

Gif me trink dere, you!
'Ave a wet!
Salute!
Gesundheit!
Skoal!
Drunk as a lord, God stiffen you!
Here's how!
Luck!
Pass back that bottle, damn you!
Pourin' it down his neck!
Ho, Froggy! Where the devil have you been?

La Touraine.

I hit him smash in yaw, py Gott!
Jenkins—the First—he's a rotten swine—
And the coppers nabbed him—and I run—
I like peer better. It don't pig head gif you.
A slut, I'm sayin'! She robbed me aslape—
To hell with 'em all!
You're a bloody liar!
Say dot again! (*Commotion. Two men about to fight are pulled apart.*)
No scrappin' now!
To-night—
See who's the best man!
Bloody Dutchman!
To-night on the for'ard square.
I'll bet on Dutchy.
He packa da wallop, I tella you!
Shut up, Wop!
No fightin', maties. We're all chums, ain't we?
(*A voice starts bawling a song.*)
"Beer, beer, glorious beer!
Fill yourselves right up to here."

YANK (*for the first time seeming to take notice of the uproar about him, turns around threateningly—in a tone of contemptuous authority*). Choke off dat noise! Where d'yuh get dat beer stuff? Beer, hell! Beer's

for goils—and Dutchmen. Me for somep'n wit a kick to it! Gimme a drink, one of youse guys. (*Several bottles are eagerly offered. He takes a tremendous gulp at one of them; then, keeping the bottle in his hand, glares belligerently at the owner, who hastens to acquiesce in this robbery by saying*) All righto, Yank. Keep it and have another. (*YANK contemptuously turns his back on the crowd again. For a second there is an embarrassed silence. Then—*)

VOICES.

We must be passing the Hook.
She's beginning to roll to it.
Six days in hell—and then Southamp-ton.
Py Yesus, I vish somepody take my first vatch for me!
Gittin' seasick, Square-head?
Drink up and forget it!
What's in your bottle?
Gin.
Dot's nigger trink.
Absinthe? It's doped. You'll go off your chump, Froggy!
Cochon!
Whisky, that's the ticket!
Where's Paddy?
Going asleep.

Sing us that whisky song, Paddy.
(*They all turn to an old, wizened Irishman who is dozing, very drunk, on the benches forward. His face is extremely monkey-like with all the sad, patient pathos of that animal in his small eyes.*)

Singa da song, Caruso Pat!
He's gettin' old. The drink is too much for him.
He's too drunk.

PADDY (*blinking about him, starts to his feet resentfully, swaying, holding on to the edge of a bunk*). I'm never too drunk to sing. 'Tis only when I'm dead to the world I'd be wishful to sing at all. (*With a sort of sad contempt*) "Whisky Johnny," ye want? A chanty, ye want? Now that's a queer wish from the ugly like of you, God help you. But no matter. (*He starts to sing in a thin, nasal, doleful tone:*)

Oh, whisky is the life of man!

Whisky! O Johnny! (*They all join in on this.*)

Oh, whisky is the life of man!

Whisky for my Johnny! (*Again chorus.*)

Oh, whisky drove my old man mad!

Whisky! O Johnny!

Oh, whisky drove my old man mad!

Whisky for my Johnny!

YANK (*again turning around scornfully*). Aw hell! Nix on dat old sailing ship stuff! All dat bull's dead, see? And you're dead, too, yuh damned old Harp, on'y yuh don't know it. Take it easy, see. Give us a rest. Nix on de loud noise. (*With a cynical grin*) Can't youse see I'm tryin' to t'ink?

ALL (*repeating the word after him as one with the same cynical amused mockery*). Think! (*The chorused word has a brazen metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a general uproar of hard, barking laughter.*)

VOICES.

Don't be cracking your head wit ut, Yank.

You gat headache, py yingo!

One thing about it—it rhymes with drink!

Ha, ha, ha!

Drink, don't think!

Drink, don't think!

Drink, don't think! (*A whole chorus of voices has taken up this refrain, stamping on on the floor, pounding on the benches with fists.*)

YANK (*taking a gulp from his bottle—good-naturedly*). Aw right. Can de noise. I got yuh de foist time. (*The uproar subsides. A very drunken sentimental tenor begins to sing:*)

"Far away in Canada,

Far across the sea,

There's a lass who fondly waits

Making a home for me——"

YANK (*fiercely contemptuous*). Shut up, yuh lousy boob! Where d'yuh get dat tripe? Home? Home, hell! I'll make a home for yuh! I'll knock yuh dead. Home! T'hell wit home! Where d'yuh get dat tripe? Dis is home, see? What d'yuh want wit home? (*Proudly*) I runned away from mine when I was a kid. On'y too glad to beat it, dat was me. Home was lickings for me, dat's all. But yuh can bet your shoit no one ain't never licked me since! Wanter try it, any of youse? Huh! I guess not. (*In a more placated but still contemptuous tone*) Goils waitin' for yuh, huh? Aw, hell! Dat's all tripe. Dey don't wait for no one. Dey'd double-cross yuh for a nickel. Dey're all tarts, get me?

Treat 'em rough, dat's me. To hell wit 'em. Tarts, dat's what, de whole bunch of 'em.

LONG (*very drunk, jumps on a bench excitedly, gesticulating with a bottle in his hand*). Listen 'ere, Comrades! Yank 'ere is right. 'E says this 'ere stinkin' ship is our 'ome. And 'e says as 'ome is 'ell. And 'e's right! This is 'ell. We lives in 'ell, Comrades—and right enough we'll die in it. (*Raging*) And who's ter blame, I arks yer? We ain't. We wasn't born this rotten way. All men is born free and ekal. That's in the bleedin' Bible, maties. But what d'they care for the Bible—them lazy, bloated swine what travels first cabin? Them's the ones. They dragged us down 'til we're on'y wage slaves in the bowels of a bloody ship, sweatin', burnin' up, eatin' coal dust! Hit's them's ter blame—the damned Capitalist clarrs! (*There had been a gradual murmur of contemptuous resentment rising among the men until now he is interrupted by a storm of catcalls, hisses, boos, hard laughter.*)

VOICES.

Turn it off!

Shut up!

Sit down!

Closa da face!

Tamn fool! (*Etc.*)

YANK (*standing up and glaring at LONG*). Sit down before I knock yuh down! (*LONG makes haste to efface himself. YANK goes on contemptuously.*) De Bible, huh? De Cap'tlist class, huh? Aw nix on dat Salvation Army-Socialist bull. Git a soapbox! Hire a hall! Come and be saved, huh? Jerk us to Jesus, huh? Aw g'wan! I've listened to lots of guys like you, see. Yuh're all wrong. Wanter know what I t'ink? Yuh ain't no good for no one. Yuh're de bunk. Yuh ain't got no noive, get me? Yuh're yellow, dat's what. Yellow, dat's you. Say! What's dem slob in de foist cabin got to do wit us? We're better men dan dey are, ain't we? Sure! One of us guys could clean up de whole mob wit one mit. Put one of 'em down here for one watch in de stokehole, what'd happen? Dey'd carry him off on a stretcher. Dem boids don't amount to nothin'. Dey're just baggage. Who makes dis old tub run? Ain't it us guys? Well den, we belong, don't we? We belong and dey don't. Dat's all. (*A loud chorus of approval. YANK goes on.*) As for dis bein' hell—aw,

nuts! Yuh lost your noive, dat's what. Dis is a man's job, get me? It belongs. It runs dis tub. No stiff's need apply. But yuh're a stiff, see? Yuh're yellow, dat's you.

VOICES.

(With a great hard pride in them.)

Righto!

A man's job!

Talk is cheap, Long.

He never could hold up his end.

Divil take him!

Yank's right. We make it go.

Py Gott, Yank say right ting!

We don't need no one cryin' over us.

Makin' speeches.

Throw him out!

Yellow!

Chuck him overboard!

I'll break his jaw for him!

(They crowd around LONG threateningly.)

YANK *(half good-natured again—contemptuously)*. Aw, take it easy. Leave him alone. He ain't woth a punch. Drink up. Here's how, whoever owns dis. *(He takes a long swallow from his bottle. All drink with him. In a flash all is hilarious amiability again, back-slapping, loud talk, etc.)*

PADDY *(who has been sitting in a blinking, melancholy daze—suddenly cries out in a voice full of old sorrow)*. We belong to this, you're saying? We make the ship to go, you're saying? Yerra then, that Almighty God have pity on us! *(His voice runs into the wail of a keen, he rocks back and forth on his bench. The men stare at him, startled and impressed in spite of themselves.)* Oh, to be back in the fine days of my youth, ochone! Oh, there was fine beautiful ships them days—clippers wid tall masts touching the sky—fine strong men in them—men that was sons of the sea as if 'twas the mother that bore them. Oh, the clean skins of them, and the clear eyes, the straight backs and full chests of them! Brave men they was, and bold men surely! We'd be sailing out, bound down round the Horn maybe. We'd be making sail in the dawn, with a fair breeze, singing a chanty song wid no care to it. And astern the land would be sinking low and dying out, but we'd give it no heed but a laugh, and never a look behind. For the day that was, was enough, for we was free men—and I'm thinking 'tis only slaves do be giving heed to the day that's gone or the

day to come—until they're old like me. *(With a sort of religious exaltation)* Oh, to be scudding south again wid the power of the Trade Wind driving her on steady through the nights and the days! Full sail on her! Nights and days! Nights when the foam of the wake would be flaming wid fire, when the sky'd be blazing and winking wid stars. Or the full of the moon maybe. Then you'd see her driving through the gray night, her sails stretching aloft all silver and white, not a sound on the deck, the lot of us dreaming dreams, till you'd believe 'twas no real ship at all you was on but a ghost ship like the *Flying Dutchman* they say does be roaming the seas forevermore widout touching a port. And there was the days, too. A warm sun on the clean decks. Sun warming the blood of you, and wind over the miles of shiny green ocean like strong drink to your lungs. Work—aye, hard work—but who'd mind that at all? Sure, you worked under the sky and 'twas work wid skill and daring to it. And wid the day done, in the dog watch, smoking me pipe at ease, the lookout would be raising land maybe, and we'd see the mountains of South Americy wid the red fire of the setting sun painting their white tops and the clouds floating by them! *(His tone of exaltation ceases. He goes on mournfully.)* Yerra, what's the use of talking? 'Tis a dead man's whisper. *(To YANK resentfully)* 'Twas them days men belonged to ships, not now. 'Twas them days a ship was part of the sea, and a man was part of a ship, and the sea joined all together and made it one. *(Scornfully)* Is it one wid this you'd be, Yank—black smoke from the funnels smudging the sea, smudging the decks—the bloody engines pounding and throbbing and shaking—wid divil a sight of sun or a breath of clean air—choking our lungs wid coal dust—breaking our backs and hearts in the hell of the stokehole—feeding the bloody furnace—feeding our lives along wid the coal, I'm thinking—caged in by steel from a sight of the sky like bloody apes in the Zoo! *(With a harsh laugh)* Ho-ho, divil mend you! Is it to belong to that you're wishing? Is it a flesh and blood wheel of the engines you'd be?

YANK *(who has been listening with a contemptuous sneer, barks out the answer)*. Sure ting! Dat's me. What about it?

PADDY (*as if to himself—with great sorrow*). Me time is past due. That a great wave wid sun in the heart of it may sweep me over the side sometime I'd be dreaming of the days that's gone!

YANK. Aw, yuh crazy Mick! (*He springs to his feet and advances on PADDY threateningly—then stops, fighting some queer struggle within himself—lets his hands fall to his sides—contemptuously.*) Aw, take it easy. Yuh're aw right at dat. Yuh're bugs, dat's all—nutty as a cuckoo. All dat tripe yuh been pullin'—Aw, dat's all right. On'y it's dead, get me? Yuh don't belong no more, see. Yuh don't get de stuff. Yuh're too old. (*Disgustedly*) But aw say, come up for air onct in a while, can't yuh? See what's happened since yuh croaked. (*He suddenly bursts forth vehemently, growing more and more excited.*) Say! Sure! Sure I meant it! What de hell—Say, lemme talk! Hey! Hey, you old Harp! Hey, youse guys! Say, listen to me—wait a moment—I gotter talk, see. I belong and he don't. He's dead but I'm livin'. Listen to me! Sure I'm part of de engines! Why de hell not! Dey move, don't dey? Dey're speed, ain't dey! Dey smash trou, don't dey? Twenty-five knots a hour! Dat's goin' some! Dat's new stuff! Dat belongs! But him, he's too old. He gets dizzy. Say, listen. All dat crazy tripe about nights and days; all dat crazy tripe about stars and moons; all dat crazy tripe about suns and winds, fresh air and de rest of it—Aw hell, dat's all a dope dream! Hittin' de pipe of de past, dat's what he's doin'. He's old and don't belong no more. But me, I'm young! I'm in de pink! I move wit it! It, get me! I mean de ting dat's de guts of all dis. It ploughs trou all de tripe he's been sayin'. It blows dat up! It knocks dat dead! It slams dat offen de face of de oith! It, get me! De engines and de coal and de smoke and all de rest of it! He can't breathe and swallow coal dust, but I kin, see? Dat's fresh air for me! Dat's food for me! I'm new, get me? Hell in de stoke-hole? Sure! It takes a man to work in hell. Hell, sure, dat's my fav'rite climate. I eat it up! I git fat on it! It's me makes it hot! It's me makes it roar! It's me makes it move! Sure, on'y for me everyting stops. It all goes dead, get me? De noise and smoke and all de engines movin' de woild,

dey stop. Dere ain't nothin' no more! Dat's what I'm sayin'. Everyting else dat makes de woild move, somep'n makes it move. It can't move witout somep'n else, see? Den yuh get down to me. I'm at de bottom, get me! Dere ain't nothin' foither. I'm de end! I'm de start! I start somep'n and de woild moves! It—dat's me!—de new dat's moiderin' de old! I'm de ting in coal dat makes it boin; I'm steam and oil for de engines; I'm de ting in noise dat makes yuh hear it; I'm smoke and express trains and steamers and factory whistles; I'm de ting in gold dat makes it money! And I'm what makes iron into steel! Steel, dat stands for de whole ting! And I'm steel—steel—steel! I'm de muscles in steel, de punch behind it! (*As he says this he pounds with his fist against the steel bunks. All the men, roused to a pitch of frenzied self-glorification by his speech, do likewise. There is a deafening metallic roar, through which YANK's voice can be heard bellowing.*) Slaves, hell! We run de whole woiks. All de rich guys dat tink dey're somep'n, dey ain't nothin'! Dey don't belong. But us guys, we're in de move, we're at de bottom, de whole ting is us! (*PADDY from the start of YANK's speech has been taking one gulp after another from his bottle, at first frightenedly, as if he were afraid to listen, then desperately, as if to drown his senses, but finally has achieved complete indifferent, even amused, drunkenness. YANK sees his lips moving. He quells the uproar with a shout.*) Hey, youse guys, take it easy! Wait a moment! De nutty Harp is sayin' somep'n.

PADDY (*is heard now—throws his head back with a mocking burst of laughter*). Ho-ho-ho-ho—

YANK (*drawing back his fist, with a snarl*). Aw! Look out who yuh're givin' the bark!

PADDY (*begins to sing the "Miller of Dee" with enormous good nature*).

"I care for nobody, no, not I,
And nobody cares for me."

YANK (*good-natured himself in a flash, interrupts PADDY with a slap on the bare back like a report*). Dat's de stuff! Now yuh're gettin' wise to somep'n. Care for nobody, dat's de dope! To hell wit 'em all! And nix on nobody else carin'. I kin care for myself, get me! (*Eight bells sound, muffled, vibrating through the steel walls as if some enormous brazen gong were imbedded in the heart of the*

ship. All the men jump up mechanically, file through the door silently close upon each other's heels in what is very like a prisoners' lockstep. YANK slaps PADDY on the back.) Our watch, yuh old Harp! (Mockingly) Come on down in hell. Eat up de coal dust. Drink in de heat. It's it, see! Act like yuh liked it, yuh better—or croak yuhself.

PADDY (with jovial defiance). To the devil wid it! I'll not report this watch. Let thim log me and be damned. I'm no slave the like of you. I'll be sittin' here at me ease, and drinking, and thinking, and dreaming dreams.

YANK (contemptuously). Tinkin' and dreamin', what'll that get yuh? What's tinkin' got to do wit it? We move, don't we? Speed, ain't it? Fog, dat's all you stand for. But we drive trou dat, don't we? We split dat up and smash trou—twenty-five knots a hour! (Turns his back on PADDY scornfully) Aw, yuh make me sick! Yuh don't belong! (He strides out the door in rear. PADDY hums to himself, blinking drowsily.)

(Curtain)

SCENE TWO

Two days out. A section of the promenade deck. MILDRED DOUGLAS and her aunt are discovered reclining in deck chairs. The former is a girl of twenty, slender, delicate, with a pale, pretty face marred by a self-conscious expression of disdainful superiority. She looks fretful, nervous and discontented, bored by her own anemia. Her aunt is a pompous and proud—and fat—old lady. She is a type even to the point of a double chin and lorgnettes. She is dressed pretentiously, as if afraid her face alone would never indicate her position in life. MILDRED is dressed all in white.

The impression to be conveyed by this scene is one of the beautiful, vivid life of the sea all about—sunshine on the deck in a great flood, the fresh sea wind blowing across it. In the midst of this, these two incongruous, artificial figures, inert and disharmonious, the elder like a gray lump of dough touched up with rouge, the younger looking as if the vitality of her stock had been sapped before she was conceived, so that she is the expression not of its life energy but merely of the artificialities that energy had won for itself in the spending.

MILDRED (looking up with affected dreaminess). How the black smoke swirls back against the sky! Is it not beautiful?

AUNT (without looking up). I dislike smoke of any kind.

MILDRED. My great-grandmother smoked a pipe—a clay pipe.

AUNT (ruffling). Vulgar!

MILDRED. She was too distant a relative to be vulgar. Time mellows pipes.

AUNT (pretending boredom but irritated). Did the sociology you took up at college teach you that—to play the ghou! on every possible occasion, excavating old bones? Why not let your great-grandmother rest in her grave?

MILDRED (dreamily). With her pipe beside her—puffing in Paradise.

AUNT (with spite). Yes, you are a natural born ghou! You are even getting to look like one, my dear.

MILDRED (in a passionless tone). I detest you, Aunt. (Looking at her critically) Do you know what you remind me of? Of a cold pork pudding against a background of linoleum tablecloth in the kitchen of a—but the possibilities are wearisome. (She closes her eyes.)

AUNT (with a bitter laugh). Merci for your candor. But since I am and must be your chaperon—in appearance, at least—let us patch up some sort of armed truce. For my part you are quite free to indulge any pose of eccentricity that beguiles you—as long as you observe the amenities—

MILDRED (drawling). The inanities?

AUNT (going on as if she hadn't heard). After exhausting the morbid thrills of social service work on New York's East Side—how they must have hated you, by the way, the poor that you made so much poorer in their own eyes!—you are now bent on making your slumming international. Well, I hope Whitechapel will provide the needed nerve tonic. Do not ask me to chaperon you there, however. I told your father I would not. I loathe deformity. We will hire an army of detectives and you may investigate everything—they allow you to see.

MILDRED (protesting with a trace of genuine earnestness). Please do not mock at my attempts to discover how the other half lives. Give me credit for some sort of groping sincerity in that at least. I would like to

help them. I would like to be some use in the world. Is it my fault I don't know how? I would like to be sincere, to touch life somewhere. (*With weary bitterness*) But I'm afraid I have neither the vitality nor integrity. All that was burnt out in our stock before I was born. Grandfather's blast furnaces, flaming to the sky, melting steel, making millions—then father keeping those home fires burning, making more millions—and little me at the tail-end of it all. I'm a waste product in the Bessemer process—like the millions. Or rather, I inherit the acquired trait of the by-product, wealth, but none of the energy, none of the strength of the steel that made it. I am sired by gold and damned by it, as they say at the race track—damned in more ways than one. (*She laughs mirthlessly.*)

AUNT (*unimpressed—superciliously*). You seem to be going in for sincerity to-day. It isn't becoming to you, really—except as an obvious pose. Be as artificial as you are, I advise. There's a sort of sincerity in that, you know. And, after all, you must confess you like that better.

MILDRED (*again affected and bored*). Yes, I suppose I do. Pardon me for my outburst. When a leopard complains of its spots, it must sound rather grotesque. (*In a mocking tone*) Pur, little leopard. Pur, scratch, tear, kill, gorge yourself and be happy—only stay in the jungle where your spots are camouflage. In a cage they make you conspicuous.

AUNT. I don't know what you are talking about.

MILDRED. It would be rude to talk about anything to you. Let's just talk. (*She looks at her wrist watch.*) Well, thank goodness, it's about time for them to come for me. That ought to give me a new thrill, Aunt.

AUNT (*affectedly troubled*). You don't mean to say you're really going? The dirt—the heat must be frightful—

MILDRED. Grandfather started as a puddler. I should have inherited an immunity to heat that would make a salamander shiver. It will be fun to put it to the test.

AUNT. But don't you have to have the captain's—or someone's—permission to visit the stokehole?

MILDRED (*with a triumphant smile*). I have it—both his and the chief engineer's. Oh,

they didn't want to at first, in spite of my social service credentials. They didn't seem a bit anxious that I should investigate how the other half lives and works on a ship. So I had to tell them that my father, the president of Nazareth Steel, chairman of the board of directors of this line, had told me it would be all right.

AUNT. He didn't.

MILDRED. How naïve age makes one. But I said he did, Aunt. I even said he had given me a letter to them—which I had lost. And they were afraid to take the chance that I might be lying. (*Excitedly*) So it's ho! for the stokehole. The second engineer is to escort me. (*Looking at her watch again*) It's time. And here he comes, I think. (*The SECOND ENGINEER enters. He is a husky, fine-looking man of thirty-five or so. He stops before the two and tips his cap, visibly embarrassed and ill-at-ease.*)

SECOND ENGINEER. Miss Douglas?

MILDRED. Yes. (*Throwing off her rugs and getting to her feet*) Are we all ready to start?

SECOND ENGINEER. In just a second, ma'am. I'm waiting for the Fourth. He's coming along.

MILDRED (*with a scornful smile*). You don't care to shoulder this responsibility alone, is that it?

SECOND ENGINEER (*forcing a smile*). Two are better than one. (*Disturbed by her eyes, glances out to sea—blurts out*) A fine day we're having.

MILDRED. Is it?

SECOND ENGINEER. A nice warm breeze—

MILDRED. It feels cold to me.

SECOND ENGINEER. But it's hot enough in the sun—

MILDRED. Not hot enough for me. I don't like Nature. I was never athletic.

SECOND ENGINEER (*forcing a smile*). Well, you'll find it hot enough where you're going.

MILDRED. Do you mean hell?

SECOND ENGINEER (*flabbergasted, decides to laugh*). Ho-ho! No, I mean the stokehole.

MILDRED. My grandfather was a puddler. He played with boiling steel.

SECOND ENGINEER (*all at sea—uneasily*). Is that so? Hum, you'll excuse me, ma'am, but are you intending to wear that dress?

MILDRED. Why not?

SECOND ENGINEER. You'll likely rub against oil and dirt. It can't be helped.

MILDRED. It doesn't matter. I have lots of white dresses.

SECOND ENGINEER. I have an old coat you might throw over—

MILDRED. I have fifty dresses like this. I will throw this one into the sea when I come back. That ought to wash it clean, don't you think?

SECOND ENGINEER (*doggedly*). There's ladders to climb down that are none too clean—and dark alleyways—

MILDRED. I will wear this very dress and none other.

SECOND ENGINEER. No offense meant. It's none of my business. I was only warning you—

MILDRED. Warning? That sounds thrilling.

SECOND ENGINEER (*looking down the deck—with a sigh of relief*). There's the Fourth now. He's waiting for us. If you'll come—

MILDRED. Go on. I'll follow you. (*He goes. MILDRED turns a mocking smile on her aunt.*) An oaf—but a handsome, virile oaf.

AUNT (*scornfully*). Poser!

MILDRED. Take care. He said there were dark alleyways—

AUNT (*in the same tone*). Poser!

MILDRED (*biting her lips angrily*). You are right. But would that my millions were not so anemically chaste!

AUNT. Yes, for a fresh pose I have no doubt you would drag the name of Douglas in the gutter!

MILDRED. From which it sprang. Good-by, Aunt. Don't pray too hard that I may fall into the fiery furnace.

AUNT. Poser!

MILDRED (*viciously*). Old hag! (*She slaps her aunt insultingly across the face and walks off, laughing gayly.*)

AUNT (*screams after her*). I said poser!

(Curtain)

SCENE THREE

The stokehole. In the rear, the dimly-outlined bulks of the furnaces and boilers. High overhead one hanging electric bulb sheds just enough light through the murky air laden with coal dust to pile up masses of shadows every-

where. A line of men, stripped to the waist, is before the furnace doors. They bend over, looking neither to right nor left, handling their shovels as if they were part of their bodies, with a strange, awkward, swinging rhythm. They use the shovels to throw open the furnace doors. Then from these fiery round holes in the black a flood of terrific light and heat pours full upon the men who are outlined in silhouette in the crouching, inhuman attitudes of chained gorillas. The men shovel with a rhythmic motion, swinging as on a pivot from the coal which lies in heaps on the floor behind to hurl it into the flaming mouths before them. There is a tumult of noise—the brazen clang of the furnace doors as they are flung open or slammed shut, the grating, teeth-gritting grind of steel against steel, of crunching coal. This clash of sounds stuns one's ears with its rending dissonance. But there is order in it, rhythm, a mechanical regulated recurrence, a tempo. And rising above all, making the air hum with the quiver of liberated energy, the roar of leaping flames in the furnaces, the monotonous throbbing beat of the engines.

As the curtain rises, the furnace doors are shut. The men are taking a breathing spell. One or two are arranging the coal behind them, pulling it into more accessible heaps. The others can be dimly made out leaning on their shovels in relaxed attitudes of exhaustion.

PADDY (*from somewhere in the line—plaintively*). Yerra, will this devil's own watch nivir end? Me back is broke. I'm destroyed entirely.

YANK (*from the center of the line—with exuberant scorn*). Aw, yuh make me sick! Lie down and croak, why don't yuh? Always beefin', dat's you! Say, dis is a cinch! Dis was made for me! It's my meat, get me! (*A whistle is blown—a thin, shrill note from somewhere overhead in the darkness. YANK curses without resentment.*) Dere's de damn engineer crackin' de whip. He tinks we're loafin'.

PADDY (*vindictively*). God stiffen him!

YANK (*in an exultant tone of command*). Come on, youse guys! Git into de game! She's gittin' hungry! Pile some grub in her. Trow it into her belly! Come on now, all of youse! Open her up! (*At this last all the men, who have followed his movements of getting into position, throw open their furnace*

doors with a deafening clang. The fiery light floods over their shoulders as they bend round for the coal. Rivulets of sooty sweat have traced maps on their backs. The enlarged muscles form bunches of high light and shadow.)

YANK (chanting a count as he shovels without seeming effort). One—two—tree— (His voice rising exultantly in the joy of battle) Dat's de stuff! Let her have it! All togedder now! Sling it into her! Let her ride! Shoot de piece now! Call de toin on her! Drive her into it! Feel her move! Watch her smoke! Speed, dat's her middle name! Give her coal, youse guys! Coal, dat's her booze! Drink it up, baby! Let's see yuh sprint! Dig in and gain a lap! Dere she go-o-es. (This last in the chanting formula of the gallery gods at the six-day bike race. He slams his furnace door shut. The others do likewise with as much unison as their wearied bodies will permit. The effect is of one fiery eye after another being blotted out with a series of accompanying bangs.)

PADDY (groaning). Me back is broke. I'm bate out—bate— (There is a pause. Then the inexorable whistle sounds again from the dim regions above the electric light. There is a growl of cursing rage from all sides.)

YANK (shaking his fist upward—contemptuously). Take it easy dere, you! Who d'yuh tink's runnin' dis game, me or you? When I git ready, we move. Not before! When I git ready, get me!

VOICES (approvingly).

That's the stuff!

Yank tal him, py golly!

Yank ain't afeerd.

Goot poy, Yank!

Give him hell!

Tell 'im 'e's a bloody swine!

Bloody slave-driver!

YANK (contemptuously). He ain't got no noive. He's yellow, get me? All de engineers is yellow. Dey got streaks a mile wide. Aw, to hell wit him! Let's move, youse guys. We had a rest. Come on, she needs it! Give her pep! It ain't for him. Him and his whistle, dey don't belong. But we belong, see! We gotter feed de baby! Come on! (He turns and flings his furnace door open. They all follow his lead. At this instant the SECOND and FOURTH ENGINEERS enter from the darkness on the left with MILDRED between them. She starts, turns paler, her pose is

crumbling, she shivers with fright in spite of the blazing heat, but forces herself to leave the ENGINEERS and take a few steps nearer the men. She is right behind YANK. All this happens quickly while the men have their backs turned.)

YANK. Come on, youse guys! (He is turning to get coal when the whistle sounds again in a peremptory, irritating note. This drives YANK into a sudden fury. While the other men have turned full around and stopped dumfounded by the spectacle of MILDRED standing there in her white dress, YANK does not turn far enough to see her. Besides, his head is thrown back, he blinks upward through the murk trying to find the owner of the whistle, he brandishes his shovel murderously over his head in one hand, pounding on his chest, gorilla-like, with the other, shouting.) Toin off dat whistle! Come down outa dere, yuh yellow, brass-buttoned, Belfast bum, yuh! Come down and I'll knock yer brains out! Yuh lousy, stinkin', yellow mut of a Catholic-moiderin' bastard! Come down and I'll moider yuh! Pullin' dat whistle on me, huh? I'll show yuh! I'll crash yer skull in! I'll drive yer teet' down yer troat! I'll slam yer nose trou de back of yer head! I'll cut yer guts out for a nickel, yuh lousy boob, yuh dirty, crummy, muck-eatin' son of a— (Suddenly he becomes conscious of all the other men staring at something directly behind his back. He whirls defensively with a snarling, murderous growl, crouching to spring, his lips drawn back over his teeth, his small eyes gleaming ferociously. He sees MILDRED, like a white apparition in the full light from the open furnace doors. He glares into her eyes, turned to stone. As for her, during his speech she has listened, paralyzed with horror, terror, her whole personality crushed, beaten in, collapsed, by the terrific impact of this unknown, abysmal brutality, naked and shameless. As she looks at his gorilla face, as his eyes bore into hers, she utters a low, choking cry and shrinks away from him, putting both hands up before her eyes to shut out the sight of his face, to protect her own. This startles YANK to a reaction. His mouth falls open, his eyes grow bewildered.)

MILDRED (about to faint—to the ENGINEERS, who now have her one by each arm—whimperingly). Take me away! Oh, the filthy beast! (She faints. They carry her quickly back, disappearing in the darkness at the left,

rear. *An iron door clangs shut. Rage and bewildered fury rush back on YANK. He feels himself insulted in some unknown fashion in the very heart of his pride. He roars.*) God damn yuh! *(And hurls his shovel after them at the door which has just closed. It hits the steel bulkhead with a clang and falls clattering on the steel floor. From overhead the whistle sounds again in a long, angry, insistent command.)*

(Curtain)

SCENE FOUR

The firemen's forecandle. YANK's watch has just come off duty and had dinner. Their faces and bodies shine from a soap and water scrubbing but around their eyes, where a hasty dousing does not touch, the coal dust sticks like black make-up, giving them a queer, sinister expression. YANK has not washed either face or body. He stands out in contrast to them, a blackened, brooding figure. He is seated forward on a bench in the exact attitude of Rodin's "The Thinker." The others, most of them smoking pipes, are staring at YANK half-apprehensively, as if fearing an outburst; half-amusedly, as if they saw a joke somewhere that tickled them.

VOICES.

He ain't ate nothin'.

Py golly, a fallar gat to gat grub in him. Divil a lie.

Yank feeda da fire, no feeda da face.

Ha-ha.

He ain't even washed hisself.

He's forgot.

Hey, Yank, you forgot to wash.

YANK (*sullenly*).

Forgot nothin'! To hell wit washin'.

VOICES.

It'll stick to you.

It'll get under your skin.

Give yer the bleedin' itch, that's wot.

It makes spots on you—like a leopard.

Like a piebald nigger, you mean.

Better wash up, Yank.

You sleep better.

Wash up, Yank.

Wash up! Wash up!

YANK (*resentfully*). Aw say, youse guys. Lemme alone. Can't youse see I'm tryin' to tink?

ALL (*repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery*). Think! (*The word has a brazen, metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*)

YANK (*springing to his feet and glaring at them belligerently*). Yes, tink! Tink, dat's what I said! What about it? (*They are silent, puzzled by his sudden resentment at what used to be one of his jokes. YANK sits down again in the same attitude of "The Thinker."*)

VOICES.

Leave him alone.

He's got a grouch on.

Why wouldn't he?

PADDY (*with a wink at the others*). Sure I know what's the matther. 'Tis aisy to see. He's fallen in love, I'm telling you.

ALL (*repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery*). Love! (*The word has a brazen, metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*)

YANK (*with a contemptuous snort*). Love, hell! Hate, dat's what. I've fallen in hate, get me?

PADDY (*philosophically*). 'Twould take a wise man to tell one from the other. (*With a bitter, ironical scorn, increasing as he goes on*) But I'm telling you it's love that's in it. Sure what else but love for us poor bastes in the stokehole would be bringing a fine lady, dressed like a white quane, down a mile of ladders and steps to be havin' a look at us? (*A growl of anger goes up from all sides.*)

LONG (*jumping on a bench—hectically*). Hinsultin' us! Hinsultin' us, the bloody cow! And them bloody engineers! What right 'as they got to be exhibitin' us 's if we was bleedin' monkeys in a menagerie? Did we sign for hinsults to our dignity as 'onest workers? Is that in the ship's articles? You kin bloody well bet it ain't! But I knows why they done it. I arsked a deck steward 'o she was and 'e told me. 'Er old man's a bleedin' millionaire, a bloody Capitalist! 'E's got enuf bloody gold to sink this bleedin' ship! 'E makes arf the bloody steel in the world! 'E owns this bloody boat! And you and me, Comrades, we're 'is slaves! And the skipper and mates and engineers, they're 'is slaves! And she's 'is bloody daughter and we're all 'er slaves, too! And she gives 'er

orders as 'ow she wants to see the bloody animals below decks and down they takes 'er! (*There is a roar of rage from all sides.*)

YANK (*blinking at him bewilderedly*). Say! Wait a moment! Is all dat straight goods?

LONG. Straight as string! The bleedin' steward as waits on 'em, 'e told me about 'er. And what're we goin' ter do, I arks yer? 'Ave we got ter swaller 'er hinsults like dogs? It ain't in the ship's articles. I tell yer we got a case. We kin go to law—

YANK (*with abysmal contempt*). Hell! Law!

ALL (*repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery*). Law! (*The word has a brazen metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*)

LONG (*feeling the ground slipping from under his feet—desperately*). As voters and citizens we kin force the bloody governments—

YANK (*with abysmal contempt*). Hell! Governments!

ALL (*repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery*). Governments! (*The word has a brazen metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*)

LONG (*hysterically*). We're free and equal in the sight of God—

YANK (*with abysmal contempt*). Hell! God!

ALL (*repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery*). God! (*The word has a brazen metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*)

YANK (*witheringly*). Aw, join de Salvation Army!

ALL. Sit down! Shut up! Damn fool! Sea-lawyer! (*LONG slinks back out of sight.*)

PADDY (*continuing the trend of his thoughts as if he had never been interrupted—bitterly*). And there she was standing behind us, and the Second pointing at us like a man you'd hear in a circus would be saying: In this cage is a queerer kind of baboon than ever you'd find in darkest Africy. We roast them in their own sweat—and be damned if you won't hear some of thim saying they like it! (*He glances scornfully at YANK.*)

YANK (*with a bewildered uncertain growl*). Aw!

PADDY. And there was Yank roarin' curses and turning round wid his shovel to

brain her—and she looked at him, and him at her—

YANK (*slowly*). She was all white. I tought she was a ghost. Sure.

PADDY (*with heavy, biting sarcasm*). 'Twas love at first sight, divil a doubt of it! If you'd seen the endearin' look on her pale mug when she shriveled away with her hands over her eyes to shut out the sight of him! Sure, 'twas as if she'd seen a great hairy ape escaped from the Zoo!

YANK (*stung—with a growl of rage*). Aw!

PADDY. And the loving way Yank heaved his shovel at the skull of her, only she was out the door! (*A grin breaking over his face.*) 'Twas touching, I'm telling you! It put the touch of home, swate home in the stokehole. (*There is a roar of laughter from all.*)

YANK (*glaring at PADDY menacingly*). Aw, choke dat off, see!

PADDY (*not heeding him—to the others*). And her grabbin' at the Second's arm for protection. (*With a grotesque imitation of a woman's voice*) Kiss me, Engineer dear, for it's dark down here and me old man's in Wall Street making money! Hug me tight, darlin', for I'm afeerd in the dark and me mother's on deck makin' eyes at the skipper! (*Another roar of laughter*)

YANK (*threateningly*). Say! What yuh tryin' to do, kid me, yuh old Harp?

PADDY. Divil a bit! Ain't I wishin' myself you'd brained her?

YANK (*fiercely*). I'll brain her! I'll brain her yet, wait 'n' see! (*Coming over to PADDY—slowly*) Say, is dat what she called me—a hairy ape?

PADDY. She looked it at you if she didn't say the word itself.

YANK (*grinning horribly*). Hairy ape, huh? Sure! Dat's de way she looked at me, aw right. Hairy ape! So dat's me, huh? (*Bursting into rage—as if she were still in front of him*) Yuh skinny tart! Yuh white-faced bum, yuh! I'll show yuh who's a ape! (*Turning to the others, bewilderment seizing him again*) Say, youse guys. I was bawlin' him out for pullin' de whistle on us. You heard me. And den I seen youse lookin' at somep'n and I tought he'd sneaked down to come up in back of me, and I hopped round to knock him dead wit de shovel. And dere she was wit de light on her! Christ, yuh coulda pushed me over with a finger! I was

scared, get me? Sure! I tought she was a ghost, see? She was all in white like dey wrap around stiffs. You seen her. Kin yuh blame me? She didn't belong, dat's what. And den when I come to and seen it was a real skoit and seen de way she was lookin' at me—like Paddy said—Christ, I was sore, get me? I don't stand for dat stuff from nobody. And I flung de shovel—on'y she'd beat it. (*Furiously*) I wished it'd banged her! I wished it'd knocked her block off!

LONG. And be 'anged for murder or 'lectrocuted? She ain't bleedin' well worth it.

YANK. I don't give a damn what! I'd be square wit her, wouldn't I? Tink I wanter let her put somep'n over on me? Tink I'm goin' to let her git away wit dat stuff? Yuh don't know me! No one ain't never put nothin' over on me and got away wit it, see!—not dat kind of stuff—no guy and no skoit neither! I'll fix her! Maybe she'll come down again—

VOICE. No chance, Yank. You scared her out of a year's growth.

YANK. I scared her? Why de hell should I scare her? Who de hell is she? Ain't she de same as me? Hairy ape, huh? (*With his old confident bravado*) I'll show her I'm better'n her, if she on'y knew it. I belong and she don't, see! I move and she's dead! Twenty-five knots a hour, dat's me! Dat carries her but I make dat. She's on'y baggage. Sure! (*Again bewilderedly*) But, Christ, she was funny lookin'! Did yuh pipe her hands? White and skinny. Yuh could see de bones through 'em. And her mush, dat was dead white, too. And her eyes, dey was like dey'd seen a ghost. Me, dat was! Sure! Hairy ape! Ghost, huh? Look at dat arm! (*He extends his right arm, swelling out the great muscles.*) I coulda took her wit dat, wit just my little finger even, and broke her in two. (*Again bewilderedly*) Say, who is dat skoit, huh? What is she? What's she come from? Who made her? Who give her de noive to look at me like dat? Dis ting's got my goat right. I don't get her. She's new to me. What does a skoit like her mean, huh? She don't belong, get me! I can't see her. (*With growing anger*) But one ting I'm wise to, aw right, aw right! Youse all kin bet your shoits I'll git even wit

her. I'll show her if she tinks she— She grinds de organ and I'm on de string, huh? I'll fix her! Let her come down again and I'll fling her in de furnace! She'll move den! She won't shiver at nothin', den! Speed, dat'll be her! She'll belong den! (*He grins horribly.*)

PADDY. She'll never come. She's had her belly-full, I'm telling you. She'll be in bed now, I'm thinking, wid ten doctors and nurses feedin' her salts to clean the fear out of her.

YANK (*enraged*). Yuh tink I made her sick, too, do yuh? Just lookin' at me, huh? Hairy ape, huh? (*In a frenzy of rage*) I'll fix her! I'll tell her where to git off! She'll git down on her knees and take it back or I'll bust de face offen her! (*Shaking one fist upward and beating on his chest with the other*) I'll find yuh! I'm comin', d'yuh hear? I'll fix yuh, God damn yuh! (*He makes a rush for the door.*)

VOICES.

Stop him!
He'll get shot!
He'll murder her!
Trip him up!
Hold him!
He's gone crazy!
Gott, he's strong!
Hold him down!
Look out for a kick!
Pin his arms!

(*They have all piled on him and, after a fierce struggle, by sheer weight of numbers have borne him to the floor just inside the door.*)

PADDY (*who has remained detached*). Kape him down till he's cooled off. (*Scornfully*) Yerra, Yank, you're a great fool. Is it payin' attention at all you are to the like of that skinny sow widout one drop of rale blood in her?

YANK (*frenziedly, from the bottom of the heap*). She done me doit! She done me doit, didn't she? I'll git square wit her! I'll get her some way! Git offen me, youse guys! Lemme up! I'll show her who's a ape!

(*Curtain*)

SCENE FIVE

Three weeks later. A corner of Fifth Avenue in the Fifties on a fine Sunday morn-

ing. *A general atmosphere of clean, well-tidied, wide street; a flood of mellow, tempered sunshine; gentle, genteel breezes. In the rear, the show windows of two shops, a jewelry establishment on the corner, a furrier's next to it. Here the adornments of extreme wealth are tantalizingly displayed. The jeweler's window is gaudy with glittering diamonds, emeralds, rubies, pearls, etc., fashioned in ornate tiaras, crowns, necklaces, collars, etc. From each piece hangs an enormous tag from which a dollar sign and numerals in intermittent electric lights wink out the incredible prices. The same in the furrier's. Rich furs of all varieties hang there bathed in a downpour of artificial light. The general effect is of a background of magnificence cheapened and made grotesque by commercialism, a background in tawdry disharmony with the clear light and sunshine on the street itself.*

Up the side street YANK and LONG come swaggering. LONG is dressed in shore clothes, wears a black Windsor tie, cloth cap. YANK is in his dirty dungarees. A fireman's cap with black peak is cocked defiantly on the side of his head. He has not shaved for days and around his fierce, resentful eyes—as around those of LONG to a lesser degree—the black smudge of coal dust still sticks like make-up. They hesitate and stand together at the corner, swaggering, looking about them with a forced, defiant contempt.

LONG (*indicating it all with an oratorical gesture*). Well, 'ere we are. Fif' Avenoo. This 'ere's their bleedin' private lane, as yer might say. (*Bitterly*) We're trespassers 'ere. Proletarians keep orf the grass!

YANK (*dully*). I don't see no grass, yuh boob. (*Staring at the sidewalk*) Clean, ain't it? Yuh could eat a fried egg offen it. The white wings got some job sweepin' dis up. (*Looking up and down the avenue—surlily*) Where's all de white-collar stiff's yuh said was here—and de skoits—her kind?

LONG. In church, blarst 'em! Arskin' Jesus to give 'em more money.

YANK. Choich, huh? I useter go to choich onct—sure—when I was a kid. Me old man and woman, dey made me. Dey never went demselves, dough. Always got too big a head on Sunday mornin', dat was dem. (*With a grin*) Dey was scrappers for fair, bot' of dem. On Satiday nights when dey

bot' got a skinful dey could put up a bout oughter been staged at de Garden. When dey got trough dere wasn't a chair or table wit a leg under it. Or else dey bot' jumped on me for somep'n. Dat was where I loined to take punishment. (*With a grin and a swagger*) I'm a chip offen de old block, get me?

LONG. Did yer old man follow the sea?

YANK. Naw. Worked along shore. I runned away when me old lady croaked wit de tremens. I helped at truckin' and in de market. Den I shipped in de stokehole. Sure. Dat belongs. De rest was nothin'. (*Looking around him*) I ain't never seen dis before. De Brooklyn waterfront, dat was where I was dragged up. (*Taking a deep breath*) Dis ain't so bad at dat, huh?

LONG. Not bad? Well, we pays for it wiv our bloody sweat, if yer wants to know!

YANK (*with sudden angry disgust*). Aw, hell! I don't see no one, see—like her. All dis gives me a pain. It don't belong. Say, ain't dere a back room around dis dump? Let's go shoot a ball. All dis is too clean and quiet and dolled-up, get me! It gives me a pain.

LONG. Wait and yer'll bloody well see—

YANK. I don't wait for no one. I keep on de move. Say, what yuh drag me up here for, anyway? Tryin' to kid me, yuh simp, yuh?

LONG. Yer wants to get back at 'er, don't yer? That's what yer been sayin' every bloomin' hour since she hinsulted yer.

YANK (*vehemently*). Sure ting I do! Didn't I try to get even wit her in Southampton? Didn't I sneak on de dock and wait for her by de gangplank? I was goin' to spit in her pale mug, see! Sure, right in her pop-eyes! Dat woulda made me even, see? But no chanct. Dere was a whole army of plain-clothes bulls around. Dey spotted me and gimme de bum's rush. I never seen her. But I'll git square wit her yet, you watch! (*Furiously*) De lousy tart! She tinks she kin get away wit moider—but not wit me! I'll fix her! I'll tink of a way!

LONG (*as disgusted as he dares to be*). Ain't that why I brought yer up 'ere—to show yer? Yer been lookin' at this 'ere 'ole affair wrong. Yer been actin' an' talkin' 's if it was all a bleedin' personal matter between yer and that bloody cow. I wants to convince yer she was on'y a representative of 'er

clarss. I wants to awaken yer bloody clarss consciousness. Then yer'll see it's 'er clarss yer've got to fight, not 'er alone. There's a 'ole mob of 'em like 'er, Gawd blind 'em!

YANK (*spitting on his hands—belligerently*). De more de merrier when I gits started. Bring on de gang!

LONG. Yer'll see 'em in arf a mo', when that church lets out. (*He turns and sees the window display in the two stores for the first time.*) Blimey! Look at that, will yer? (*They both walk back and stand looking in the jeweler's. LONG flies into a fury.*) Just look at this 'ere bloomin' mess! Just look at it! Look at the bleedin' prices on 'em—more'n our 'ole bloody stokehole makes in ten voyages sweatin' in 'ell! And they—'er and 'er bloody clarss—buys 'em for toys to dangle on 'em! One of these 'ere would buy scoff for a starvin' family for a year!

YANK. Aw, cut de sob stuff! T' hell wit de starvin' family! Yuh'll be passin' de hat to me next. (*With naïve admiration*) Say, dem tings is pretty, huh? Bet yuh dey'd hock for a piece of change aw right. (*Then turning away, bored*) But, aw hell, what good are dey? Let her have 'em. Dey don't belong no more'n she does. (*With a gesture of sweeping the jewelers into oblivion*) All dat don't count, get me?

LONG (*who has moved to the furrier's—indignantly*). And I s'pose this 'ere don't count neither—skins of poor, 'armless animals slaughtered so as 'er and 'ers can keep their bleedin' noses warm!

YANK (*who has been staring at something inside—with queer excitement*). Take a slant at dat! Give it de once-over! Monkey fur—two t'ousand bucks! (*Bewilderedly*) Is dat straight goods—monkey fur? What de hell—?

LONG (*bitterly*). It's straight enuf. (*With grim humor*) They wouldn't bloody well pay that for a 'airy ape's skin—no, nor for the 'ole livin' ape with all 'is 'ead, and body, and soul thrown in!

YANK (*clenching his fists, his face growing pale with rage as if the skin in the window were a personal insult*). Trowin' it up in my face! Christ! I'll fix her!

LONG (*excitedly*). Church is out. 'Ere they come, the bleedin' swine. (*After a glance at YANK'S lowering face—uneasily*) Easy goes, Comrade. Keep yer bloomin'

temper. Remember force defeats itself. It ain't our weapon. We must impress our demands through peaceful means—the votes of the on-marching proletarians of the bloody world!

YANK (*with abysmal contempt*). Votes, hell! Votes is a joke, see. Votes for women! Let dem do it!

LONG (*still more uneasily*). Calm, now. Treat 'em wiv the proper contempt. Observe the bleedin' parasites but 'old yer 'orses.

YANK (*angrily*). Git away from me! Yuh're yellow, dat's what. Force, dat's me! De punch, dat's me every time, see! (*The crowd from church enter from the right, sauntering slowly and affectedly, their heads held stiffly up, looking neither to right nor left, talking in toneless, simpering voices. The women are rouged, calcimined, dyed, overdressed to the nth degree. The men are in Prince Alberts, high hats, spats, canes, etc. A procession of gaudy marionettes, yet with something of the relentless horror of Franksteins in their detached, mechanical unawareness.*)

VOICES.

Dear Doctor Caiaphas! He is so sincere!

What was the sermon? I dozed off. About the radicals, my dear—and the false doctrines that are being preached.

We must organize a hundred per cent American bazaar.

And let everyone contribute one one-hundredth per cent of their income tax.

What an original idea!

We can devote the proceeds to rehabilitating the veil of the temple.

But that has been done so many times.

YANK (*glaring from one to the other of them—with an insulting snort of scorn*). Huh! Huh! (*Without seeming to see him, they make wide detours to avoid the spot where he stands in the middle of the sidewalk.*)

LONG (*frightenedly*). Keep yer bloomin' mouth shut, I tells yer.

YANK (*viciously*). G'wan! Tell it to Sweeney! (*He swaggers away and deliberately lurches into a top-hatted gentleman, then glares at him pugnaciously.*) Say, who d'yuh tink yuh're bumpin'? Tink yuh own de oith?

GENTLEMAN (*coldly and affectedly*). I beg your pardon. (*He has not looked at YANK and passes on without a glance, leaving him bewildered.*)

LONG (*rushing up and grabbing YANK's arm*). 'Ere! Come away! This wasn't what I meant. Yer'll 'ave the bloody cop-pers down on us.

YANK (*savagely—giving him a push that sends him sprawling*). G'wan!

LONG (*picks himself up—hysterically*). I'll pop orf then. This ain't what I meant. And whatever 'appens, yer can't blame me. (*He slinks off left.*)

YANK. T' hell wit youse! (*He approaches a lady—with a vicious grin and a smirking wink.*) Hello, Kiddo. How's every little ting? Got anyting on for to-night? I know an old boiler down to de docks we kin crawl into. (*The lady stalks by without a look, without a change of pace. YANK turns to others—insultingly.*) Holy smokes, what a mug! Go hide yuhself before de horses shy at yuh. Gee, pipe de heine on dat one! Say, youse, yuh look like de stoin of a ferry-boat. Paint and powder! All dolled up to kill! Yuh look like stiff's laid out for de boneyard! Aw, g'wan, de lot of youse! Yuh give me de eye-ache. Yuh don't belong, get me! Look at me, why don't youse dare? I belong, dat's me! (*Pointing to a skyscraper across the street which is in process of construction—with bravado*) See dat building goin' up dere? See de steel work? Steel, dat's me! Youse guys live on it and tink yuh're somep'n. But I'm in it, see! I'm de hoistin' engine dat makes it go up! I'm it—de inside and bottom of it! Sure! I'm steel and steam and smoke and de rest of it! It moves—speed—twenty-five stories up—and me at de top and bottom—movin'! Youse simps don't move. Yuh're on'y dolls I winds up to see 'm spin. Yuh're de gar-bage, get me—de leavins—de ashes we dump over de side! Now, what 'a' yuh gotta say? (*But as they seem neither to see nor hear him, he flies into a fury.*) Bums! Pigs! Tarts! Bitches! (*He turns in a rage on the men, bumping viciously into them but not jarring them the least bit. Rather it is he who recoils after each collision. He keeps growling.*) Git off de oith! G'wan, yuh bum! Look where yuh're goin', can't yuh? Git outa here! Fight, why don't yuh? Put up yer

mits! Don't be a dog! Fight or I'll knock yuh dead! (*But, without seeming to see him, they all answer with mechanical affected politeness:*) I beg your pardon. (*Then at a cry from one of the women, they all scurry to the furrier's window.*)

THE WOMAN (*ecstatically, with a gasp of delight*). Monkey fur! (*The whole crowd of men and women chorus after her in the same tone of affected delight.*) Monkey fur!

YANK (*with a jerk of his head back on his shoulders, as if he had received a punch full in the face—raging*). I see yuh, all in white! I see yuh, yuh white-faced tart, yuh! Hairy ape, huh? I'll hairy ape yuh! (*He bends down and grips at the street curbing as if to pluck it out and hurl it. Foiled in this, snarling with passion, he leaps to the lamp-post on the corner and tries to pull it up for a club. Just at that moment a bus is heard rumbling up. A fat, high-hatted, spatted gentleman runs out from the side street. He calls out plaintively:*) Bus! Bus! Stop there! (*and runs full tilt into the bending, straining YANK, who is bowled off his balance.*)

YANK (*seeing a fight—with a roar of joy as he springs to his feet*). At last! Bus, huh? I'll bust yuh! (*He lets drive a terrific swing, his fist landing full on the fat gentleman's face. But the gentleman stands unmoved as if nothing had happened.*)

GENTLEMAN. I beg your pardon. (*Then irritably*) You have made me lose my bus. (*He claps his hands and begins to scream:*) Officer! Officer! (*Many police whistles shrill out on the instant and a whole platoon of policemen rush in on YANK from all sides. He tries to fight but is clubbed to the pavement and fallen upon. The crowd at the window have not moved or noticed this disturbance. The clanging gong of the patrol wagon approaches with a clamoring din.*)

(Curtain)

SCENE SIX

Night of the following day. A row of cells in the prison on Blackwell's Island. The cells extend back diagonally from right front to left rear. They do not stop, but disappear in the dark background as if they ran on, numberless, into infinity. One electric bulb from the low ceiling of the narrow corridor sheds its light

through the heavy steel bars of the cell at the extreme front and reveals part of the interior. YANK can be seen within, crouched on the edge of his cot in the attitude of Rodin's "The Thinker." His face is spotted with black and blue bruises. A blood-stained bandage is wrapped around his head.

YANK (suddenly starting as if awakening from a dream, reaches out and shakes the bars—aloud to himself, wonderingly). Steel. Dis is de Zoo, huh? (A burst of hard, barking laughter comes from the unseen occupants of the cells, runs back down the tier, and abruptly ceases.)

VOICES (mockingly).

The Zoo? That's a new name for this coop—a damn good name!

Steel, eh? You said a mouthful. This is the old iron house.

Who is that boob talkin'?

He's the bloke they brung in out of his head. The bulls had beat him up fierce.

YANK (dully). I musta been dreamin'. I tought I was in a cage at de Zoo—but de apes don't talk, do dey?

VOICES (with mocking laughter).

You're in a cage aw right.

A coop!

A pen!

A sty!

A kennel! (Hard laughter—a pause.)

Say, guy! Who are you? No, never mind lying. What are you?

Yes, tell us your sad story. What's your game?

What did they jug yuh for?

YANK (dully). I was a fireman—stokin' on de liners. (Then with sudden rage, rattling his cell bars) I'm a hairy ape, get me? And I'll bust youse all in de jaw if yuh don't lay off kiddin' me.

VOICES.

Huh! You're a hard boiled duck, ain't you!

When you spit, it bounces! (Laughter.)

Aw, can it. He's a regular guy. Ain't you?

What did he say he was—a ape?

YANK (defiantly). Sure ting! Ain't dat what youse all are—apes? (A silence. Then a furious rattling of bars from down the corridor.)

A VOICE (thick with rage). I'll show yuh who's a ape, yuh bum!

VOICES.

Sssh! Nix!

Can de noise!

Piano!

You'll have the guard down on us!

YANK (scornfully). De guard? Yuh mean de keeper, don't yuh? (Angry exclamations from all the cells.)

VOICE (placatingly). Aw, don't pay no attention to him. He's off his nut from the beatin'-up he got. Say, you guy! We're waitin' to hear what they landed you for—or ain't yuh tellin'?

YANK. Sure, I'll tell youse. Sure! Why de hell not? On'y—youse won't get me. Nobody gets me but me, see? I started to tell de Judge and all he says was: "Toity days to tink it over." Tink it over! Christ, dat's all I been doin' for weeks! (After a pause) I was tryin' to git even wit someone, see?—someone dat done me doit.

VOICES (cynically).

De old stuff, I bet. Your goil, huh?

Give yuh the double-cross, huh?

That's them every time!

Did yuh beat up de odder guy?

YANK (disgustedly). Aw, yuh're all wrong! Sure dere was a skoit in it—but not what youse mean, not dat old tripe. Dis was a new kind of skoit. She was dolled up all in white—in de stokehole. I tought she was a ghost. Sure. (A pause.)

VOICES (whispering).

Gee, he's still nutty.

Let him rave. It's fun listenin'.

YANK (unheeding—groping in his thoughts). Her hands—dey was skinny and white like dey wasn't real but painted on somep'n. Dere was a million miles from me to her—twenty-five knots a hour. She was like some dead ting de cat brung in. Sure, dat's what. She didn't belong. She belonged in de window of a toy store, or on de top of a garbage can, see! Sure! (He breaks out angrily.) But would yuh believe it, she had de noive to do me doit. She lamped me like she was seein' somep'n broke loose from de menagerie. Christ, yuh'd oughter seen her eyes! (He rattles the bars of his cell furiously.) But I'll get back at her yet, you watch! And if I can't find her I'll take it out on de gang she runs wit. I'm wise to where dey

hangs out now. I'll show her who belongs! I'll show her who's in de move and who ain't. You watch my smoke!

VOICES (*serious and joking*).

Dat's de talkin'!

Take her for all she's got!

What was this dame, anyway? Who was she, eh?

YANK. I dunno. First cabin stiff. Her old man's a millionaire, dey says—name of Douglas.

VOICES.

Douglas? That's the president of the Steel Trust, I bet.

Sure. I seen his mug in de papers.

He's filthy with dough.

VOICE. Hey, feller, take a tip from me. If you want to get back at that dame, you better join the Wobblies. You'll get some action then.

YANK. Wobblies? What de hell's dat?

VOICE. Ain't you ever heard of the I. W. W.?

YANK. Naw. What is it?

VOICE. A gang of blokes—a tough gang. I been readin' about 'em to-day in the paper. The guard give me the *Sunday Times*. There's a long spiel about 'em. It's from a speech made in the Senate by a guy named Senator Queen. (*He is in the cell next to YANK's. There is a rustling of paper.*) Wait'll I see if I got light enough and I'll read you. Listen. (*He reads:*) "There is a menace existing in this country to-day which threatens the vitals of our fair Republic—as foul a menace against the very life-blood of the American Eagle as was the foul conspiracy of Catiline against the eagles of ancient Rome!"

VOICE (*disgustedly*). Aw, hell! Tell him to salt de tail of dat eagle!

VOICE (*reading*): "I refer to that devil's brew of rascals, jailbirds, murderers and cut-throats who libel all honest workingmen by calling themselves the Industrial Workers of the World; but in the light of their nefarious plots, I call them the *Industrious Wreckers of the World!*"

YANK (*with vengeful satisfaction*). Wreckers, dat's de right dope! Dat belongs! Me for dem!

VOICE. Ssshh! (*reading*). "This fiendish organization is a foul ulcer on the fair body of our Democracy——"

VOICE. Democracy, hell! Give him the boid, fellers—the raspberry! (*They do.*)

VOICE. Ssshh! (*reading:*) "Like Cato I say to this Senate, the I. W. W. must be destroyed! For they represent an ever-present dagger pointed at the heart of the greatest nation the world has ever known, where all men are born free and equal, with equal opportunities to all, where the Founding Fathers have guaranteed to each one happiness, where Truth, Honor, Liberty, Justice, and the Brotherhood of Man are a religion absorbed with one's mother milk, taught at our father's knee, sealed, signed, and stamped upon in the glorious Constitution of these United States!" (*A perfect storm of hisses, catcalls, boos, and hard laughter.*)

VOICES (*scornfully*).

Hurrah for de Fort' of July!

Pass de hat!

Liberty!

Justice!

Honor!

Opportunity!

Brotherhood!

ALL (*with abysmal scorn*). Aw, hell!

VOICE. Give that Queen Senator guy the bark! All togedder now—one—two—tree—— (*A terrific chorus of barking and yapping.*)

GUARD (*from a distance*). Quiet there, youse—or I'll git the hose. (*The noise subsides.*)

YANK (*with growling rage*). I'd like to catch dat senator guy alone for a second. I'd loin him some trute!

VOICE. Ssshh! Here's where he gits down to cases on the Wobblies. (*Reads:*) "They plot with fire in one hand and dynamite in the other. They stop not before murder to gain their ends, nor at the outraging of defenseless womanhood. They would tear down society, put the lowest scum in the seats of the mighty, turn Almighty God's revealed plan for the world topsy-turvy, and make of our sweet and lovely civilization a shambles, a desolation where man, God's masterpiece, would soon degenerate back to the ape!"

VOICE (*to YANK*). Hey, you guy. There's your ape stuff again.

YANK (*with a growl of fury*). I got him. So dey blow up tings, do dey? Dey turn

tings round, do dey? Hey, lend me dat paper, will yuh?

VOICE. Sure. Give it to him. On'y keep it to yourself, see. We don't wanten listen to no more of that slop.

VOICE. Here you are. Hide it under your mattress.

YANK (*reaching out*). Tanks. I can't read much but I kin manage. (*He sits, the paper in the hand at his side, in the attitude of Rodin's "The Thinker."* A pause. Several snores from down the corridor. Suddenly YANK jumps to his feet with a furious groan as if some appalling thought had crashed on him—*bewilderedly*.) Sure—her old man—president of de Steel Trust—makes half de steel in de world—steel—where I tought I belonged—drivin' trou—movin'—in dat—to make her—and cage me in for her to spit on! Christ! (*He shakes the bars of his cell door till the whole tier trembles. Irritated, protesting exclamations from those awakened or trying to get to sleep.*) He made dis—dis cage! Steel! It don't belong, dat's what! Cages, cells, locks, bolts, bars—dat's what it means!—holdin' me down wit him at de top! But I'll drive trou! Fire, dat melts it! I'll be fire—under de heap—fire dat never goes out—hot as hell—breakin' out in de night— (*While he has been saying this last he has shaken his cell door to a clanging accompaniment. As he comes to the "breakin' out" he seizes one bar with both hands and, putting his two feet up against the others so that his position is parallel to the floor like a monkey's, he gives a great wrench backwards. The bar bends like a licorice stick under his tremendous strength. Just at this moment the PRISON GUARD rushes in, dragging a hose behind him.*)

GUARD (*angrily*). I'll loin youse bums to wake me up! (*Sees YANK*) Hello, it's you, huh? Got the D. Ts., hey? Well, I'll cure 'em. I'll drown your snakes for yuh! (*Noticing the bar*) Hell, look at dat bar bended! On'y a bug is strong enough for dat!

YANK (*glaring at him*). Or a hairy ape, yuh big yellow bum! Look out! Here I come! (*He grabs another bar.*)

GUARD (*frightened now—yelling off left*). Toin de hose on, Ben!—full pressure! And call de others—and a straitjacket! (*The curtain is falling. As it hides YANK from view, there*

is a splattering smash as the stream of water hits the steel of YANK's cell.)

(*Curtain*)

SCENE SEVEN

Nearly a month later. An I. W. W. local near the waterfront, showing the interior of a front room on the ground floor, and the street outside. Moonlight on the narrow street, buildings massed in black shadow. The interior of the room, which is general assembly room, office, and reading room, resembles some dingy settlement boys' club. A desk and high stool are in one corner. A table with papers, stacks of pamphlets, chairs about it, is at center. The whole is decidedly cheap, banal, commonplace and unmysterious as a room could well be. The secretary is perched on the stool making entries in a large ledger. An eye shade casts his face into shadows. Eight or ten men, longshoremen, iron workers, and the like, are grouped about the table. Two are playing checkers. One is writing a letter. Most of them are smoking pipes. A big signboard is on the wall at the rear, "Industrial Workers of the World—Local No. 57."

(YANK comes down the street outside. He is dressed as in Scene Five. He moves cautiously, mysteriously. He comes to a point opposite the door; tiptoes softly up to it, listens, is impressed by the silence within, knocks carefully, as if he were guessing at the password to some secret rite. Listens. No answer. Knocks again a bit louder. No answer. Knocks impatiently, much louder.)

SECRETARY (*turning around on his stool*). What the hell is that—someone knocking? (*Shouts:*) Come in, why don't you? (*All the men in the room look up. YANK opens the door slowly, gingerly, as if afraid of an ambush. He looks around for secret doors, mysteriously, is taken aback by the commonplaceness of the room and the men in it, thinks he may have gotten in the wrong place, then sees the signboard on the wall and is reassured.*)

YANK (*blurts out*). Hello.

MEN (*reservedly*). Hello.

YANK (*more easily*). I tought I'd bumped into de wrong dump.

SECRETARY (*scrutinizing him carefully*). Maybe you have. Are you a member?

YANK. Naw, not yet. Dat's what I come for—to join.

SECRETARY. That's easy. What's your job—longshore?

YANK. Naw. Fireman—stoker on de liners.

SECRETARY (*with satisfaction*). Welcome to our city. Glad to know you people are waking up at last. We haven't got many members in your line.

YANK. Naw. Dey're all dead to de woild.

SECRETARY. Well, you can help to wake 'em. What's your name? I'll make out your card.

YANK (*confused*). Name? Lemme tink.

SECRETARY (*sharply*). Don't you know your own name?

YANK. Sure; but I been just Yank for so long—Bob, dat's it—Bob Smith.

SECRETARY (*writing*). Robert Smith. (*Fills out the rest of card.*) Here you are. Cost you half a dollar.

YANK. Is dat all—four bits? Dat's easy. (*Gives the Secretary the money.*)

SECRETARY (*throwing it in drawer*). Thanks. Well, make yourself at home. No introductions needed. There's literature on the table. Take some of those pamphlets with you to distribute aboard ship. They may bring results. Sow the seed, only go about it right. Don't get caught and fired. We got plenty out of work. What we need is men who can hold their jobs—and work for us at the same time.

YANK. Sure. (*But he still stands, embarrassed and uneasy.*)

SECRETARY (*looking at him—curiously*). What did you knock for? Think we had a coon in uniform to open doors?

YANK. Naw. I tought it was locked—and dat yuh'd wanten give me the once-over trou a peep-hole or somep'n to see if I was right.

SECRETARY (*alert and suspicious but with an easy laugh*). Think we were running a crap game? That door is never locked. What put that in your nut?

YANK (*with a knowing grin, convinced that this is all camouflage, a part of the secrecy*). Dis burg is full of bulls, ain't it?

SECRETARY (*sharply*). What have the cops got to do with us? We're breaking no laws.

YANK (*with a knowing wink*). Sure. Youse wouldn't for woilds. Sure. I'm wise to dat.

SECRETARY. You seem to be wise to a lot of stuff none of us knows about.

YANK (*with another wink*). Aw, dat's aw right, see. (*Then made a bit resentful by the suspicious glances from all sides.*) Aw, can it! Youse needn't put me trou de toid degree. Can't youse see I belong? Sure! I'm reg'lar. I'll stick, get me? I'll shoot de woiks for youse. Dat's why I wanted to join in.

SECRETARY (*breezily, feeling him out*). That's the right spirit. Only are you sure you understand what you've joined? It's all plain and above board; still, some guys get a wrong slant on us. (*Sharply*) What's your notion of the purpose of the I. W. W.?

YANK. Aw, I know all about it.

SECRETARY (*sarcastically*). Well, give us some of your valuable information.

YANK (*cunningly*). I know enough not to speak outa my toin. (*Then resentfully again*) Aw, say! I'm reg'lar. I'm wise to de game. I know yuh got to watch your step wit a stranger. For all youse know, I might be a plain-clothes dick, or somep'n, dat's what yuh're tinkin', huh? Aw, forget it! I belong, see? Ask any guy down to de docks if I don't.

SECRETARY. Who said you didn't?

YANK. After I'm 'nitiated, I'll show yuh.

SECRETARY (*astounded*). Initiated? There's no initiation.

YANK (*disappointed*). Ain't there no pass-word—no grip nor nothin'?

SECRETARY. What'd you think this is—the Elks—or the Black Hand?

YANK. De Elks, hell! De Black Hand, dey're a lot of yellow backstickin' Ginees. Naw. Dis is a man's gang, ain't it?

SECRETARY. You said it! That's why we stand on our two feet in the open. We got no secrets.

YANK (*surprised but admiringly*). Yuh mean to say yuh always run wide open—like dis?

SECRETARY. Exactly.

YANK. Den yuh sure got your noive wit youse!

SECRETARY (*sharply*). Just what was it made you want to join us? Come out with that straight.

YANK. Yuh call me? Well, I got noive, too! Here's my hand. Yuh wanter blow tings up, don't yuh? Well, dat's me! I belong!

SECRETARY (*with pretended carelessness*). You mean change the unequal conditions of society by legitimate direct action—or with dynamite?

YANK. Dynamite! Blow it offen de oith—steel—all de cages—all de factories, steamers, buildings, jails—de Steel Trust and all dat makes it go.

SECRETARY. So—that's your idea, eh? And did you have any special job in that line you wanted to propose to us? (*He makes a sign to the men, who get up cautiously one by one and group behind YANK.*)

YANK (*boldly*). Sure, I'll come out wit it. I'll show youse I'm one of de gang. Dere's dat millionaire guy, Douglas—

SECRETARY. President of the Steel Trust, you mean? Do you want to assassinate him?

YANK. Naw, dat don't get you nothin'. I mean blow up de factory, de woiks, where he makes de steel. Dat's what I'm after—to blow up de steel, knock all de steel in de woild up to de moon. Dat'll fix tings! (*Eagerly, with a touch of bravado*) I'll do it by me lonesome! I'll show yuh! Tell me where his woiks is, how to git there, all de dope. Gimme de stuff, de old butter—and watch me do de rest! Watch de smoke and see it move! I don't give a damn if dey nab me—long as it's done! I'll soive life for it—and give 'em de laugh! (*Half to himself*) And I'll write her a letter and tell her de hairy ape done it. Dat'll square tings.

SECRETARY (*stepping away from YANK*). Very interesting. (*He gives a signal. The men, huskies all, throw themselves on YANK and before he knows it they have his legs and arms pinioned. But he is too flabbergasted to make a struggle, anyway. They feel him over for weapons.*)

MAN. No gat, no knife. Shall we give him what's what and put the boots to him?

SECRETARY. No. He isn't worth the trouble we'd get into. He's too stupid. (*He comes closer and laughs mockingly in YANK's face.*) Ho-ho! By God, this is the biggest joke they've put up on us yet. Hey, you Joke! Who sent you—Burns or Pinkerton?

No, by God, you're such a bonehead I'll bet you're in the Secret Service! Well, you dirty spy, you rotten agent provocator, you can go back and tell whatever skunk is paying you blood-money for betraying your brothers that he's wasting his coin. You couldn't catch a cold. And tell him that all he'll ever get on us, or ever has got, is just his own sneaking plots that he's framed up to put us in jail. We are what our manifesto says we are, neither more nor less—and we'll give him a copy of that any time he calls. And as for you—— (*He glares scornfully at YANK, who is sunk in an oblivious stupor.*) Oh, hell, what's the use of talking? You're a brainless ape.

YANK (*aroused by the word to fierce but futile struggles*). What's dat, yuh Sheeny bum, yuh!

SECRETARY. Throw him out, boys. (*In spite of his struggles, this is done with gusto and éclat. Propelled by several parting kicks, YANK lands sprawling in the middle of the narrow cobbled street. With a growl he starts to get up and storm the closed door, but stops bewildered by the confusion in his brain, pathetically impotent. He sits there, brooding, in as near to the attitude of Rodin's "Thinker" as he can get in his position.*)

YANK (*bitterly*). So dem boids don't tink I belong, neider. Aw, to hell wit 'em! Dey're in de wrong pew—de same old bull—soapboxes and Salvation Army—no guts! Cut out an hour offen de job a day and make me happy! Gimme a dollar more a day and make me happy! Tree square a day, and cauliflowers in de front yard—ekal rights—a woman and kids—a lousy vote—and I'm all fixed for Jesus, huh? Aw, hell! What does dat get yuh? Dis ting's in your inside, but it ain't your belly. Feedin' your face—sinkers and coffee—dat don't touch it. It's way down—at de bottom. Yuh can't grab it, and yuh can't stop it. It moves, and everything moves. It stops and de whole woild stops. Dat's me now—I don't tick, see?—I'm a busted Ingersoll, dat's what. Steel was me, and I owned de woild. Now I ain't steel, and de woild owns me. Aw, hell! I can't see—it's all dark, get me? It's all wrong! (*He turns a bitter mocking face up like an ape gibbering at the moon.*) Say, youse up dere, Man in de Moon, yuh look so wise, gimme de answer, huh? Slip me de

inside dope, de information right from de stable—where do I get off at, huh?

A POLICEMAN (*who has come up the street in time to hear this last—with grim humor*). You'll get off at the station, you boob, if you don't get up out of that and keep movin'.

YANK (*looking up at him—with a hard, bitter laugh*). Sure! Lock me up! Put me in a cage! Dat's de on'y answer yuh know. G'wan, lock me up!

POLICEMAN. What you been doin'?

YANK. Enuf to gimme life for! I was born, see? Sure, dat's de charge. Write it in de blotter. I was born, get me!

POLICEMAN (*jocosely*). God pity your old woman! (*Then matter-of-fact*) But I've no time for kidding. You're soused. I'd run you in but it's too long a walk to the station. Come on now, get up, or I'll fan your ears with this club. Beat it now! (*He hauls YANK to his feet.*)

YANK (*in a vague mocking tone*). Say, where do I go from here?

POLICEMAN (*giving him a push—with a grin, indifferently*). Go to hell.

(Curtain)

SCENE EIGHT

Twilight of the next day. The monkey house at the Zoo. One spot of clear gray light falls on the front of one cage so that the interior can be seen. The other cages are vague, shrouded in shadow from which chatterings pitched in a conversational tone can be heard. On the one cage a sign from which the word "Gorilla" stands out. The gigantic animal himself is seen squatting on his haunches on a bench in much the same attitude as Rodin's "Thinker." YANK enters from the left. Immediately a chorus of angry chattering and screeching breaks out. The gorilla turns his eyes but makes no sound or move.

YANK (*with a hard, bitter laugh*). Welcome to your city, huh? Hail, hail, de gang's all here! (*At the sound of his voice the chattering dies away into an attentive silence. YANK walks up to the gorilla's cage and, leaning over the railing, stares in at its occupant, who stares back at him, silent and motionless. There is a pause of dead stillness. Then YANK begins to talk in a friendly confidential tone,*

half-mockingly, but with a deep undercurrent of sympathy.) Say, yuh're some hard-lookin' guy, ain't yuh? I seen lots of tough nuts dat de gang called gorillas, but yuh're de foist real one I ever seen. Some chest yuh got, and shoulders, and dem arms and mits! I bet yuh got a punch in eider fist dat'd knock 'em all silly! (*This with genuine admiration. The gorilla, as if he understood, stands upright, swelling out his chest and pounding on it with his fist. YANK grins sympathetically.*) Sure, I get yuh. Yuh challenge de whole woild, huh? Yuh got what I was sayin' even if yuh muffed de woids. (*Then bitterness creeping in*) And why wouldn't yuh get me? Ain't we both members of de same club—de Hairy Apes? (*They stare at each other—a pause—then YANK goes on slowly and bitterly.*) So yuh're what she seen when she looked at me, de white-faced tart! I was you to her, get me? On'y outa de cage—broke out—free to moider her, see? Sure! Dat's what she tought. She wasn't wise dat I was in a cage, too—worsen'n yours—sure—a damn sight—'cause you got some chanct to bust loose—but me—— (*He grows confused.*) Aw, hell! It's all wrong, ain't it? (*A pause*) I s'pose yuh wanter know what I'm doin' here, huh? I been warmin' a bench down to de Battery—ever since last night. Sure. I seen de sun come up. Dat was pretty, too—all red and pink and green. I was lookin' at de skyscrapers—steel—and all de ships comin' in, sailin' out, all over de oith—and dey was steel, too. De sun was warm, dey wasn't no clouds, and dere was a breeze blowin'. Sure, it was great stuff. I got it aw right—what Paddy said about dat bein' de right dope—on'y I couldn't get in it, see? I couldn't belong in dat. It was over my head. And I kept tinkin'—and den I beat it up here to see what youse was like. And I waited till dey was all gone to git yuh alone. Say, how d'yuh feel sittin' in dat pen all de time, havin' to stand for 'em comin' and starin' at yuh—de white-faced, skinny tarts and de boobs what marry 'em—makin' fun of yuh, laughin' at yuh, gittin' scared of yuh—damn 'em! (*He pounds on the rail with his fist. The gorilla rattles the bars of his cage and snarls. All the other monkeys set up an angry chattering in the darkness. YANK goes on excitedly.*) Sure! Dat's de way it hits me, too. On'y yuh're lucky, see? Yuh don't

belong wit 'em and yuh know it. But me, I belong wit 'em—but I don't, see? Dey don't belong wit me, dat's what. Get me? Tinkin' is hard— (*He passes one hand across his forehead with a painful gesture. The gorilla growls impatiently. YANK goes on gropingly.*) It's dis way, what I'm drivin' at. Youse can sit and dope dream in de past, green woods, de jungle and de rest of it. Den yuh belong and dey don't. Den yuh kin laugh at 'em, see? Yuh're de champ of de woild. But me—I ain't got no past to tink in, nor nothin' dat's comin', on'y what's now—and dat don't belong. Sure, you're de best off! Yuh can't tink, can yuh? Yuh can't talk neider. But I kin make a bluff at talkin' and tinkin'—a'most git away wit it—a'most!—and dat's where de joker comes in. (*He laughs.*) I ain't on oath and I ain't in heaven, get me? I'm in de middle tryin' to separate 'em, takin' all de woist punches from bot' of 'em. Maybe dat's what dey call hell, huh? But you, yuh're at de bottom. You belong! Sure! Yuh're de on'y one in de woild dat does, yuh lucky stiff! (*The gorilla growls proudly.*) And dat's why dey gotter put yuh in a cage, see? (*The gorilla roars angrily.*) Sure! Yuh get me. It beats it when you try to tink it or talk it—it's way down—deep—behind—you 'n' me we feel it. Sure! Bot' members of dis club! (*He laughs—then in a savage tone:*) What de hell! T' hell wit it! A little action, dat's our meat! Dat belongs! Knock 'em down and keep bustin' 'em till dey croaks yuh wit a gat—wit steel! Sure! Are yuh game? Dey've looked at youse, ain't dey—in a cage? Wanter git even? Wanter wind up like a sport 'stead of croakin' slow in dere? (*The gorilla roars an emphatic affirmative. YANK goes on with a sort of furious exaltation.*) Sure! Yuh're reg'lar! Yuh'll stick to de finish! Me 'n' you, huh?—bot' members of this club! We'll put up one last star bout dat'll knock 'em offen deir seats! Dey'll have to make de cages stronger after we're trou! (*The gorilla is straining at his bars,*

growling, hopping from one foot to the other. YANK takes a jimmy from under his coat and forces the lock on the cage door. He throws this open.) Pardon from de governor! Step out and shake hands! I'll take yuh for a walk down Fif' Avenoo. We'll knock 'em offen de oath and croak wit de band playin'. Come on, Brother. (*The gorilla scrambles gingerly out of his cage. Goes to YANK and stands looking at him. YANK keeps his mocking tone—holds out his hand.*) Shake—de secret grip of our order. (*Something, the tone of mockery, perhaps, suddenly enrages the animal. With a spring he wraps his huge arms around YANK in a murderous hug. There is a crackling snap of crushed ribs—a gasping cry, still mocking, from YANK.*) Hey, I didn't say kiss me! (*The gorilla lets the crushed body slip to the floor; stands over it uncertainly, considering; then picks it up, throws it in the cage, shuts the door, and shuffles off menacingly into the darkness at left. A great uproar of frightened chattering and whimpering comes from the other cages. Then YANK moves, groaning, opening his eyes, and there is silence. He mutters painfully.*) Say—dey oughter match him—wit Zybszko. He got me, aw right. I'm trou. Even him didn't tink I belonged. (*Then, with sudden passionate despair:*) Christ, where do I get off at? Where do I fit in? (*Checking himself as suddenly*) Aw, what de hell! No squawkin', see! No quittin', get me! Croak wit your boots on! (*He grabs hold of the bars of the cage and hauls himself painfully to his feet—looks around him bewilderedly—forces a mocking laugh.*) In de cage, huh? (*In the strident tones of a circus barker*) Ladies and gents, step forward and take a slant at de one and only—(*His voice weakening*)—one and original—Hairy Ape from de wilds of— (*He slips in a heap on the floor and dies. The monkeys set up a chattering, whimpering wail. And, perhaps, the Hairy Ape at last belongs.*)

(Curtain)

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